

How to be a Diversity Champion

(from Strictly RE session January 2023 – Charlotte Newman)

Core purposes of the Diversity Champion are

1. Promote within the school community a good understanding of, and respect for, the differences between people
2. Ensure that all members of the school community actively challenge prejudice and discrimination when they occur and
3. Promote the regular celebration of our diverse community

Other key points

- Recognise that there is diversity within tradition – there is not one uniform view – use language like some or most rather than all
- Use preferred labels rather than old colonial names – e.g Sanatana Dharma rather than Hinduism
- Avoid stereotypical language e.g., examine common everyday phrases – don't say things like stop gossiping girls (it reinforces the stereotype that all women gossip)
- Recognize that there is darkness within religion and culture – don't sugar coat things – RE needs to be a place to discuss and examine issues realistically
- Ensure all students feel safe and able to contribute to the session – support them if they need it
- ALWAYS tackle racist/stereotypical/sexist/homophobic language – call them out
- Allow students to present their worldview if they wish, however if there is one minority in your class don't assume they will want to share, and don't think they represent the entire worldview
- Allow students to respectfully challenge the views of others
- Ensure positive representation throughout the curriculum – not just RE
- Use external speakers from the community but only if they are good – if they are a bit preachy don't use them
- Celebrate different religious festivals in the calendar
- Check resources – remove old fashioned or stereotyped texts or images