



Whixall C.E. Primary School

Religious Education Policy

At Whixall C.E. Primary School Religious Education (R.E.) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The subject is central to the school's understanding of education and mission, and the commitment that 'the Church at national, diocesan and local level is called to work towards every child and young person having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ' (Going for Growth Report). As a school we recognise that spiritual development lies at the heart of the curriculum. All members of the school community should experience Christianity through the life of the school, as well as through the taught curriculum.

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools, published by the National Society and adopted by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education (2012). Christianity will, therefore, be the majority study in R.E. as understanding Christianity as a living religion is the foundation of Religious Education in church schools. It is important that this draws on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms. The encounter must be an open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations and in which real dialogue and education takes place.

Church schools have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and world views. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also be able to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice.

R.E. teaching also follows the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act (1988), which places R.E. as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement of all pupils. We base our RE provision on the Lichfield Agreed Syllabus. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan R.E. Resource Handbook, materials from the National Society, and other appropriate units to enhance teaching and offer the extra dimension of its Church foundation. The school recognises the right of withdrawal of teachers, and of pupils at the request of their parents. This is stated in the school brochure. Access to R.E. is made clear in the school's inclusion policy.

At least 5% of R.E. curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly R.E. objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation at least two thirds of subject content will be allocated to an exploration of the Christian faith, and the concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- to develop knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights beliefs and practices. (This reflects AT1 Learning about religion)
- to deepen or realise their own beliefs and respect the freedom of other people to hold beliefs different from their own, so preparing them for adult life and becoming citizens in a modern multicultural Britain (This reflects AT 2 Learning from Religion).

These aims will be realised by helping our children to:

- develop awareness:
 - that many people believe human life depends upon an ultimate being or a sustaining creative power often referred to as God;
 - of a spiritual dimension to life;
- develop an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the broad religious, spiritual and ethical heritage of their Immediate and global communities;
- learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;
- reflect upon the experiences and the mysteries of life and to recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief;

In addition the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

spiritual - widening pupils vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God;

moral - helping each pupil develop their own informed values;

social - helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values in our society;

cultural - aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and in developing positive attitudes towards diversity;

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with Citizenship and PSHE. R.E. can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all children.

Religious Attitudes and Values

The personal development of children will be encouraged by fostering:

- a sensitive interest in the spiritual; dimension of life. This will include the desire to investigate or respond to religious traditions, beliefs, practices and the natural world;
- a willingness to explore enthusiastically and in a positive manner, their own and other people's beliefs and traditions;
- consideration and understanding of other people and for the world in which we live;
- a respect for the freedom of everyone in society to practice or not to practice a religious belief;
- confidence in their own background, which for some will include a cultural and/ or religious heritage;
- an understanding of the effects the commitment to belief may have on their own lives and the lives of others;
- an ability to respond to the challenges of life;

Principles of Learning and Teaching in Religious Education

RE is important in the development of skills, attitudes and concepts which enable children to recognise the importance which a belief has for individuals or groups and to reflect on its significance or otherwise for their own developing beliefs and values.

RE provides, within the curriculum, a reminder that education concerns the whole person – body, mind and spirit. It confronts teachers and children with the basic questions about God and humanity, good and evil, forgiveness and salvation, life and death and especially about meaning and purpose.

The Skills to be Fostered

The following skills are not an exhaustive list or exclusive to Religious Education. They can be found across the curriculum, but for RE to be effective they must be present.

Investigation / Exploration

This would involve observing, finding out and responding to religious beliefs, the environment, the world and its peoples.

Questioning / Enquiry

This should provide opportunities for children to develop their ability to ask and respond to fundamental human questions and mysteries.

Communication / Sharing

This will be achieved through children listening and talking with people of various religious and ethical beliefs; and encountering religious expression through a range of means, including symbol, art, music and drama.

Understanding / Evaluation

This will be fostered through a developing awareness of the extent to which religious belief affects a believer's life style.

Sensitivity / Empathy

This will include the ability to respect the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and the values of others.

Self-understanding / Reflection

This should provide the opportunity for children to become aware of their own attitude towards the religious and ethical concepts studied. Times of stillness and a variety of creative experiences are essential in the development of these skills.

Whole School Principles and Strategies for the Teaching of Religious Education

RE is taught in a variety of ways to a whole class through group work and through drama, role play and discussion. Spiritual development also takes place through worship, mindfulness activities and other opportunities for worship during the school day. Where ever possible, the children will be given the opportunity to learn at first hand.

Continuity and Progression

The Shropshire Agreed Syllabus provides a framework for learning opportunities at each Key Stage. These experiences are broken down for each class and provide enough material for flexibility and differentiation.

Recording, Assessment and Reporting

Assessment will assist the teacher in planning and the children in their learning. It is based on clear learning outcomes and an integral part of classroom organisation. It involves children in reflection and review.

RE is recorded as a whole class reflecting a variety of teaching styles and learning opportunities. Their understanding about religion and learning from religion is a fundamental aspect of RE. This understanding and learning is assessed and recorded for each individual child by the class teacher. We recognise the value that RE can have in other areas of the curriculum.

Feedback to children about their progress is achieved through assessment and verbal feedback.

Children's progress is reported to parents in the annual end of year report and through two parents' evenings which are held each year.

Equal Opportunities

As a school, we are committed to ensuring that all children have equal access and opportunities in RE, regardless of race, gender or disability.

Role of Co-ordinator

- take the lead in policy and scheme of work development to ensure coverage, progression and continuity;
- support colleagues in development work plans and implementation of schemes of work;
- monitor progress;
- take responsibility for the upkeep of resources;
- keep up to date with developments in RE and relate information to colleagues as appropriate;
- advise on staff training for RE.

Responsibility: Foundation Governors

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