



HOLY TRINITY C E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

Vision

We aspire to be a happy, confident and caring community where children are motivated to achieve their full potential in a supportive learning environment, underpinned by a strong Christian ethos.

1 John 4: 16: 'God is love and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them'.

POLICY	RE Policy
SOURCE	HTS
REVIEWED BY	Reviewed and approved by Teaching, Learning & Ethos Committee Nov 2018
APPROVED	November 2024
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Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Rationale

We support pupils in developing a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice as well as a good understanding of a range of religions and world views. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religion as well as about religion.

Aims

In Religious Education we aim for pupils to:

- Be engaged and challenged through the exploration of core concepts and questions
- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions within the context of Christian values;
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious faith;

- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- Develop an understanding and respect of religious traditions and cultural differences in modern Britain;
- Develop investigative and research skills to enable our pupils to make reasoned views and opinions about religious issues;
- Be respectful and tolerant of other peoples' views and celebrate the diversity in our society.

The school's Christian values

The school's Christian values within RE are integral to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values and vision. There is a strong connection between our values and learning in RE which ultimately creates a deeper understanding of what is important in our school community and how they can be put into practice in our pupil's own lives.

Contribution of Religious Education to the teaching of Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

Through teaching Religious Education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development and times for reflection. 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 multicultural and diverse 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 and those of others.

Respect for All & Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination & extremism.

The school community – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

The community within which the school is located – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches.

The UK community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

The promotion of 'British Values'- RE provides opportunities to promote the 'British Values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty & mutual respect.

Time Allocation

Religious Education should be taught for at least 5% of the timetable in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The year is broken into topics which encompasses the Anglican faith, other World Religions as well as some more generalised religious topics. Christianity should be the major religion studied in each year and account for at least 50% of the curriculum time. Religious Education should not be 'blocked' but taught on a weekly basis. Worship time does not count towards Religious Education curriculum allocation.

Teaching and Learning

We base our teaching and learning in Religious Education on the key principle that good teaching in Religious Education allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them or others. 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 the Religious Education curriculum. We provide regular opportunities for children to discuss and ask questions based on religious, moral and global issues.

Our teaching and learning in Religious Education enables children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious faiths and their traditions. As a Church of England School, we enable our children to celebrate the rich variety of Christian Seasons and Festivals, usually at our local church. At the same time, whilst celebrating Easter, etc, we also explore festivals from other faiths: Passover, Eid, Diwali, etc. Our learning and teaching in Religious Education enables children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of different faith traditions. We also organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of religious groups to come into the 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 their beliefs, traditions, symbols and festivals.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and therefore 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, for example, by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- Setting tasks of increasing challenge (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- Providing resources that are age appropriate, interesting and relevant, which are adapted to the needs of the children;

- Using a variety of learning strategies;
- Accessing learning challenges through a variety of media including audio-visual, drama, music, dance and art.

Planning

At Holy Trinity we adhere to the framework of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus but also use the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus to provide a high quality sequential RE programme. We aim to ensure that the topics studied build upon prior learning and that children are able to learn from religion, as well as about religion. In Reception classes, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year as part of Understanding the World (UW) and Personal and Social Educational Development (PSED) within the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. We relate the Religious Education aspects of children in our Reception classes to the Early Learning Goals which all children are working towards achieving by the end of their Reception year. (See RE Long Term Plan for an overview of topics across the school).

Contribution of Religious Education to the teaching of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour and which complement our Christian values. This may include discussions of topics such as ‘The story of Creation’ and where you choose to buy your coffee etc from. We aim to promote tolerance and understanding of other people, which we believe enables children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

Assessment and Recording

We assess children’s work in Religious Education by making formative assessments as we observe them during lessons. Children assess themselves against the Learning Challenge and Success Criteria and this is monitored by the teacher and assessed by them too. Teachers mark a piece of work once it has been completed and comment in depth once every 3 weeks, as is in line with the school’s marking policy. Once a term, we make a summative assessment about the work of each pupil in relation to the expectations of the topic. We record the attainment on individual sheets which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child towards Age-Related Expectations. We aspire for all children’s progress in RE to be significant and attainment high, enabling all pupils to develop confident religious literacy.

Religious Education books have a uniform appearance in size, style and cover throughout the school but may be presented differently inside depending on the age of the children.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education. We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store where there is a separate box of equipment, artefacts and a collection of religious artefacts for different faiths.

Monitoring and review

The Religious Education subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. The Religious Education 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 Religious Education subject leader presents the Head teacher with an annual action plan that evaluates the priorities of the subject.

The Religious Education subject leader has a responsibility for carrying out a review of the children's work across the school, monitoring marking, assessment, interviewing children for feedback about RE and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

The right of Withdrawal from RE

Our school curriculum for Religious Education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and The Church of England Statement of Entitlement. The ERA stipulates that Religious Education is compulsory for all children, including those in the Reception class who are less than five years old. It is hoped that in a Church of England School it will not be necessary for any pupils to be withdrawn from RE. However we recognise that this may sometimes be necessary. At Holy Trinity school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school.

Managing the right of withdrawal

We will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it's relevance to all pupils and respect for their own personal beliefs.

- We will ensure parents are made aware the RE learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- We will review requests each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although we will ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, we will discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, we have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.