

Tuesday, September 8, 2015

Dear Keith,

Get national recognition for a local inclusive school

I am writing to you in your capacity as local authority support officer to the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education to ask you to consider recommending to the school in your area that has done most in the last year to promote inclusion, cohesion and mutual understanding, particularly on the grounds of religion and belief, to apply for the 2016 [Accord Inclusive Schools Award](#).

The annual Award - now in its seventh year - is open all schools in England and Wales. Past winners have all received coverage for their success in national and local press. This year's winners are being offered a cash prize (£500 for first place; £250 for second and £100 for third). The Award has consistently rewarded schools that have excelled in RE, and thanks to recommendations of SACREs.

Past winners include Newbury Park Primary School in Ilford, which came first [in 2014](#) for its 'Ambassadors of Faith and Belief' scheme, which was actively supported by its SACRE. The scheme involved volunteers from local sixth forms supporting the delivery of RE by making presentations to pupils, including about their own beliefs and the role of them in their life, so improving younger pupils understanding of the nature of faith and belief as a real life experience. The first placed school [in 2013](#), Little Heath School in Redbridge, won strong praise from judges for its approach to RE which was later [highlighted](#) by Ofsted as an example for other special schools to follow.

Listed by Ofsted as a way for schools to complement their duties under the Equality Act to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and tackle discrimination, the Award is free for schools to apply for. This year's Award will be judged by a respected and experienced panel of experts from a range of backgrounds - previous judges have included the former Conservative Secretary of State for Education, Lord Baker; the Labour Shadow Minister for Children, Lisa Nandy MP; the then Chair of the Religious Education Council of England, John Keast OBE; the Bishop of Buckingham, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, and journalist Polly Toynbee.

If you know of a local school that provides inclusive and high quality RE and that takes seriously the promotion of the growth of mutual understanding between those of different beliefs and backgrounds, then please let them know that you think highly of their work and about the Award, so they don't miss out on a chance to get recognised.

Due to the relatively detailed nature of the information required, a [nomination form](#) should probably be completed by someone at a school and will normally take them a few hours. We have tried to make the process of applying as simple as possible, and most of the questions the nomination form poses will have already been answered, if not seriously considered, in material already produced by the school for Ofsted, the school prospectus, newsletters or internal policy documents.

For more information on the Award please visit Accord's website at <http://accordcoalition.org.uk/inclusivity-award-2016/>. The deadline for entries is Sunday December 13th, and prizes will be awarded in the New Year. Please contact Accord's National Coordinator, Paul Pettinger, at paul@accordcoalition.org.uk or on 020 7324 3071 with any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE

Chair of the Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education

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