

ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



RE POLICY INTENT

INTRODUCTION

Religious Education (RE) is part of all pupils' entitlement under the Education Act 1996 to receive a broad and balanced curriculum which, "Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and of society and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities of life".

PURPOSE OF STUDY

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School we believe that children, whatever their background ability or religious persuasion will find themselves able to benefit from the experiences of Religious Education. RE must be relevant to the needs of our pupils as members of a multicultural society. This means providing opportunities for pupils to understand the motivation of themselves and others. We believe that RE encourages a reflective approach to living; a knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices and a development of personal skills in forming reasoned opinions based on evidence and argument.

RE makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils. We believe RE forms a distinctive element in the curriculum whilst helping to foster the total development of the pupil. It provides pupils with an awareness of the basis on which much of our culture has developed. RE is a preparation for life. The ethos of the school has a profound effect on the pupils and influences each aspect of the educational process. We hope to provide an atmosphere where religion and a spiritual life is a genuine and important dimension of human life and so foster the achievement of the more specific aim of promoting a tolerant understanding of the religious beliefs of others and to provide opportunities to reflect upon and grow in understanding of their own faith.

We have close links with the parish church of St Mary the Virgin. St Mary's Church of England Primary School holds Easter, Harvest, Christmas and other services in the parish church, in addition to our team minister taking a school assembly approximately weekly.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of RE are:

- To be aware of and respond to life experiences and the questions they raise;
- To know and understand religious beliefs and practices;
- To evaluate the significance of religious concepts, beliefs and practices by being able to express personal opinions based on the use of appropriate evidence and argument.

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School we aim to encourage children to develop a reflective and caring approach to life through developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the life of Jesus. In our worship together as a Christian community and through our "Character Matters" themes, we strive to stimulate a recognition and enthusiasm for the spiritual dimension in our lives.

We aim to:

- Provide an education based on the principles of the Established Church;
- Promote spiritual, moral, cultural, and mental development;
- Provide knowledge with which understanding and awareness can be fostered;
- Reflect on the impact of religion on the way people live;
- Learn about the major religions as specified in the Bolton Agreed syllabus;
- Produce children who have an understanding, care and concern for people of all faiths;
- Encourage children to respect Christianity and other principle religions in this country and show respect to those holding different beliefs.

IMPLEMENTATION

LEARNING ACROSS THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Bolton Agreed Syllabus can promote learning across the curriculum in a number of areas, such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key skills and thinking skills. The teaching of RE can contribute effectively to these areas of learning.

SCHEME OF WORK

The scheme of work adopted makes reference to the knowledge, skills and understanding in the Bolton Agreed Syllabus. This helps teachers to plan lessons focusing on RE skills as well as subject knowledge. Teaching the skills is important and teachers can assess children's learning against these statements.

DELIVERING THE RE CURRICULUM

RE has two distinct dimensions, the implicit and the explicit, which are both of equal importance. Implicit RE is concerned with such areas as personal feelings and experiences, relationships, questions and responses to life and the natural world and in understanding how religion contributes to these. Explicit RE deals with the aspects of specific religions for example writings, festivals, buildings, beliefs, and symbols. These can be seen simply as Learning About Religion (AT1) and Learning From Religion (AT2).

It is essential that both these dimensions are identified and incorporated into schemes of work to ensure a balanced RE programme. At St Mary's Church of England Primary School we follow the Bolton Agreed Syllabus 2015. Whilst Christianity forms the main component in our programme of study, the Bolton Agreed Syllabus also requires the study of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism in both Key Stage 1 and 2. In the Foundation Stage, the exploration of religion is conducted through careful planning in the areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World.

The Bolton Agreed Syllabus for RE outlines a scheme of work which ensures progression and continuity through the Foundation and Key Stages

TEACHING APPROACHES

A variety of teaching approaches are presented to children throughout their History lessons. These include:

- Teacher guided sessions, where information is provided;
- Mixed ability group work, where the children discuss problems in small groups;
- Class discussion lessons, where pupils are encouraged to join in with their personal opinions;
- The use of differentiated tasks, allowing children of different ability levels to work at their appropriate pace;
- The use of role-play;
- The use of audio visual aids in presenting material to the children;
- The integrated use of ICT within RE lessons;
- The use of outside speakers with relevant experience.

CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

The organisation of the classroom will vary according to the activity that is being carried out. The formal classroom layout will alter when mixed ability group work activities are taking place. The use of audio visual aids necessitates the movement of chairs nearer to the viewing screen.

Role-play scenarios will require a re-ordering of the room to provide wider areas nearer the front of the class.

Although children in the teaching groups are in broad bands, they, nevertheless, display a wide range of abilities with regard to this area of the curriculum. No attempt is made to group them according to ability within the classroom and the mix that exists encourages the

children with SEN to gain in confidence through sitting next to, or near to, fellow pupils with a deeper understanding of the subject.

SUPPORT STAFF

Non-teaching assistants, who support individual children within the class, play an important role in the delivery of the subject. Weekly planning meetings are held in advance of the proposed teaching programme so that preparation and review can take place.

RESOURCES

Most RE resources are stored in topic boxes. Equipment suitable for Early Years is stored in the Foundation Stage classrooms.

INCLUSION AND THE RE CURRICULUM

In order to provide work that is appropriate to the learning experiences of individual children, it is necessary for the teacher to be aware of the statements/individual learning programmes that apply to children in the class that he/she is teaching.

Planning and teaching the RE curriculum should

- Set suitable learning challenges;
- Respond to the diverse learning needs of pupils;
- Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

These principles are considered when selecting units to be taught throughout the Foundation Stage curriculum and Key Stages One and Two.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development in this area of the curriculum is available through the LA course programme and through meetings with colleagues from other educational establishments. Teachers who have attended RE courses report back to colleagues at the following staff meeting.

School INSET provides opportunities to compare developments in this area of the curriculum with other subject disciplines.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Children, irrespective of ability, race or gender, are given full access to the RE schemes of work. The use of differentiation by outcome allows children to respond to the work presented to them at the appropriate level. As members of a multicultural, multi-religious society, children need to be given opportunity to understand the beliefs and motivations of themselves and others.

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

RE at St Mary's Church of England School aims to be inclusive but we respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from religious education. We also respect the right of teachers to withdraw from teaching RE, although recruitment procedures will ensure appointed staff are sympathetic with the aims of a church school.

IMPACT

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The subject approach to Assessment, Recording and Reporting follows the whole school policy guidelines.

Our RE curriculum and assessment framework sets out steps so that pupils reach the end of key stage expectations in the new national curriculum. Teachers use a range of formative assessment opportunities to enable them to make a judgement about each child at the end of a unit of work. This information is put into the tracker to show whether a pupil is Emerging (E), Developing (D) or Secure (S). A secure judgement on the School Pupil Tracker Online must only be used once all objectives for a year group are evidenced.

All pupils' work is regularly marked. Reports to parents are completed during the academic year, when indications are made as to the individual's progress in this area of the curriculum. Reporting of RE at the Foundation Stage appears within the Knowledge and Understanding of the World Early Learning Goal.

EVALUATION-REVIEW-MODIFICATION

This policy document will be regularly reviewed to assess its value as a working document.

Those areas which have not worked particularly well, i.e. sections of the schemes of work, will be modified according to the experiences that have taken place.