

St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy



Religious Education Policy

June 2017



Our Christian Values

As a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary Academy, we have eight Christian Values, underpinned by love at the heart of everything we do.

Our Christian Values are:

Fair, Kind, Joy, Courage, Forgive, Hope, Peace and Trust
Love

Mission Statement for RE

St. Wilfrid's Religious Education will support children in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes through exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of Christianity and other religions in the contemporary world, with such emphasis upon Anglican beliefs and practices as appropriate to our school's situation.

Introduction

As a Voluntary Aided Academy the management of R.E. is a distinctive role of the governors and head teacher. R.E. has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided within its school. This policy reflects the school's agreed values and philosophy with regard to Religious Education. It illustrates how Religious Education is taught within school and gives guidance on planning and assessment. The policy has been produced after discussion with governors and members of staff and will be reviewed annually. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Schemes of Work in the Blackburn Diocesan Agreed Syllabus for R.E. which sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught on a half termly basis. The policy will be available to all staff, governors, parents, advisors and inspectors.

Entitlement

Entitlement R.E. in our church school lies at the very heart of the curriculum. The Governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus which reflects the National Framework for R.E, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. The R.E. Curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus requires a curriculum allocation of 5% of the available timetable and in view of this children will be taught in class groups for one hour a week at both Key Stage One and 1 hour 10 minutes at Key Stage Two. Christianity plays a central role in R.E, taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time available. Appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is included.

The time allocated to R.E. in school is independent of time allocated to Collective Worship. Although R.E and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich each other Collective Worship is a separate statutory requirement and is not covered by this policy.

Aims and objectives

At St Wilfrid's the Religious Education provided is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England, and it plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the school.

Within the context of our School, Religious Education will support children in developing their own beliefs values and attitudes through an exploration of shared human experience and the place and significance of Christianity and Other Religions in the contemporary world.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- think theologically and explore the great questions of life/death, meaning and purpose, developing a personal response to these
- reflect critically on their own experiences and develop a personal response to their Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post-modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world
- respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious; and develop their own personal faith and nurture their own spiritual development
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue about Christianity and other faiths and traditions; develop an understanding of religious traditions, the personal commitment involved and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

We base our teaching of R.E. on the key principle that good teaching in R.E. allows children to both learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our R.E. curriculum therefore maintains a balanced approach of Learning about Religion (Attainment Target 1) and Learning from Religion (Attainment Target 2).

This can be expressed distinctively as...

Learning about Religion

We learn about:

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

Learning from Religion

We learn from:

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it
- responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith
- developing a vision for life that transcends a dull materialism and recognises the reality of the spiritual realm.

RE and Church School Distinctiveness

The content of the R.E. curriculum contributes towards our church school distinctiveness through:

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year
- study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish church to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life
- liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur

- skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions
- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence
- a sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection.

R.E. and Other Faiths

It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths. Therefore R.E. in our Church School should also help pupils to:

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

Religious Education in our Church School should enable:

- children and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- children to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- children from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- children from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- children with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- children of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

Contribution of R.E. to children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Spiritual development within R.E. in our school enriches and encourages the children's discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer children a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches children's understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

Contribution of R.E. to the Teaching of Other Subjects

Although R.E. is taught as an implicit subject within our school, it does provide many opportunities for links with other curriculum areas, particularly English, PSHE, History, Geography and the creative arts. In addition, there are strong links between R.E. and cross curricular themes and dimensions, including multi-cultural education, equal opportunities, citizenship and health education. As stated previously, it also has strong links with collective worship. Religious Education 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 our English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability. We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use ICT to

review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation. Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin choices and behaviour. 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.

School Organisation

The school has a nursery class which, together with the reception class, forms the Foundation Stage. Years 1 and 2, form Key Stage One and Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 form Key Stage Two. Across all three key stages Religious Education is taught in classes.

Assessment/Planning/Record Keeping and Reporting

The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education document, Religious Education Syllabus for Church Schools, provides the Programmes of Study from which teachers plan their teaching and the objectives against which the children's progress can be assessed. There are also separate folders covering all aspects of the Religious Education curriculum which provide more ideas and go into greater depth. We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases (long term, medium-term and short-term). The long term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson, ensuring a balance between AT1 and AT2 (learning about and learning from religion). The class teacher uses the syllabus units and/or scale to set relevant, creative, effective and challenging tasks using a wide range of teaching strategies. Weekly planning includes references to the expected level of achievement. S/he keeps these individual plans and discusses them during planning/book moderations with the R.E. subject leader and senior leaders. Informal assessment is undertaken on a lesson by lesson basis through observation of children at work, discussion and questioning so that any misunderstandings or problems can be identified in the lesson. This assessment is reinforced by the marking of children's work. Each child in Key Stages 1 and 2 will have their own R.E. book and each class through school must have an R.E. 'floor book'. The floor book will contain evidence of children's discussions, comments and ideas, visits and visitors, photographs, group work, post-it-notes and printed work from the interactive whiteboard. 'I can' statements can be used by teachers to annotate work in the class R.E. scrapbook.

Note: From September 2017 the school will be using the new syllabus from Blackburn Diocese (where AT1 and AT2 will not exist) and new assessment procedures will be put in place.

Resources

We are building up sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store. There are bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a supply of Religious Education topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.

SEND Provision

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Our assessments in R.E. allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. 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 children to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning in Religious Education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a church, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all children involved.

Equal Opportunities

It is our aim to offer equal access to the curriculum to all children irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability and social circumstances, so that each child has the greatest opportunity to progress. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice in equal opportunities. Refer to Equal Opportunities Policy.

Parental Involvement

At St Wilfrid's, we believe education to be a joint venture between home and school and are aware that one of the most significant factors influencing children's attainment at school is parental involvement. We therefore encourage the support of parents. Parents' evenings are held twice a year during which parents and teachers discuss their child's progress in Religious Education along with other subjects. Further information is provided in a school report which is issued in the Summer Term. Parents can contact the school at any time if they have concerns regarding their child's progress in Religious Education. Parents are also invited to school church services and Celebration Worship

Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided Academy

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any school. The Worship and Religious Education provided by our school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school. If a request for a withdrawal is made, the head-teacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation.

Signed:

Headteacher: Mr. S. Colothan

Date: June 2017

