

Burton Agnes CE Primary School



Religious Education Policy

May 2016

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Introduction

As a Church school within the Diocese of York, the teaching of Religious Education is a fundamental priority. R.E. forms an intrinsic part of the school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. Our Voluntary Controlled School provides R.E. in accordance with the East Riding L Agreed Syllabus. As a church school we consider RE to be a core subject in our National Curriculum.

Religious Education is central to the churches understanding of education and mission. 'The National Society Statement of Entitlement' outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England School.

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

**'Our vision is to provide a caring, creative,
Christian environment
Where you will be able to achieve your full
potential
So you can make a positive contribution to
the community and the wider world.'**

Purpose and aims of RE

Religious Education (RE) contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

In RE they learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with

its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence.

They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.

Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to SMSC, promotion of the schools Christian values and the promotion of 'British Values'

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

SMSC prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

The school's Christian values

RE should contribute to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values in particular care, trust and friendship. Making connections between the values and learning in RE will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

Respect for All & Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination & extremism.

The school community

RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

The community within which the school is located

RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches such as St Martin's in Burton Agnes.

The UK community

A major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community

RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

The promotion of 'British Values'

The school ethos embraces mutual respect and children are actively taught that their behaviours can affect their own rights and those of others. It is understood across the entire school community that all members treat each other respectfully. The RE curriculum makes provision for children to understand and respect those of different faiths and beliefs. As a church school we regularly visit our local village church to hold school services at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. We are lucky to welcome a variety of visitors from a range of communities and organisations into school. The school has a link with a school in France and we hold a year International Week in School. All children in school actively become involved supporting a variety of charities throughout the school year. For example Children in Need, Sports/Comic Relief and MacMillan.

Approaches to teaching RE

- RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled
- High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus and diocesan materials taking into account the need to offer breadth of content

- In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection
- Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities

We use as a basis for our planning the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

How RE is organised

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that

At KS 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism

At KS 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism

We will ensure that the children learn about their religions and festivals as and when appropriate through faith days etc.

A long-term plan is in place, based upon the East Riding of Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus, allowing for continuity and progression and building upon prior learning. The 2016 programme of Units of Learning is followed. Pupils receive an average of 45-60 mins/week of RE, representing at least 5% of curriculum time; when appropriate some of this time may be blocked to provide a concentrated focus.

EYFS

RE forms a valuable part of the educational experience of children in the EYFS. Principles and practice of EYFS offer good opportunities for RE.

The syllabus website offers resources and suggestions for RE linked to Development Matters:

<http://eriding.eastriding.gov.uk/all-ages/religious-education/early-years-foundation-stage/>

Assessment and Recording of RE

This is done in line with the school policy on assessment and recording.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE, including how RE contribute to SIAMS School Self Evaluation

The co-ordinator and church school working party will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, book scrutinies, observations, monitoring of planning and talk with pupils. These findings will be fed into the SIAMS SEF.

Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE. In these circumstances, head teachers might wish to seek advice from the diocese, or LA SACRE.

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Burton Agnes CE Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school. Teachers may also exercise their right to withdraw from the teaching of RE.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.

- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Date of policy review: May 2019

