

# Learning Outside the Classroom

## Year 11 Visit to Leeds Grand Mosque – as an aid to GCSE Revision

'A different way of getting information' – quotation from a Year 11 student.

Leeds 6

### What were we trying to achieve?

- to give students an opportunity to review Muslim beliefs and practices learnt on the GCSE course
- to enable students to put their knowledge in context

### Cost:

Travel costs only. The visit is offered free by the mosque for one week in spring each year to local schools.

### Who went? How many?

40 Year 11 students with five members of staff. On arrival, students were split into groups, each with an accompanying member of staff.

### Preparation:

In preparation, students were asked to think of questions based on the Islam sections of the GCSE. Students were told about the need to remove shoes. Girls were not required to cover their hair during the visit.

### How did we organise the learning?

Students were given a tour of the mosque and various functions were explained, including – *wuzu*, prayer and Five Pillars. Students had the opportunity to ask their questions. This session was open and frank - all questions were well-received and ably dealt with, even those about terrorism had a frank response. The members of the mosque in charge of the visit were glad to be able to give a balance to the arguments often portrayed in the media. Students had the opportunity to meet Muslims – not all of Asian origin. This proved a talking point and addressed some prejudicial ideas. Some students were allowed to dress in traditional Muslim dress. The mosque had devised a professional walk-through display with several artefacts which explained many points about Islam.

### What was the impact of the experience?

Student opinion was canvassed about the visit:

#### 1. Did you enjoy the Mosque visit? Why?

'We learnt a lot more about the mosque than in lessons because we could ask questions and get answers from the view of Muslims.'

#### 2. What did you learn from this trip?

'Our guides gave first hand insight into religion.'

'Not to always judge religions such as Islam, according to what the media says.'

#### 3. How did it help your preparation for your GCSE exam?

'It was more interesting than sitting in a classroom all day, so I listened a lot more.'

Most of the answers in the exam were based on the visit. I remembered some of the things said.

#### 4. What was the most memorable part of the visit?

'When we dressed up in traditional Muslim clothing'.

#### 5. How could we improve the trip for future years?

The majority of students who commented said they wanted longer on the visit.

### Follow up:

A similar visit was made to a church.

Students who took the exam achieved the best results of any subject in the Academy. The teacher believes the trip was a major contributory factor in this success – 72% A\*-C compared with the school average of 42% A\*-C.

### Contacts and links:

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