RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

A Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Religious education is a legal requirement for every pupil and forms part of the basic curriculum as set down in the 1998 Education Art. Its place in the curriculum is an acknowledgement of the fact that religious beliefs and practices play an important part in the lives of many people worldwide, and have done so throughout history. Christianity will form the majority study in all church schools An understanding of religion can help children develop a better appreciation of themselves, the people around them and then world in which they live.

This is a county Primary Aided school. The education acts require that the religious education should be provided according to the syllabus laid down by the school governors in line with the trust deeds of the school. This document is available in school.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and documents including:

- West Sussex Agreed Syllabus
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Maps

SCHOOL AIMS

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school follows the aims and objectives set out in the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus which is supported by 'RE Guidelines for Church of England Aided Schools' published by the Diocese of Chichester.

Aims

To teach religious education so that children may:-

- receive a coherent, progressive and challenging approach to teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world.
- acquire a knowledge of understanding of the origins, content and development of the Christian religion and other religions, their traditions and beliefs;

- understand the importance of religious experience and recognise the ways by which these experiences have been interpreted and expressed through a variety of religious traditions;
- appreciate the contribution that religious and spiritual ideas and concepts can make to their personal search for meaning and purpose in life, enabling them to develop their own spiritual values;
- look beyond self and recognise the contribution of religion in the establishment of relationships and responsibilities in the family, among friends, in schools, the community and the world at large;
- explore the consequences of religious belief and experience in the development of personal attitudes.
- encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage
- develop their own spirituality / philosophical convictions and enrich their own faith and beliefs.
- develop children's understanding to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning.

Objectives

Key Stage 1

To enable pupils:

(a) to become increasingly aware of the significance of religious ideas and experiences by means of stories, drama, ritual and worship with emphasis on the Christian tradition;

(b) to use and experience the creative arts in the exploration and communication of religious thoughts and feelings;

(c) to develop religious insight and moral and spiritual values by encouraging sensitivity towards other people and a capacity to form relationships based upon love, sympathy, forgiveness and consideration;

(d) to begin to enhance and clarify their own ideas about religion by developing self-expression, confidence and an enquiring and reflective attitude towards the rich variety and complexity of creation.

Key Stage 2

To enable pupils:

(e) to acquire a more coherent knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus;

(f) to understand the structure of the Bible and obtain a basic knowledge of its key personalities and stories;

(g) to explore the nature of Christian worship and the use of signs and symbols in expressing religious feelings and beliefs;

(h) to become familiar with different ways of communicating and interpreting

religious experience;

(i) to become aware of the importance of the spiritual dimension in their own experience and in the experiences of other individuals and communities;

(j) to acquire a basic understanding of the place of religion in the world and its relevance to personal, social and moral issues.

CURRICULUM

It is clearly stated in the Agreed Syllabus that R.E. in schools is concerned with educating children about religion and for them to learn from religion. It is not concerned with inducting them in a particular faith; this is the responsibility of the family or the faith community. Pupils will learn about Christianity, as the main religious tradition in this country, but also about the teaching and practices of some of the other principal world religions represented in this country. In Key Stage One, children will learn about Judaism, in Years Three and Four the focus will change to Hinduism and in Years Five and Six, Islam.

Curriculum Organisation

Religious Education is taught through a combination of classroom work and work linked to assemblies. This work is co-ordinated to ensure the highest quality of learning experiences for the pupils and to cover the requirements of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus and the guidelines provided by the Diocese of Chichester.

The curriculum is planned to deliver R.E. through a combination of methods;

(i) Religious education is taught mainly through weekly lessons, however opportunities arise in all areas of the curriculum. The R.E. units of work are linked with cross-curricular school topics whenever possible;

(ii) The opportunity is taken to deliver identified areas of R.E. through assemblies and collective worship. The work is carefully planned and followed up in class when appropriate;

(iii) Separately identified R.E. is found at different times of the year covering significant festivals throughout the Liturgical Year, including Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Advent and Christmas.

