

West Haddon Endowed C of E Primary School

Policy Document

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

‘Where Happiness Promotes Success’

OUR SCHOOL VISION

To ensure every child leaves our school with an outstanding education and the values and character to live life in its fullness, contributing positively to society.

Jesus said: I have come in order that you might have life-and life in all its fullness. John 10:10

School Mission Statement

We are proud of the Christian love and care which we extend to all our children, staff, parents and the local community. Standards of teaching and learning reflect our high expectations of achievement. Christian values are at the core of our school family.

Our School Aims :-

1. To equip all children with attitudes, skills and knowledge to enable them to enjoy their childhood and serve as a foundation for further development;
2. To place Christian values at the heart of everything we do;

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Page 1 of 8		Next review due:	March 2024

3. To provide a happy environment that is caring, nurturing and supportive for everyone involved in our school;
4. To treat the children as individuals and encourage them to reach their potential;
5. To maintain and strengthen our links with the wider community.

Rationale

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of Religious Education at West Haddon Endowed C of E Primary School.

The Legal Situation of Religious Education (RE)

The Education Act (1996) requires:

- RE to be taught to all pupils in full time education in LA schools. This includes children in reception classes, post-16 students and those with special educational needs;
- RE to be taught according to the LA Agreed Syllabus, (except in voluntary aided schools);
- RE to play its full part along with other subjects and aspects of school life, and Collective Worship in 'providing for the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils';
- The Agreed Syllabus to reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in the UK.

To assist in meeting these legal requirements, we have adopted fully the 2018 – 2023 Syllabus for RE in Northamptonshire.

Aims of Religious Education

The overall aims of Religious Education are to enable children to become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve to their full potential;
- Literate in the major world religions and have high levels of Christian literacy;
- Spiritually and morally aware;
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives;
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

More specifically, Religious Education aims to enable children to:

- Enquire into, investigate and understand religions and beliefs. This includes thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied;
- Question, explore, reflect upon and interpret human experience in the light of religions and beliefs studied. This includes communicating reflections,

responses and evaluations about questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific religions studied.

These aims contribute to and complement our School Aims, re-affirming the importance of Christian values at the heart of everything we do.

Subject Intent:

Our Religious Education and Collective Worship curricula play a fundamental role in realising the key aspects of our school vision: to 'ensure that every child leaves our school with an outstanding education the values and character to live life in its fullness, contributing positively to society.' This recognises how essential both curricula are in developing 'character' as defined in the Church of England's thinking: The Fruit of the Spirit. In essence, both curricula are central in ensuring our school meets its intent to prepare children to flourish in the complex world around them, developing their spiritual, moral, intellectual and academic character.

The curricula intent is to meet the statutory requirements for Religious Education whilst ensuring provision meets the needs of our particular local situation. In meeting legal requirements, the intent is to:

- Teach RE all pupils from nursery to year 6;
- Fully adopt the LA Agreed Syllabus;
- Utilise other quality resources to add depth in understanding (e.g. Understanding Christianity);
- Integrate with other subjects and aspects of school life to provide for the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils;
- Reflect the religious tradition in Great Britain of Christianity;
- Reflect the religious practices represented in the UK.

There are a clear set of school intents that are in keeping with the statutory aims and develop important themes for our school in greater detail, helping to build up their cultural capital. These are to enable children to:

- Grow in confidence and self-awareness so that they can approach learning positively, enjoy the challenges they face when learning, make progress and achieve their full potential;
- Be literate in the major world religions and have high levels of Christian literacy (including being knowledgeable in the Anglican liturgical calendar);
- Develop knowledge of and attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- Through first-hand experience, develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, local communities and cultures;
- Be able to take a reasoned and informed view of religious and matters of faith;
- Be spiritually and morally aware;
- Be able to contemplate some of the profound questions in life (What is the purpose of life? How should we treat each other?);
- Be responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society;

- Understand and know how to use the Christian values to guide their everyday choices and positive interactions with others.

It is intended that Religious Education lessons provide opportunities to learn about a religion and to explore, reflect, interpret and question.

