

THREE FAITHS FORUM



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School Linking Project Officer : Secondary Schools

The Three Faiths Forum is a registered charity that widens horizons, encourages harmony, and confronts prejudice. Our objectives are to build lasting relationships between people of different faiths (and those of non religious beliefs). Our aim is to create a society where religious and cultural differences are no longer seen as a problem to be solved, but where diversity is embraced and valued. Our activities encourage friendship, peace, goodwill and understanding, especially between Muslims, Christians and Jews.

We are looking for an experienced individual to join our growing team to develop and implement a programme creating links between faith schools. You will have experience running activities in secondary schools which explore identities, faiths and beliefs and will be able to run professional development sessions for teachers on these issues. You will also have knowledge of issues relating to faith communities in the UK. You will be committed to achieving the organisational aims, passionate about young people, fully committed to equality and have a vision of how young people can explore and learn about others.

Application Information

Please send a CV and covering letter detailing your suitability for the position and indicating when you would be available to start work. Applications should be emailed to admin@threefaithsforum.org.uk, postal applications can be sent to Three Faiths Forum, Star House, 104 Grafton Road, London, NW5 4BA. For more information please call 020 7482 9549.

Deadline for applications: 5pm, Monday 22nd June 2009

JOB DESCRIPTION: School Linking Project Officer (Secondary Schools)

Salary: £27,500 pro rata
Contract: Until August 2011
Location: Kentish Town, North London
Reports to: Programme Director
Hours: 2.5 days/week (19 hours), with some evening work (time off in lieu given)

Duties and Responsibilities

1. To develop and implement a strategic programme involving linking faith schools
2. To recruit and support faith schools
3. To develop and deliver Continuing Professional Development to school staff on issues of identity and diversity and to support the linking process
4. To work with approximately 10 secondary schools in the first instance to develop a curriculum and ethos which fulfils DCSF and OFSTED guidance on community cohesion
5. To establish links with partner organisations to enhance the quality of the school linking work
6. To produce guidance on faith school linking in secondary schools
7. To produce resources and lesson plans on faiths and beliefs

Additional duties include, but are not confined to, the following:

1. To support the educational programmes of the Three Faiths Forum through resource production and delivery
2. To speak and write about interfaith and faith school linking in public e.g. at conferences, news articles, web forum.
3. To promote good relations between people of different faiths (and those of non religious beliefs)
4. To assist in the upkeep and promotion of the organisational websites (www.3ff.org.uk and www.threefaithsforum.org.uk)
5. To undertake other initiatives necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the project.

Person specification

It is essential to have sensitivity to the issues surrounding this area of work and proven commitment to the aims of the Three Faiths Forum, especially the importance of interfaith work with young people. Three Faiths Forum's programmatic work aims to promote a more harmonious society by:

- **Increasing understanding and knowledge** of different faiths and beliefs
- **Supporting dialogue** between people of different faiths and those of non-religious beliefs
- **Facilitating shared action** to improve communities and society

Experience

- At least three years' teaching experience in secondary schools
- Experience creating and delivering activities exploring identities, faiths and beliefs
- Experience running professional development or teacher training courses including evaluation
- Experience in interfaith education, equalities, conflict transformation/peace building methodologies

Knowledge & Understanding

- Excellent knowledge of faith schools in England (particularly Muslim or Catholic)
- Good understanding of leadership processes in secondary schools and local authorities and governing bodies of faith schools
- Good understanding of the issues relating to faith and inter faith relations in the UK, particularly relating to faith schools
- Good knowledge of British school curricula and duties, especially Citizenship Education, Religious Education or Religious Studies, the Race Relations Amendment Act and the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion

Skills and abilities

- Ability to bring an imaginative, enthusiastic and innovative approach to work and to work under pressure and manage changing priorities.
- Good capacity for self-directed working and also team work
- Diplomatic and courteous manner
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Proven ability to work with, and create excellent programmes for a wide range of people, particularly young people and students of different faiths and backgrounds
- IT literate, with good working knowledge of Word and Excel
- Skills in social media and online communications

Information on the Faith School Linking Programme

The Three Faiths Forum believes that in order for young people to reach both their personal potential and to form part of a cohesive society in the future they must engage with people of different faiths and beliefs. Through these interactions young people understand the significance of religious beliefs in real people's lives and discover the personal relationships people have with their faith. This learning is most effective when it comes from young people themselves – through both formal teaching and informal interactions.

In 2008-9 the Shared Futures programme ran a pilot supporting links between 20 schools (primary and secondary). Teachers devised lesson plans and long term projects with support from outside agencies. Young people engaged in identity activities, exchanged information about themselves and had a number of shared experiences through the year. Activities included: Training in community leadership; Dialogue skills; Workshops on immigration; Exploring religious festivals through art; Learning about democracy; Sharing narratives.

By January 2010, the Faith School Linking programme will provide support for 30-40 faith schools. The links will primarily be with other faiths schools, but may also be with local community schools. In their first year of involvement, pairs of schools will receive support in devising and delivering activities to ensure they are appropriate for interfaith settings. The involvement of outside staff will reduce through the year to ensure sustainability of the programme within the schools.

The programme is affiliated to the National Schools Linking Network and it shares their vision to inspire communities to create a shared future through fostering understanding of identities and diversity and in helping schools exceed the new community cohesion duty.

The project is funded by the Pears Foundation.