

Work with other organisations

Coleman Primary School

Background

Coleman Primary School in Leicester is a school with an incredible diverse array of pupils. With 60% Muslim students, and the remaining 40% consisting of mainly Hindu and Sikh, it is a multicultural school with many different languages and backgrounds attending the school. The headmaster, Nigel Bruwen, was able to see that such diversity needed to be acknowledged. Also, with so many of the pupils attending supplementary schools outside the mainstream school, he decided that it was imperative he learned more about the supplementary schools his pupils were attending and how he could facilitate good relationships between them and him.

Work with other organisations

After carrying out a survey of his pupils, Nigel discovered that a considerable amount of them attended supplementary schools. 71% of Key Stage 2 pupils in September 2007 alone attended a supplementary school. *'This in turn has an effect on the number of children who can attend or who take up extended school opportunities offered by the school itself'* says Nigel. The survey he conducted shows that Muslim pupils in Key Stage 2 attend around 38 different madrassahs. This led Nigel to decide to build links with significant local supplementary schools.

To enable this, Nigel became a member of the board of a local supplementary schools trust in order to help foster links. He met with Julia Leith from the SDSA, who is helping him to make initial contacts with schools across the faiths, in order to fully represent the school composition. *'Supplementary schools play a significant part in pupils' lives and as such it would be useful for both systems to be aware of that connection and see if links and relationships could be developed'* says Nigel when asked about the importance of strong links between supplementary and mainstream schools.

Top Tips

- Building strong partnerships with supplementary schools benefits those of your pupils that attend them.
- When fostering links with schools, ensure they adequately reflect the composition of your school.
- Together you can both raise standards and achievements for your pupils.