It is the clear intent that Religious Education plays a leading role in establishing Christian values at the heart of everything the school does.

It is intended that learning in Religious Education is embedded in the long-term memory for later application and transfer to novel situations. To do this, 10 common characteristics of good quality teaching and learning are applied.

The intention is that the majority of children will move through the Religious Education curriculum at broadly the same pace, making at least expected progress throughout all Key Stages from their individual starting points. Children who are not sufficiently fluent, either through a lack of experience or a recognised need, will have adaptations to the curriculum to meet their needs. We also expect that overall standards in RE will broadly match that of the core subject of reading.

Implementation

Curriculum Structure

Our Religious Education curriculum is structured around the programmes of study detailed in the Agreed Syllabus. Christianity is studied in all Key Stages. In Key Stage 1 children also study Judaism and Hinduism. In Key Stage 2 children build on their learning on Judaism and Hinduism, and the further study Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and the philosophical and ethical stance of Humanism. A curriculum map details the sequence of teaching across the year groups.

Depth of religious literacy in Christianity is supported by the use of the Understanding Christianity resources. Certain units have been selected that assist in the delivery of the Christian element of the SACRE scheme: these are detailed in the curriculum map.

Where-ever practicable, representatives of the main religious practices meet and work with our children, providing first-hand experiences of other faiths and depth to their learning and understanding.

Our schemes of work are developed from the Agreed Syllabus and guidance from the Diocese. From these, teachers plan and deliver a minimum of an hour per week of direct Religious Education teaching in KS1, and a minimum of one hour and fifteen minutes of direct teaching in KS2. During each Key Stage, at least 50% of this time is given to units with a strong Christian emphasis. Further time is given over to visits and/ or visitors. Acts of Worship are not included in these timings. Where possible, links to other subjects are made to make learning as relevant as is possible and linked to wider issues faced by the world today.

Teaching and Learning – Religious Education

Religious Education has a unique role in promoting our school aims and thereby promoting the development of the whole child: developing their spiritual, moral, intellectual and academic character.

Lessons, across all religions, consider two key attainment targets:

- AT1: Learning about religion and belief; and
- AT2: Learning from religion and belief.

Throughout, there is a focus on exploration, reflection, interpretation and questioning.

Additional time throughout the year is given to a programme of religious and cultural enrichment activities, to give children a 'first-hand' understanding of aspects of their learning, for example through visitors to the school or visits to places of worship.

Asking and exploring the difficult or big questions in life is a key thread running through a lesson. Lessons frequently start with a big question for the children to consider and explore. In support of this questioning and enquiring approach, visitors from the principal religions represented in the United Kingdom visit classes as a part of the RE units. During these visits, children not only learn first-hand about the religion and the influence on people's everyday lives, they are encouraged to ask questions and explore deeper concepts and ideas about beliefs.

A key focus of Christian teaching are the 8 key concepts of God's Story: God, Creation, The Fall, Incarnation, Salvation and The Kingdom of God. Lessons on Christianity regularly make reference to these key concepts. In keeping with the aim to develop deep religious literacy, learning focuses on the **text** sources of religious belief (e.g. the Bible, hymns etc.), the **impact** on Christians (how aspects of a Christian's life is informed by guidance in texts) and **connections** with their own views, putting parts together to see a bigger picture and similarities between religions.

The ten characteristics of good quality teaching and learning are applied throughout Religious Education lessons through approaches such as:

- Regularly review previous learning through starters that connect the new to the existing.
- Regularly provide next-step marking that invites children to recall earlier learning and makes links between different religions.
- Revisit and link core RE learning (such as the 8 core concepts in God's Story) where opportunities arise.
- Deliver new content in small steps that build up a bigger picture of a religion or religious practice.
- Provide time to talk about a religion and religious practices with the teacher asking questions to check understanding and challenge perceptions.
- Provide real life models of a religion and religious practice through the use of visitors to talk about their experiences, practices and beliefs.
- Provide feedback in marking and verbally in lessons, allowing meaningful time to think and respond.

