

# Die Senatorin für Kinder und Bildung

**Freie  
Hansestadt  
Bremen**

Die Senatorin für Kinder und Bildung · Rembertiring 8-12 · 28195 Bremen

To the Parents  
of the Students  
of First and Fifth Grade  
in the Academic Year 2017/ 2018

Auskunft erteilt  
Frau Julia Le Dem

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Datum und Zeichen  
Ihres Schreibens

Mein Zeichen  
(bitte bei Antwort angeben)  
21-13

Bremen, 20.07.2017

## Letter to parents regarding the subject of Religion

*“Why are there different religions?”, “What connects the religions?”, “Do you guys also celebrate Christmas?”, “Why do Jewish boys and men wear a kippa?”, “Why do you have to take your shoes off in a mosque?”, “Why do people fast?”, “How do Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus pray?”, “How should we interact with one another?”*

Dear parents and guardians,

These are just a few of the many questions children are asking today. In public schools across the state of Bremen, your child will encounter “Religion” as a subject from primary school onwards. This subject’s new name seeks to take into account the altered social situation, with pupils from very different religious and non-religious backgrounds all living and learning at the school. And the lesson must cater to this accordingly. The new subject of “Religion” seeks to clarify the issues together with the various children in the class. Because many questions are raised during school-time interactions. The lesson can thus help clear up the misunderstandings which sometimes arise as a result of cultural or religious differences. School is a chance to use religious diversity as an enriching opportunity, and to appreciate and respect one another. Guardians not wanting their child to participate in these lessons can, under our state constitution, unenrol their child from the subject. Primary school students will then participate in the lesson in a parallel group, while middle school students will take an alternative class in philosophy. We hope and advise, however, that you, as parents and guardians, take the opportunity to discuss this subject with your children and the teachers.

School is not about raising the children in a certain faith. The aim of the lesson is to encourage independent thought so that children can make their own, justified judgements, including in relation to religious issues – regardless of whether they themselves are religious or what religion they practise.

Yours sincerely,

p.p.

Signed

Lars Nelson