
Religious Education

Bahá'ís are committed to the religious content in school education, embracing collective worship, spiritual and ethical education and the study of the world's religions and worldviews.

- Bahá'ís consider the study and understanding of religions to be of central importance in any child's education. Bahá'í parents would therefore not normally withdraw their child from RE lessons or collective worship
- Bahá'ís are discouraged from portraying the Founders of religions in art or drama. Parents may be happy to discuss alternative approaches for RE lessons if necessary
- The Bahá'í RE website (<http://re.bahai.org.uk>) contains a wide variety of content suitable for teachers of RE to include in programmes of work covering the Bahá'í Faith

Discipline

Bahá'ís recognise the authority of the teacher *in loco parentis*.

- Should discipline problems arise, parents will welcome the opportunity to consult with teachers and school staff to agree ways to correct undesirable behaviour
- The Bahá'í view is that the “twin pillars” for the character education of children are sanction and reward

Attitudes to education

- Bahá'u'lláh taught that education should be compulsory for all children
- A child is a “mine rich in gems of inestimable value”, and education enables each child's talents and abilities to be developed
- Great emphasis should also be put on the development of virtues such as honesty, trustworthiness and the elimination of all kinds of prejudice. Parents will support PSHE programmes
- Since Bahá'ís are committed to the oneness of humanity, parents will also be highly supportive of multicultural education and world studies

Further information

A first point of call for further information may well be a Bahá'í child or parent.

The following websites provide useful information on the Bahá'í Faith:

<http://re.bahai.org.uk>
<https://www.bahai.org>

Schools may also wish to contact the UK Bahá'í community's national office, using one of the following methods:

By post: 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD, UK
By phone: (+44) 207 584 2566
By email: opa-re@bahai.org.uk

Pastoral Care of Bahá'í Children in schools

Information for teachers



*This leaflet may be photocopied
as necessary*

About the Bahá'í Faith

The Bahá'í Faith is the most recent of the world religions. It started in Iran, but has spread to every country in the world, therefore Bahá'ís come from a wide mix of ethnic groups.



Bahá'ís are followers of Bahá'u'lláh, whom they believe to be the latest in an eternal series of Divine Teachers. Each Divine Teacher builds on the message of those who have gone before to take humanity forward. Prior to Bahá'u'lláh, another Divine Teacher known as the Báb prepared the way for Bahá'u'lláh's message.

Fundamental to the Bahá'í Faith is the belief in the oneness of God, the essential oneness of all religions, and the oneness of humanity.

Religious practices

Prayer

Certain daily prayers, revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, are obligatory from the age of 15. These should not disrupt normal school life, as the range of time in which to say them is broad.

Fasting

From the age of 15, Bahá'ís take part in the 19-day fast from sunrise to sunset, starting on 1 or 2 March. This involves complete abstinence from food and drink. Prayer and meditation are emphasised, making the fast essentially spiritual in character.

Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is made to Bahá'í sites in the Holy Land. A full pilgrimage usually lasts nine days. There is no particular time of year when a Bahá'í pilgrimage must take place, but parents may need to ask permission for an authorised absence for their child if the pilgrimage dates overlap with school days.

Diet

There are no specific dietary restrictions for Bahá'ís although the use of alcohol or habit-forming drugs is forbidden. Smoking is strongly discouraged.

Clothing

Bahá'ís have no clothing restrictions, though decency is encouraged.

Relationship education

Most parents would support responsible, sensitive sex education which places sex in the context of marriage.

Holy Days

On the nine main Holy Days, Bahá'ís are encouraged to refrain from work and study when possible. Parents may ask that schools authorise the absence of their child on these days, where the festival falls on a school day - especially when there is some organised activity in which the child would wish to participate.

New Year's Day (Naw Rúz)	20 or 21 March
The First Day of Ridván	20 or 21 April
The Ninth Day of Ridván	28 or 29 April
The Twelfth Day of Ridván	1 or 2 May
The Declaration of the Báb	23 or 24 May
The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	28 or 29 May
The Martyrdom of the Báb	9 or 10 July

The following two festivals occur on consecutive days, varying each year, during October or November:

The Birth of the Báb
The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh

To find specific dates for all these festivals, please visit https://bahai-library.com/holy_days_calendar_students

Other festivals

The Ayyam-i-Ha (or Intercalary Days) are a period of four or five days prior to the month of fasting. They fall during the period between 25 February and 1 March, and are a time when Bahá'ís focus on hospitality and charity. Work is not suspended on these days.