Further details can be found in teachers' plans, curriculum maps and schemes of work.

Curriculum Time

The School gives between 5% and 10% of curriculum time to religious education in line with the recommendations of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus. It is anticipated that the actual amount of time given each week will vary.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Teachers use a variety of means of assessing pupils' work in line with the whole school assessment policy and the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This will include:

- the regular reviewing of pupils' work;
- observing the work of groups and individuals and recording the outcomes;
- marking which is developmental and relevant to the subject matter and involves pupils.
- targets that are set with the children
- RE is seen as a core subject
- a consistency in the quality of planning, teaching and assessing
- a strategic cycle of analysing and evaluating teaching and learning of RE

Pupils' achievement in religious education is reported in the annual report to parents and should be in line with other core subjects.

Equal Opportunities

The school equal opportunities policy is used throughout the curriculum and must be adhered to at all times. In addition it is important in religious education to ensure the work being covered is appropriate to pupils who come from any religious background or none.

Foundation Stage

All registered pupils in schools must be taught religious education. For the purposes of religious education, pupils are considered to be registered when they join the reception class. From the time the pupil enters the reception class, religious education complies with the syllabus agreed by the governors.

Promoting Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious education provides opportunities for;

Spiritual development, through helping pupils to consider and respond to questions of meaning and purpose in life, and questions about the nature and values in human society;

Moral development, through helping pupils to consider and respond to areas of morality using their knowledge and understanding, or religious and ethical teachings. This enables them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;

Social development, through helping pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;

Cultural development, through fostering pupils' awareness and understanding of a range of beliefs, practices and values in their own society, and in the wider world. Pupils explore within and between faiths, developing their understanding of the cultural contexts within which they live.

MANAGEMENT

Co-ordination

The day to day support for religious education is provided by the co-ordinator who is responsible to the Headteacher for:

- devising and maintaining the scheme of work;
- supporting teachers in their medium and short term planning;
- developing and maintaining the R.E. handbook;
- attending relevant in-service courses to keep up to date on religious education and reporting to staff;
- managing the resources for religious education;
- producing a development plan setting out the priorities for religious education;
- co-ordinating the links with the local church;
- conducting an annual review of R.E.
- monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning of R.E.

Role of Governors

The governors of voluntary aided schools have a special responsibility for religious education and developing the Christian ethos of the school. They oversee the formation, delivery, monitoring and assessment of the agreed religious education syllabus and provide an important link to the community. The ethos committee meet on a regular basis and have input into the SIAMS self-evaluation book.

Withdrawal

When parents request that their child be withdrawn from religious education, they are interviewed by the headteacher to clarify the beliefs and practices from which they wish their child to be excluded. Because of the need to assure their safety, pupils, when withdrawn, work in the main school library and complete material brought from home.

RESOURCES

Reference books are available for staff use and are kept in RE cupboards in the school hall and staff room. Detailed lists of the resources are available and can be found in the co-ordinator's file. The co-ordinator will arrange if requested the borrowing of materials from the county loan collection.

Books, artefacts and other resources for classroom use are available from the R.E. resource cupboard in the Prep room or hall. (Including worship support material – Christian Values and Godly Play) A good range of R.E. books can be found in the library. All children are given a Bible

Further resources can be borrowed from the Schools Library Service or through the County R.E. loan collection (see catalogue in the staffroom cupboard) or The Diocesan Education Schools Team on request.

COMMUNITY

The school has excellent links with St Mary's Church and Incumbent supports the school. The church is used for special occasions and to support many areas of the curriculum.

A range of special occasions are planned throughout the year to which parents and friends are invited, for example, the Christmas Production, the Harvest Festival and the Leavers' Service. Workshops at Harvest and Easter A Eucharist service takes place every half term in the school and everyone is welcome to attend.

Date: Spring 2017

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