- Provide a range of artefacts and literary sources that children can access during their learning.
- Planning inspiring learning opportunities that engage children and get them questioning and probing their current understanding.
- Plan independent learning where knowledge is rephrased, summarised, applied (e.g. writing a letter on behalf of a charity).
- Differentiate learning for all learners.
- Promote talk and explanation through the regular use of Big Questions that explore deeper questions of life and belief.
- Consider matters of morality.
- Learn about the diverse views and beliefs represented in the local and wider society.
- Explore their own beliefs and values and be challenged to put these positive values into action.

Teaching and Learning –Religious Education & Collective Worship crossover

The teaching of Christian Values follows key strands to ensure that they are ‘lived’ and becomes a part of the fabric of the children’s experience, thereby fulfilling the school’s Vision. There strands are:

- The meaning behind each value;
- How the value is presented in the Bible and the part it plays in God’s Story;
- The role the value plays in developing spirituality;
- The ‘Big Questions’ that arise from studying the values;
- How children might be Courageous Advocates and make a positive difference to the communities around them.

Teaching of a value is carried out in RE lessons and further exploration, reflection, interpretation and questioning takes place during acts of Collective Worship (following detailed plans written by the Collective Worship lead).

At the end of each month, each class presents their learning to the school community during an act of Community Worship at the village church. This is led by year 6 children.

Subject Knowledge

We set high expectations for every lesson taught at our school, and therefore take staff development very seriously. The Church of England’s resource *Understanding Christianity* is a key document that teachers draw on in their teaching of Christianity. It’s clear and detailed notes give information about the aspect of Christianity covered to a depth beyond that in the SACRE scheme. Therefore, teachers religious literacy and subject knowledge is considerably enhanced by using this resource. The SACRE resource includes detailed progression documentation that supports teachers’ attaining a good subject knowledge in the religions studied. INSET in Religious Education is regular feature of staff training, ensuring teachers are up-to-date with the school’s priorities for the subject. INSET on the Christian Values is led by the local vicar. Where necessary, high levels of staff subject knowledge are attained by additional support, such as joint planning, with the RE Subject Leader.

Assessment

End-of-term summative assessments are made of every child in both AT1 and AT2, backed up by examples knowledge of children's work and level judgements across the ability ranges. To give a sense of our attainment against the national picture, attainment in RE is compared against the school's reading results. Progress and attainment is reported to parents annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluating in Religious Education is led by the RE Subject Leader, and in recognition of the high importance placed on the subject there is a considerable input from the school's leadership. Whenever possible, external 'critical friends' are employed to provide an impartial view of the subject (including the linked DSS).

A range of monitoring activities are timetabled throughout the year to ensure the learning and teaching of Religious Education is clearly understood. Annually, lessons are observed through lesson observations and/ or learning walks; a book scrutiny takes place across the whole school; children's attitudes are gathered via pupil voice activities.

Termly assessment data is used to monitor and evaluate current attainment, children's progress towards their end-of-key stage target and to identify cohorts that are at risk of under-performing and to assist in identifying any remedial actions required.

Following monitoring and evaluation exercises, staff are given development points to improve their practice further. Where necessary, this may include additional support such as joint planning with the RE Subject Leader.

Staff Development

We set high expectations for every lesson taught at our school, and therefore take staff development very seriously.

Following monitoring exercises, staff are given development points to improve their practice further. Where necessary, this may include additional support such as joint planning with the RE Subject Leader.

Any concerns of underperformance will be referred to the Head Teacher and addressed through the appropriate performance procedures.

Staff meetings and regular Training Day sessions are used to address whole-staff development needs, such as assessment practices.

Clergy from the West Haddon Church regularly assist in staff meetings to develop pedagogical knowledge and understanding.

Risk Assessment

R.E. at West Haddon follows the Risk Assessment policy which is in place at the school and a full risk assessment will be carried out before any R.E. visits take place.

Resources

We recognise good R.E. needs to be properly resourced. Key resources include: every child having access to a Bible in their classroom; Artefacts supporting Judaism, Islam and other world religions stored in the staff room and storage areas; Visitors who visit the school and receive children at religious venues; The Church of All Saints, West Haddon, West Haddon Baptist Church and other places of worship.