



Religious Education Policy

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| Final Version by Governors – February 18 |
| Reviewed – February 19 |

The school will provide a secure, caring Christian community where everyone can learn their own self-worth in an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect and co-operation

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1. Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most important questions asked by people. At Pytchley Endowed CE Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of all the major world faiths, and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of the divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity as well as the other major world faiths, especially those that are practiced by the children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We provide many opportunities for pupils to learn from religions as well as about religion.

1.2. Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children:

- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives.
- to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the major world faiths or values adhered to in the UK.
- to enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today.
- to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a faith through the understanding and participation in religious traditions.
- to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.
- to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of differences in the UK today.
- to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues.
- to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

2. The Legal Position of Religious Education

2.1. Our school curriculum for RE meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in reception class who are less than 5 years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from RE classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors. The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. The Head Teacher and SLT, in consultation with the Governors have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus and supplement this with additional material from the Diocese, such as Understanding Christianity. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take into account the teachings and practices of other major world faiths.

3. Teaching and Learning Styles

- 3.1. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning using the locally agreed syllabus, and seeking diocesan advice, taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.
- 3.2. In order to make religious education a lively, active and engaging subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, the use of artefacts, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, stories, as well as the use of periods of stillness and reflection.
- 3.3. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities. We use a variety of approaches of helping pupils to appreciate, and to begin to develop critical thinking about, religious life and teachings, including enquiry based and philosophical approaches.
- 3.4. We base our teaching of RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in Religious Education.
- 3.5. Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faiths on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups. Sometimes they create presentations and share these with other members of the school community.
- 3.7. We recognise that classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, e.g. by:
 - setting tasks which are open ended and can have a variety of responses.
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty.
 - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the individual child.
 - using teaching assistants to support the work of individuals of groups of children.

4. Religious Education Curriculum Planning

- 4.1. RE is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus, using units from Understanding Christianity to enhance and deepen the teaching of Christianity in our school. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into

the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

- 4.2. We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the topics studied in each term in each key stage. The RE Subject Leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group. The long-term plan is based on a two year rotating cycle, due to mixed aged classes throughout both key stages. By doing so, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics.
- 4.3. Our medium-term plans are taken from the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. These units of work are taken and adapted by the class teacher in their own short-term plans. This enables teachers to tailor their lessons to suit the teaching and learning styles of school, their own classes and individual pupils.
- 4.4. The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning intention and expected outcomes. Class teachers keep these individual plans and often discuss them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.
- 4.5. In school we have adopted a creative curriculum with each class focussing on a country for each term of the academic year. To ensure links between our creative curriculum and RE there are occasions when class teachers, in consultation with the subject Leader and Head Teacher, will look at an additional world faith and associated religious traditions taken from their current focus country.

5. The Early Years Foundation Stage

- 5.1. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage we relate the RE curriculum to the Early Years Outcomes which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged 3 to 5. The relevant outcomes for RE are found in the Personal, Social and Emotional Development as well as Understanding the World.
- 5.3. Approaches to teaching and learning in Religious Education in the Early Years Foundation Stage:
 - Children visit places of worship, show respect and learn new words.
 - They listen to and respond to a range of stimuli about and from different religious and ethnic groups and from the natural world.
 - They handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
 - Children use stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways. They reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation.
 - Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
 - Children think about issues of right and wrong and how people help one another.

6. Contribution of Religious Education to the teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1. English

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts used in literacy sessions have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and promotes the children's speaking and listening skills. We also encourage the children to write letters, instructions and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

6.2. Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) and Citizenship

Through our RE lessons, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. Key Stage 2 pupils also take part in Philosophy for Children, where they engage in discussions and debates in a secure and supportive way. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of others, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

6.3. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through RE we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values, and in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7. Religious Education and ICT

7.1. ICT is a powerful tool for the enhancement of RE, and is used throughout both key stages. Children select and analyse information from a wide range of verified and age appropriate resources from the internet and our ongoing subscription to the PurpleMash web suite. Children also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, as well as to improve presentation. The development of online resources means that when first hand experiences are not available pupils can still participate in the experiences of others, for example the use of virtual tours around various places of worship and the sharing of rituals and traditions of the major world faiths. Taking photographs using iPads is a great way of recording snapshots of the pupils first hand experiences to refer back to in future sessions.

8. Religious Education and Inclusion

8.1. At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning

opportunities which allow all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies.

8.2. We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate with activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

9. Assessment for Learning

9.1. Children demonstrate their ability in RE in a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess the pupils work in RE by making informal judgements as they are observed during lessons. On completion of a piece of work pupils will be given written or verbal feedback to help guide progress and deepen their thinking, in accordance with the schools marking policy. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future.

9.2. The teacher will record the attainment awarded at the end of a unit of work on their own planning and in the school reporting format provided by the subject leader. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9.2. We follow the assessment points outlined in the Creative Curriculum document, adopted by the school in September 2014. This sets out the expected age related attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 1, lower key stage 2 and upper key stage 2. At the end of the whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected age related attainment. This is recorded on the form provided by the subject leader. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

10. Resources

10.1. We have sufficient resources on our school to be able to teach all our RE units of work. Resources are kept in the main corridor when entering through the Key Stage 2 entrance. Resources are organised into the different major world religions covered in the units of work provided by the Local Agreed Syllabus. There is a set of Bibles for both key stages and the school library has a good supply of RE topic books. Teachers and pupils have access to a variety of ICT based resources through the internet and the schools subscription to the PurpleMash website to support the children's individual research.

10.2. The SACRE newsletter and information regarding visitors from a range of world faith and places of worship who encourage visitors is regularly updated in the staff room.

11. Monitoring and Review

11.1. The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about the current developments in RE and improving the strategic lead and direction of the subject.
- gives the Head Teacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and areas for development in RE and identifies the next steps for improvement and development.
- uses specifically allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to undertake monitoring of RE across the school in the form of lesson observation, book scrutinies and pupil interviews.

11.2. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Head Teacher: _____

Governor: _____

Subject Leader: _____

Date: _____