



Horsley C of E Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Mission Statement:

*Through activity, opportunity and challenge,
we open minds and fulfill potential*

With specific reference to this policy the Staff and Governors at Horsley C of E Primary School undertake a commitment to: acknowledge our Christian foundation and work closely with the Parish of St. Clement's.

Horsley is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School. The school has adopted the Locally Agreed Syllabus and supplements this with materials from the Diocese and elsewhere. It must be noted that RE and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another but are managed separately.

Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables the children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Horsley C of E Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and existence of a divine spirit. As a Church school we enable children to develop sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

Religious Education in our school helps children:

- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to fundamental questions of life;
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;

- Develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- Have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society;
- To explore and experience the Church's year;
- Welcome visitors from the local parish and beyond who share their experience of Christian belief and life.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as PHSE and our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious Education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

The Legal Position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and the School and Standards Framework Act 1998. The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school Governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on Derbyshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. 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 account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and Learning Style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principal 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 in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their

experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children research religious and moral issues using computers and by working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in Collective Worship.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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 which include:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks)
- Grouping the children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group
- Grouping the children in mixed ability groups to support the learning for all
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child
- Using classroom assistant to support the work of individuals or groups of children

Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Derbyshire LA's Agreed Syllabus combined with the Understanding Christianity Resource and guidance from the Derby Diocesan Board of Education. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially in Key Stage 1. Some medium-term (termly) topics have a particular historical focus. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of religious themes and topics.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader has oversight of these plans on a regular basis. As we have mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a three-year rotational cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists specific learning objectives for that lesson. The teacher keeps these individual plans and discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

We seek to enrich the curriculum by having themed experiences across the school. These include our “Exploring the Christian Faith Days” and our multi-faith weeks.

Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the Foundation Stage.

In the Foundation Stage, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the religious education aspects of the children’s work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Contribution of Religious Education to the Teaching of other Subjects

English

Religious education 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 that we use in Literacy have religious or spiritual themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and CD ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the 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, health, relationships and sex education. 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 other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning 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 build a sense of identity and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. We also promote appreciation of the arts and literature through the sharing of the joy of reading in themed book days and our regularly awarded poetry recital certificate.

Teaching Religious Education to Children with Special Needs

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Assessing and Recording

We assess the children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to levels of attainment. A copy of this assessment is given to the RE coordinator. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The RE subject leader keeps examples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each faith. There is a set of Bibles and collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education.

Monitoring and Review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject leader alongside governors and our link advisor have been active in the monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicate areas for further improvement.

Parental Right of Withdrawal

The RE provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England. This foundation is reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England, removal of pupils from RE (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.

Signed

(Chair of Governors)

Date