



Religious Education Policy

Latest Review: November 2017

Agreed by Governors:.....Chair of Governors

Agreed by Head teacher:.....Head teacher

The Nature and potential of Religious Education

As a Church of England School, we believe in the importance of developing good relationships throughout all aspects of school life. Religious Education has a crucial part to play in helping to recognise and appreciate the contribution religion in its varied aspects has made to how many people see the world. We believe it is important not only to learn about religion, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to learn from religion. We have expectations of the quality of RE taught in our school. RE is exciting and absolutely relevant to the lives of all of our pupils. We hope that our commitment and enthusiasm as governors and staff will be communicated by the high priority we place on RE.

The Legal position

RE is part of the basic curriculum and is therefore an entitlement for every child. The curriculum will reflect the fact that the religious traditions in this country are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented.

RE in a Voluntary Aided School

In a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, the Christian foundation of the school is explicitly expressed through the RE curriculum. The faith and practice of the Church of England is the bedrock on which the school is built, both physically and educationally. Therefore, the Christian faith will be acknowledged as "our" faith. This approach is appropriate even though some individuals and pupils (and parents or governors) are not in a position to make the Christian faith their own personal faith. This is not indoctrination. Indoctrination forces an individual to believe in one ideology without reference to other world views. In a Christian school, force or coercion has no place. In a church aided school we are saying that we see all of life from a Christian world view and Christianity is "our" faith.

Aims

"To enable pupils to understand the nature of religious beliefs and practices, and the importance and influence of these in the lives of believers, that their own personal spiritual development will be promoted."

Religious Education will:

- Develop pupil's knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity as the predominant religion in Great Britain.

- Encourage respect for those holding different beliefs.
- Help promote pupil's spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development.
- Provide knowledge and understanding for some other religions as suggested by the Glos. Agreed syllabus.

In order to help promote pupil's spiritual, moral, cultural and social development, at a level appropriate to their age and ability, pupils will benefit from the following areas through their R.E.

Spiritual Development

- To grow in awareness of themselves and to develop a positive attitude to their own emotions, life and learning.
- To gain knowledge of the central beliefs, ideas and practices of major religions.
- To acquire an understanding of the universe (myths, stories, religions).
- To acknowledge beliefs that are held personally, and to be aware of the relationship between belief and action.
- To be able to make a personal response about life (including love, pain and suffering)

Moral Development

- To learn that what they think, say and do matters to other people, realising a connection between their actions and consequences.
- To learn to co-operate with others and appreciate the diversity of people's interests, abilities and contributions. (Respect, tolerance, truthfulness, compassion etc.).
- To be able to make their own moral decisions with judgement.

Cultural Development

- To develop an interest in, and be able to reflect upon the world around them.
- To gain a knowledge and understanding of their own culture and practices.
- To recognise and take responsibility for their surroundings.

Social/Mental Development

- To make a strong personal contribution to the well-being of different social groups and to form effective relationships within them.
- To understand how individuals, relate to each other in society.
- To demonstrate sensitive behaviour when appropriate.

Entitlement

R.E. at Withington is included alongside the National Curriculum for all registered pupils. It is taught as a 'standalone' lesson, but integrates into every aspect of school life.

Withdrawal

Parents have a legal right of withdrawal from RE lessons, however, being a Church of England School, we hope that no Parent will exercise this right. Parents who wish to withdraw their children should make the request in writing to the Head Teacher.

Community

Strong links exist between the school and local Church. A display board in the Church is maintained by the school. The school takes part in 3 Sunday services each year and host their Communion service in Church at the end of each term, as well as holding one act of Collective Worship a week in Church. This is taken by an 'Open the Book' team. The vicar (and curate) are frequent visitors to the school.

Implementation Procedures

- The programmes of Study set out in the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus and 'Understanding Christianity' form the content of the School Curriculum for R.E. and the activities which children undertake are planned from these.
- This Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus is designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE. The teaching and learning approach consists of three core elements - 'making sense of beliefs', 'making connections' and 'understanding the impact'. These have been put into a long term plan.
- At Key Stage 2 alongside Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism are taught. At Key Stage 1 we teach Islam and Judaism alongside Christianity.
- In our nursery setting, even though R.E. is non-statutory, we choose to incorporate RE material into the children's activities.
- In reception, Y1 and upwards, R.E. is compulsory and is taught according to the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus.
- R.E. is taught through subject specific lessons, but also as arises in a cross-curricular content.
- The teaching time for R.E. is about 5% - the equivalent of one hour each week in KS1 and 7.5% or 1.5 hours a week in KS2
- Teachers will teach children in a variety of ways, including whole class and group teaching.
- The style of teaching at Withington will give each child access to a wide range of learning experiences including observation, investigation, analysis and evaluation. Use will be made of visits and visitors wherever possible.
- Children are taught in mixed age classes.

SEND

Children with special educational needs are taught within their class, and given differentiated individualised work as necessary.

Equal Opportunities

R.E. at Withington has a part to play in helping children to learn about the rich ethnic and cultural diversity found in the world. R.E. is also a valuable means of exploring attitudes towards the roles of women and men. Withington C. of E School believes in equal opportunities for all.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment is ongoing and also rounds off each unit of work. This will be based on observation by staff of oral and written work. Each child's attainment is subject to continuous classroom monitoring. Progress will be reported on the child's annual report to parents, based on the statements of Attainment in the agreed syllabus. No comments will be made on pupil's own religious beliefs or their spiritual development.

Assessment in this subject will seek to raise standards of achievement by:

- Providing teachers with information on individual strengths and weaknesses.
- Informing the planning of future work.
- Involving children in assessment of their own work, using 'I can...' statements.

Co-ordination

The R.E. co-ordinator is responsible for supporting and guiding teachers. Staff development needs relating to R.E. will be identified during performance management procedures. The co-ordinator is responsible for collating and organising R.E. resources and for monitoring the teaching of RE.

Resources

There are a range of books in school, including Christian and Non-Christian faiths. Staff have access to the County resource centre:

Gloucester Diocesan Religious Education Resource Centre College Green
Gloucester
GU 2LX