

The True Meaning of Islam

Summary of Projects 2013

As a member of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), I am proud to be part of a team working within the Borough of Bromley to help and support religious education in schools. I am very thankful to Mufti Mustafa, the Principal of Darul Uloom, for sponsoring this competition to encourage interest in RE and, in particular, an understanding of the true meaning of Islam. This competition was organised with the support of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) and the generous help of teachers from participating schools.

The title of the project set was "The True Meaning of Islam". Pupils have been asked to explain what they consider to be the essential teachings of Islam, to discuss their implications for important issues of today and to finish with a statement about what they have gained from their work.

This year 41 students aged 11 and 12 years from Farringtons, Coopers Technology, Harris Academy, Bullers Wood and Langley Park Boys have submitted projects. Most of the students have understood the basic foundations of Islam correctly and presented the key aspects of religion clearly. Almost all have documented that Islam means 'submission to Allah' and also means 'peace'. For a Muslim, obedience to Allah's commands, as embodied by the last Messenger of Allah, is the path to inner peace. They also understood that Muslims believe that the Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah in its entirety, not a single word of which has been changed since its revelation, and that it will always remain so, protected forever by Allah.

Some students have discussed terrorism and clearly documented that it has nothing to do with Islam. A few of them, mostly girls, described detailed information about Hijab.

Overall, the quality of projects submitted is very impressive and their presentation often innovative. The majority of the students have understood Islam and Muslims. They have presented well-researched information and have documented their findings beautifully. The snapshots, the art and decorative style of presentation are admirable.

Marking was carried out relative to the best performer who was awarded first prize for outstanding work. 75% of marks were for content including breadth of scope, accuracy and clarity of explanation and 25% of marks were for presentation and organisation of information. Marks were deducted for mistakes and inaccuracies; which includes sensitive pictures. Please note that pictures of the prophets are strictly forbidden in Islam and also that the Zakat is 2.5% of wealth not income.

This year, in addition to two first and a second prize, four third prizes, 16 consolation prizes and 18 commendations were awarded. Each participant is acknowledged by a prize of a book about Muhammad written by the late Afzalur Rahman, who was both a London school teacher and an Islamic scholar. Also, a small booklet on 'Islam' by Dr Manazir Ahsan, Director of the Islamic Foundation is to be presented. A certificate from Darul Uloom London is also provided to each student.

Mahmood, 7 November 2013