

LAERSKOOL AKASIA PRIMARY SCHOOL



16. POLICY ON RELIGION

1. POSITION STATEMENT

Most South Africans are religious people, following a number of different religions. In South Africa we have followers of African Traditional Religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and other religions. Because religion plays an important role in the lives of so many, it is important for us to have a policy dealing with religion in our school.

For most people who follow a religion, their religions and traditions are very important to them. Many such people do not feel as if they are full human beings if they are not allowed to practice their religions and teach their children about their traditions. In our democratic society, all religions and their followers have a place and have the right to be respected by all. Similarly, people who do not have a religion also have the right to the same kind of respect. The Akasia Religious policy is an attempt to give that respect to all our citizens within the school environment.

2. POLICY

The South African Constitution gives recognition to the role of faith and religion in our society. The preamble to the Constitution ends with the words:

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.

God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.

Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi kateskisa Afrika.

With this in mind Akasia Primary School will recognise the place that religion plays in our lives.

Akasia Primary School acknowledges the multi-cultural and multi-faith parent-learner community.

It cannot be more strongly stated that no prejudice against individuals, because of their religion, will be tolerated.

There are two aspects to religion in the school that need to be addressed.

The first is at whole school functions such as assembly and prize-givings. As allowed for in the Education Act, there will be religious observance at these gatherings. Out of respect for the school's majority Christian families and the school's roots and history, there will be a Bible reading, a song and prayer at these functions.

Any learner, with permission from their parents, or staff member may leave the venue for the duration of these observances. These individuals have a right to do so and will not be discriminated against in any way.

The second aspect is teaching religion in the classroom. The job of educators teaching religion in the classroom is not to convince learners that a particular religion is better than others or to convince learners that all religions are good or that all religions are bad. The job of educators is to teach learners certain aspects of the many religions so that the children will learn to understand other people.

As set out in the RNCS:

In the Foundation Phase, learners discover the religious *diversity* in our society. They learn about many religious expressions as practiced in religious institutions like churches, mosques, synagogues and temples.

Learners in the Intermediate Phase are taught various aspects of different religions: their founders, their sacred places, rituals, festivals, stories and songs.

What Religion Education can do:

- Religion Education can help to build a school community of respect and understanding.
- It can help the learner understand how her beliefs are different from those of other learners.
- It can strengthen the idea of unity in diversity.

What Religion Education does not do:

- Religion Education does not say that all religions are the same.
- It does not try to say that one religion is better than another.
- It does not try to make a new religion.
- It does not try to make everyone have the same religious beliefs.

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	SIGNATURE
N V ERASMUS	PRINCIPAL		
A C TSHIVHASE	CHAIR PERSON SGB		
T MMUTLANA	IDSO		
R MEKWA	DISTRICT TSHWANE WEST: DIRECTOR		