



Religious Education Policy

Purpose of Study- Why do we teach Religious Education?

During the foundation stage, children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

Throughout key stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Throughout key stage 2, pupils learn about Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

Aims

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. The aim of Religious Education in our school is to help children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain; to appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and behaviour, develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues and enhance the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values, and philosophy of the school and it plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas, particularly PSHCE, in promoting social awareness and understanding in our children.

It is our role to ensure pupils are being inquisitive by asking questions about the world around them by allowing pupils to gain high quality experiences. Our curriculum has been designed to encourage creativity, imagination, enquiry, debate, discussion, and independence.

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

- To develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- To develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems adhered to in the UK;
- 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 cultural 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.

The Legal position of Religious Education

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver religious education to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents. Schools must ensure that sufficient time is given in order to enable pupils to meet the expectations set out in Swindon agreed syllabus, ensuring that the curriculum is coherent and shows progression, particularly across transitions between key stages.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of 5 per cent of curriculum time for RE and this will be monitored by the RE subject leader.

At Badbury Park Primary School we understand that the teaching of RE is a necessary part of offering a 'broad and balanced curriculum'.

The approach to the teaching of RE at Badbury Park Primary School and Nursery

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

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, 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 to take part in collective worship with the children.

Each Year Group should arrange at least one RE visit or Visitor to visit the school each academic year. They should also arrange one celebration/theme day based on their curriculum. This is monitored by the RE Subject Leader.

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 investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all 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 (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

Through RE in our school, 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 doing so, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching in RE is generally intended to be suitable for a mixed ability, whole class approach. However, when appropriate, ability groups will be set so that particular skills can be developed and all children are working on suitably differentiated tasks.

At Badbury Park Primary School and Nursery we endeavor to ensure an equal interest in the subject for both boys and girls. The cultural diversity of our children will be recognised and respected. All children are encouraged to take part in and are taught all areas of the RE curriculum.

SEN and G&T

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 that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have Special Educational Needs (SEN). Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education.

Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to the local church, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

School Curriculum

We plan the RE curriculum in accordance with the Swindon Agreed Syllabus. At Badbury Park Primary School, it has been agreed that having taken into account the requirements and guidelines presented in the Agreed Syllabus, the following religions have been selected for study:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism
- Hinduism

Planning

The Foundation Stage

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception classes.

In reception classes, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year with a specific focus on 'special places, people and books. The children are taught about various religious festivals throughout the year from multiple faiths. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, we relate the RE 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.

Key Stage One and Two

We plan the RE curriculum in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge 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.

We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the RE topics studied in each term during each key stage.

Our medium-term plans take the form of termly topic webs which summarise the key learning objectives and outcomes of each unit of work for each term.

Class teachers complete a more detailed daily plan for each RE lesson. Teachers may use the schools' non-core subject weekly planning template.

Contribution of RE to other subject areas

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 that we use in English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. Children are often encouraged to make books and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Computing

We use ICT where appropriate in RE. The children will be offered opportunities to find, select and analyse information, using the Internet and on some occasions use ICT to present their findings such as producing Power Point presentations, written texts and making posters etc. Teachers use interactive whiteboards for whole class or group teaching.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Through RE 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 and health 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 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 society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and by doing so they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Badbury Park Primary School has been involved in charity projects that offer the children the opportunity to learn about and support others in need. E.g. Harvest Festivals (giving food to the Swindon Food Collective, Food Bank), and giving to charities (Comic Relief, Children in Need, amongst others).

Assessment and Recording

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Children's RE work can be found in their 'Wonderful Work' books or whole class floor books. Floor books contain verbal responses made by children as well as photographs of practical work/ visits and examples of work completed in books.

Formative Assessment

Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. 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.

Summative Assessment

Throughout each academic year, each teacher records the levels of achievement each child has made towards attainment targets on a whole class assessment grid. This assessment grid is then given to the subject leader at the end of the year and passed onto the next class teacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Class teachers are responsible of assessing and monitoring pupil's progress in this subject area. The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the pupil's work and the quality of the teaching in RE through annual work scrutinies, pupil interviews and lesson observations.

The coordination of the RE curriculum is the responsibility of the RE co-ordinator who will:

- Audit, order and review resources
- Attend RE courses to further own professional development and provide information and support for colleagues
- Monitor RE lesson practice and planning to ensure high quality delivery and setting future targets
- Extend relationships and contacts beyond the school with local communities e.g. members of local churches and school workers.
- Regularly monitor examples of RE work to identify if progression and good standards of work are evident.
- Organise whole school celebrations, festivals and events.

The Role of the Governors

- To visit the school regularly to talk with the teachers and when possible, observe some RE lessons;
- To report back to the curriculum committee on a regular basis;
- To attend any relevant inset or training;

Resourcing

We are building up sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We have some artefacts that introduce children to a variety of religions. The school has a set of Bibles for both Key Stages and the school library has a good supply of RE topic books to support the children's individual research.

Reporting to Parents

The level of effort shown by pupils will be recorded in the end of year school report. Any significant achievements will also be recorded on the end of year report.

Withdrawal from RE lessons/trips

Parents have the legal right to withdraw pupils from RE but this must be discussed with the class teacher, RE Coordinator and Head teacher. A class teacher cannot make the decision to allow a child/parent to withdraw from RE lessons. If the parent chooses to go ahead and withdraw their child from RE this must be given to the school in writing by the parent. Staff should refer to the Swindon New Agreed Syllabus for information about speaking to parents and withdrawing pupils from RE and the issues surrounding this, including the negative implications, must be highlighted to the parent (for example, missing lessons that may link to other subject areas, for example, Literacy lessons, which may have an impact on the pupil's progress and learning), as well as issues of discrimination. The withdrawal of a child from RE lessons should be the last resort as RE is an important part of learning and understanding about the world and community.