

Comments regarding Addition of Humanism to RE Syllabus

Name	Position / Role & Responsibility in RE	School / Interest in RE	Yes/No	Comments
Phil Seaman	Head of subject	Queensmead School	Yes	Strongly in favour of inclusion
Dominic Beer	Assistant Headteacher / RE teacher	Northwood School	Yes	
Gurpreet Sidhu	Subject leader for RE / Punjabi	Sikh Faith Academy	Yes	Would be useful addition to K3 syllabus. We already use many of the key terminology mentioned within lessons for year 7/8
Alice Guthrie	Ruislip Gardens		Yes	We agree as a school that it would be beneficial to teach a specific strand relating to humanism and we are strongly in favour of the proposed change
Uma Thaker	RE Coordinator	Hayes Park School	Yes	I am in favour of this addition as I feel it is important for children to understand that there are various ways for people to live their lives. I think it will encourage a wonderful, broad and open mind to life.
Sabrina Edwards	Headteacher	Bourne Primary	Yes	I think that in order to fully embrace British Values, it is vital that children have an understanding that some people do not have a faith but still lead lives based on moral values.
Becki Wakefield & Jodie Simmons	RE Coordinators	Deansfield Primary	Yes	We feel that it is important to teach all major religions and, in a changing community, we feel this is more relevant in today society.
Elaine D'Souza	Headteacher	Hermitage Primary	Yes	
Trusha Dabba	Chairperson	Heathrow Primary	Yes	
Rachel Quinn	RE Coordinator	Breakspear School	No	The curriculum states that we should be learning about the 6 main religions and Humanism is not one of them. However, I feel the concepts from Humanism are great and something that we should be informing our children. I feel this might be better in PSHE session.
Olivia Wall	Deputy Head, RE teacher	Swakeleys School for Girls	Yes	
Robert Goldsmith	Parent Governor	St Bernadette's Primary School	Yes	I think that as the number of people who identify with this choice increases in the country it is important that our children are taught about all aspects of religious faiths including those with no faith.
Karen Jenkins	Year 4 teacher / RE co-coordinator	Hillside Junior School	No	Due to what appears to be the confusing nature of the religion, for example KS1: Humanists would either consider themselves atheists or agnostics, then Humanism is more than just atheism or agnosticism. The information provided seems quite wide ranging, contradictory and not specific enough to create understandable lessons/
Karen Collier	RE Coordinator	Whiteheath Junior	No	Humanism is a "non-religious philosophy based on liberal human values" (Oxford

		School		<p>English Dictionary definition). As humanism is a philosophy rather than a religion it does not qualify to be included in the syllabus.</p> <p>Religious belief does not engage with matters of science and there is no crossover with the science syllabus. Humanism with its emphasis on understanding through scientific development is presenting a position that is not relevant to religious education.</p> <p>Within the religious syllabus the emphasis is always that some people hold beliefs consistent with the religion that is being studied and some do not, being followers of other religions or those that have no religious beliefs at all.</p> <p>It is not clear from the document how ethical or societal values are derived by humanists. Without a defining text, "liberal human values" are open to individual interpretation and so cannot be readily evaluated in a learning context.</p> <p>The "responses" outlined within the humanism document are typical of the vast majority of religious beliefs and therefore developed as part of the existing curriculum and further covered in the PSHE syllabus.</p>
Alan Mills	Headteacher	Oak Farm Junior School	Yes	
Ravinder Singh	Head of RE	Uxbridge High School	Yes	
Sydney Quartey	Subject Leader RE	Harlington School	Yes	
Sharifah Lee	RE Subject Leader	Charville Academy	Yes	<p>Our teaching plans include acceptance of all faiths/beliefs and aspects of humanism. We aim to be fully inclusive and encourage tolerance and critical thinking. It is important that pupils are encouraged to look at a range of resources and evidence (including scientific) to support and develop their own ideas and understanding</p>
Ann Bowen-Breslin	Headteacher	Hillingdon Primary School	Yes	
Jasvinder Osan	Chair of Governors	Minet Nursey & Infant School	No	<p>Children at the Stage 1 / Stage 2 are impressionable. Exposing these age groups to differing ideas as in Humanism may lead to mental setup which makes them consider traditional religions negatively. The concept of Humanism, which is effect not a religion is an acquired view that is gained through the child's own realisation of nature around him / her, as they seek to accept that in their own life, and we should not try to influence them with these concepts at an early age. We should therefore allow them to mould into that as they gain more life experiences, and</p>

