

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

Syresham St James Primary School seeks to create an environment that reflects our Christian ethos, providing safe, happy and challenging working conditions for all members of the school. This environment is exemplified by our school values to promote respect, generosity, courage, love, fairness and forgiveness.

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It is more than just developing knowledge it seeks to develop children's skills in investigation/enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis and evaluation.

Syresham St James school follows the Northamptonshire agreed Syllabus for RE. There are two central attainment targets:

AT1 Learning about religion.

AT2 Learning from religion.

In learning about religion children learn about the different beliefs and teachings, practices and ways of life and how religions express themselves in different ways.

In learning from religion children reflect on and consider important questions of identity and belonging (e.g. who inspires me?) questions of meaning (e.g. what do people believe about how life began?) and values and commitments (e.g. what is important to me?)

Syresham St James has strong links with the parish church with services and assemblies in which children play a part.

Key Attitudes in RE

As with skills RE has a number of key attitudes it seeks to promote. These include self-esteem (so that every child feels valued and significant), respect (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others), open-mindedness (being willing to learn and gain new understanding) and appreciation and wonder (developing children's imagination and curiosity).

Expectation in RE

RE is assessed using level descriptors (just like Maths/English).

By the end of Key Stage1 most children will be expected to achieve Year 2 secure. In RE this means: They can use religious words to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They show awareness of similarities in religions and can identify how religion is expressed in different ways. They ask and respond sensitively to questions about their own and others experiences and feelings. They recognise their own values and those of others and are aware that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer.

By the end of Key Stage 2 most children will be expected to achieve Year 6 secure. In RE this means: Children can describe both similarities and differences within and between religions. They make links between different aspects of religions and can describe the impact of religion on peoples' lives. They suggest answers to questions of identity and meaning. They apply their ideas to their own and others lives. They can also describe what inspires and influences themselves and others

Approaches to teaching and learning in RE

RE is an exciting curriculum subject so we employ a variety of teaching methods. These include:-

- Visiting local places of worship and receiving visitors from faith communities
- Using art, music, dance and drama
- Children experiencing times of quiet reflection to develop their own thoughts and ideas
- Using story, pictures and photographs
- Using artefacts to help children develop their understanding of religious beliefs and forms of expression
- Discussing religious and philosophical questions giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- Developing the use of ICT (particularly DVDs and the internet) in helping children's awareness of religions and beliefs.
- Children's own beliefs and suggestions for enquiry are taken into account especially as they reach the upper school

Organisation

All classes are taught by one RE teacher to ensure continuity and progression are maintained. RE is taught to each class following a 1 year cycle in foundation stage and 2 year cycle in the other year groups:

Reception	Ourselves (Where do we belong?)	Celebrations (What happens at a festival?)	Special Books	Special Times (What happens at a wedding or when a baby is born?)	Religions studied: Christianity Judaism plus Diwali /Chinese new Year
KS1 Cycle A	People in Christianity	The Family in Judaism Visit to Synagogue	Books and Stories in Christianity Christian Visitor	Questions about God	Religions Studied: Christianity Judaism
KS1 Cycle B	Places in Christianity Visit to Church & Chapel	The Torah	Books & Stories in Christianity	Family ties Hindu Visitor	
LKS2 Cycle A	Islam Keeping the 5 pillar Muslim Visitor	Values What matters to Christians & Humanists?	Easter New life or Sacrifice	Christianity in Action What difference can Christians make? Christian visitor	Religions Studied: Christianity Islam Judaism Humanism
LKS2 Cycle B	Prayer How & Why do Muslims & Jews pray? Visit to Mosque Jewish visitor	Christmas Festival of light or love?	Jesus Why is he inspirational for some people? Christian visitor	Light and Dark What do the symbols mean? Or PEACE	
UKS2 Cycle A	Hinduism What can we learn from Hinduism? Hindu Visitor	Words of Wisdom What can we learn from sacred texts?	Religions in our Community How can we be more respectful?	Milestones & meaning (yr5) What happens at a Bah Mitzvah? Visit to Synagogue	Religions Studied: Christianity Hinduism Sikhism Islam Judaism
UKS2 Cycle B	Stories of Faith What can we learn from religious stories? Christian Visitor	Sikhism What is important to a Sikh in Britain today?	Beliefs & Actions in the world	Living & Dying (yr6) What happens when we die?	

		Visit to Gurdwara	Can Christian aid & Islamic relief change the world?		
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Assessment and Recording

Assessment Progress charts are kept for each child showing children's progress against the level descriptors in the local agreed syllabus adjusted for targets by year group. Results and targets are recorded on i-track each term along with Maths and English. We recognise that some of the most important learning in RE (e.g. how RE contributes to spiritual development) cannot be formally assessed.

Rights of withdrawal

We firmly believe that RE is an important subject in children's learning. We fully recognise the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of RE on the grounds of conscience. We do encourage parents to contact the Head Teacher if they have any concerns about RE provision and practice at the school.

Learning resources

We encourage the use of a wide range of resources to enrich children's learning. These include children's and teacher's books, DVDs, the internet, music and artefacts. We try to ensure RE is a lively, stimulating subject which engages all children.

The contribution of RE to the wider curriculum

While RE has its own distinctive subject matter it does make an important contribution to other aspects of children's learning. The key ones are outlined below.

RE contributes to children's spiritual development by:-

- Discussing and reflecting on questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, good and evil, life after death, beliefs about God and humanity and values such as justice, honesty and truth.
- Learning about and reflecting on important concepts and experiences such as love, trust, forgiveness, obedience and sacrifice.
- Valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.
- Considering how religions and beliefs regard the value and purpose of human beings, the importance of the environment and the significance of emotions such as love, anger, joy, jealousy, happiness and pain.

RE contributes to children's moral development by:-

- Enabling children to value themselves and others.
- Exploring the influence of family, friends and other sources on moral choices.
- Considering what is of ultimate value both to children and within religious traditions.
- Developing an understanding in key beliefs and teachings in religion and values and moral choices.
- Considering ethical issues, especially justice, which promote racial and religious respect.
- Reflecting on the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

RE contributes to children's social development by:-

- Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns.
- Reflecting on the importance of friendship and positive relationships.

RE contributes to children's cultural development by:-

- Encountering people, stories, artefacts and resources from differing cultures.
- Promoting respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination.

- Challenging stereotypes of religion and beliefs.

RE and the use of language

RE can also make an important contribution to children's use of language by enabling them to:-

- Acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary
- Communicate their ideas with clarity.
- Listen and respond to the views and ideas of others.
- Be inspired by the power and beauty of language.
- Write in different styles such as poetry, diaries and extended writing.
- Highlight their own ideas and those of others.

RE and the use of ICT

RE can make an important contribution to children's use of ICT by:-

- Helping them make effective use of the internet to investigate and learn from different religions beliefs, teachings and ideas.
- Use multimedia and presentation software to communicate their own ideas and those within religions and beliefs

Equal Opportunities

We follow the guidance of the school policy on equal opportunities.

We follow guidance of the school inclusion policy.

Conclusion

In essence we are aiming to help our children develop respect and sensitivity for all people and to understand more about the importance of religion in today's world.

Future plans for RE include devising more challenging activities for our more able children in RE and developing more RE visits. We also want to increase the role of visitors from different faiths to enhance our children's learning.

Reviewed by the Curriculum Committee in November 2016

Approved by the Full Board of Governors on 18th January 2017

Next Review Due in November 2019