				allow them to acquire these concepts outside of school curriculum & RE.
Steven Courtndage	Chair of Governors	Ruislip Gardens Primary School	No	Agree wholeheartedly with the inclusion of Humanism in the RE syllabus but not in this format. Non-religious views should be taught <i>alongside</i> the main religions as a method of enriching discussion of religion rather than an either-or. Humanism should be taught in its own terms, not forced into the same structure as the main Religions as appears to be suggested here.
Rev Daniel Norris	Executive Headteacher	Holy Trinity C of E Primary, Northwood	No	In my opinion humanism is a world view/ philosophy/ ideology and is not a faith. There is already provision within the syllabus for the discussion of a range of world views.
Diana Jelavic-Wade	Assistant Headteacher	Whiteheath Infant School	Yes	My opinion is that it is really important to acknowledge Humanism and teach children about it. In my experience, there are less and less people who are religious in a traditional sense more and more people that take on this approach to life. I went to a Humanist funeral recently and it made me think about some of the ideas that are part of this approach. Any belief/ attitude that promotes goodness, helping and respecting others, looking after the natural world surely is something we want to teach our children about at all stages of their education. I am hoping that Humanism becomes part of our agreed RE syllable and I have already ordered a copy of the book by Michael Rosen for my school.
Niela Bamber	Headteacher / oversees RE	Rosedale Primary	Yes	
Rachel Langford	Co-Headteacher	Whiteheath Infant School	No	The teaching of religious education is vital to the development of well-rounded and informed individuals. It is our duty as practitioners to teach our children about religion, sharing with them what people believe and letting them form their own thoughts and opinions for themselves. In an Infant/primary school our children are very young, their religious beliefs are often formed from their parents/carers views which is totally appropriate. We teach Christianity and Hinduism which form the two biggest religion groups in our school. We encourage parents of other religious groups to come and talk to the children, and have a range of denominations come to talk to the children in assembly of religions that are represented in our school. All of our religions believe in a God, and the biggest question for most of our children is death, knowing that there is a God brings comfort to children. As children mature

				<p>they will begin to question more and at this point (Secondary in my opinion) it is appropriate to talk about what other religious groups believe. Our job is to teach, inform and care for the children in our care, not cause more confusion, some children are aware that atheism is a belief 'that there is no God', Humanist don't associate themselves with this group which again is confusing for children of primary school age. Humanism is not significantly represented at all in our school and I would argue not Nationally either with a poll in 2011 showing the 3 biggest groups as Christianity at 59.3%, Islam at 4.8%, Hindu at 1.5%. Humanism teachings are not dis-similar to other religions that are represented, the main difference is Humanists don't believe there is a god or that we can ever know whether there is a god, or not. We are a thinking school we believe in questioning, teaching this key idea of Humanism would take up a considerable amount of our timetable and is not a reflection of what our children or parents believe. The parents in my school especially Christian and Muslim would have real reservations on these key principles being taught. We are a broadly Christian school and celebrate Christian festivals Humanim ideas of god are in total disagreement to this.</p>
Kristin Sutherland	Headteacher	St Andrew's C of E Primary School	No	We understand why it might be included
John Goddard	Headteacher	Hedgewood	Yes	<p>In respect of the documentation received and the ideas and principles contained therein, I think it would be accurate to say that as a school community, we are committed to striving for equality,empathic consideration (translated as practical expressions of value and respect for others) which is describing a sort of goodness grounded in love and respect for our fellow human beings and the wonderful natural bio diversity of the planet. Thus in principle we would be happy to include and incorporate much of the KS1 and KS2 areas.</p> <p>However, there is a caveat and that is as a special school where most of our pupils are autistic and communication disordered, this does mean that we have to adapt and present the curriculum in a way that has relevance for our young people. This makes the RE curriculum challenge interesting to say the least. However our young people are amazing and never cease to enlighten and invigorate us with their capacity to care beyond themselves, accept others and</p>

				deal positively with the significant challenges they face on a daily basis.
Mrs Roseline Wilkinson	DHT & RE Teacher	Botwell House Catholic Primary	Yes	
Gemma Denham	Head of RE	Harefield Academy	No	We include a variety of beliefs within our SOW, including atheism and agnosticism also but cannot include all ideas as we have to meet the demands of the preparation also needed for GCSE- the foundation knowledge which must be built in KS3. We will add in Humanism to our environment, charity, human rights and community cohesion lessons as this is important that students understand a variety of viewpoints.
Ann-Marie Sissons	DHT with responsibility for RE	Pinkwell Primary	Yes	
Russell Middleton	Chair of Governors	Barnhill Community High	Yes	
Rob Hayden	Head of Department	Haydon School	No	<p>In principle I do not have any problems with Humanism being added to the syllabus but I do have some concerns in having an equal place alongside the other 6 religious faiths. Firstly - why Humanism? Could the argument also be made for other belief systems such as paganism, scientology etc. What is the criteria that has now meant that Humanism is considered alongside the 6 major world faiths? Secondly looking at the proposed areas of study, there really is not a great deal of depth compared with the other 6 religions. If we are being encouraged to teach Humanism as a religious belief system I think there needs to be more in the way of beliefs and practices.</p> <p>I do believe it is important to cover a range of religious and non religious view points within the classroom. My understanding though would be that non religious beliefs would be used as a counter or point of comparison with religious beliefs. I am not convinced that Humanism can stand alone as an area of study in this context.</p>