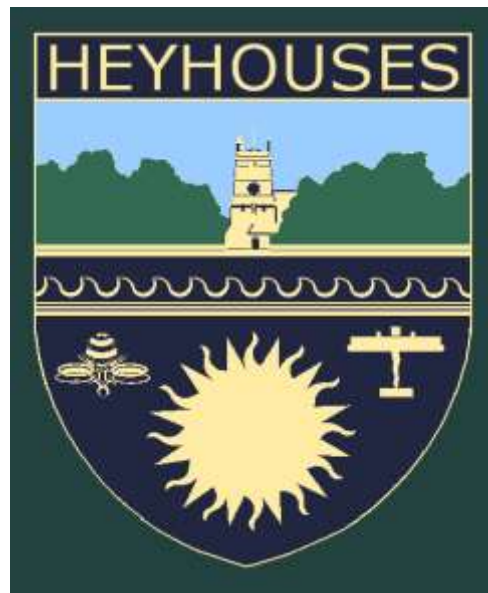


Heyhouses Endowed Church of England School



Policy for Religious Education

Last Review: October 2017
Next review: October 2018

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Introduction to the policy

As Religion Education is not a subject in the National Curriculum, the format of this policy document differs in some ways from the other curriculum policy documents formulated by the school. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Scheme of Work for Religious Education. This can be found on the T Drive of the school computer system. A paper master copy and a CD Rom of The Scheme of Work is also kept by Ruth Hutchinson, R.E Co-ordinator.

Religious Education plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the school as expressed in the following mission statement:

“We seek to enable children to reach their full potential educationally, spiritually and socially so that they may become all that God has created them to be.”

The mission statement is central to the way of life in our school, for it is out of our commitment to this statement that precise and detailed aims are formed.

The Importance of Religious Education

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of the right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupil's knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to the questions such as these. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

It enhances pupil's awareness and understanding of religion and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures. (Taken from the QCA document Religious Education the Non-Statutory National Framework.)

The Aim of Religion Education

According to The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education the aim of its syllabus is as follows;

‘Religious Education will support children and young people in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes, through an exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in the contemporary world.’

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values and philosophy of the school. The school's philosophy and aims can be seen in a separate policy. Although R.E. and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another they should be managed separately.

The aims for Religious Education in our school may be grouped into three main areas;

- A. Personal, Social and Spiritual Development**
- B. Knowledge and Understanding of the Christian Religion**
- C. Knowledge and Understanding of Other World Religions**

A. Personal, Social and Spiritual Development

- To help the children understand more about themselves and their relationships with others.
- To develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious.
- To help the children investigate experiences of love, hate, anger, acceptance, fear, rejection, sorrow and joy, encouraging the children to reflect on and deepen their understanding of what it means to be human.
- To help the children to grow into sensitive, caring people with an awareness of the needs of others.
- To provide opportunities for the children to explore what it means to be a Christian and how this affects their behaviour and values.
- To experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community.
- To encourage the children to think theologically and to explore questions concerning the purpose of life and to help them begin a personal search for a faith by which to live.
- To foster a sense of awe and wonder about God, his power, love and majesty.
- To nurture an ability to pray and reflect which will continue through life.
- To understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

B. Knowledge and Understanding of the Christian Religion

- To help the children develop their knowledge and understanding of key Christian beliefs and how these beliefs are relevant to our lifestyles today.
- To learn about the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.
- To study the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, developing with the contents of The Bible and its relevance to the Christian faith.
- To discover how and why Christians celebrate the festivals of Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Saints days.
- To develop an understanding of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination and Holy Eucharist.
- To learn about the work of the church in the local community and on a world-wide basis.
- To develop an understanding of Church history by learning how the church developed and the figures of importance in this process

C. Knowledge and Understanding of other World Religions

R.E. should equip pupils to recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in R.E. within a Church school. This respect must be based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation. (Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Policy Guidance)

- To learn about other faiths their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue.
- To help the children develop an open, sensitive attitude towards people of all faiths.
- To learn about the leaders, worship and lifestyle of people belonging to different faiths.
- To recognize areas of common belief and practice between different faiths.
- Enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

The Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education

At Heyhouses, the Religious Education provided is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England and follows the R.E. Syllabus produced by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education.

The framework of Religious Education outlines the provision for Religious Education throughout the whole school and indicates the progression and continuity, which has been built into the teaching of Religious Education.

The basis of our scheme of work is focused on two attainment targets;

Attainment target 1: Learning about Religion (Knowledge and understanding)

The children will 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.

Attainment target 2: learning from Religion (Response, evaluation and application)

The children will learn from

- An empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it.
- Responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ
- Understanding ourselves and others, celebrating our shared humanity and the breadth of human achievement.

The R.E. framework covers all seven years of the Primary stage. Each year group has a theme which links all the work covered during the year. The year themes which are followed correspond to those of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus and the Diocesan Syllabus.

There are certain essential elements of R.E. which are developed through these themes:

- 1. Personal Development: Ourselves and others.**
- 2. Living the Faith: Belief and practice.**
- 3. Festivals and Worship: Celebrating our beliefs.**
- 4. Symbols and Signs: Interpreting belief.**
- 5. Sacred Writings: Learning about and understanding faith and beliefs.**

Time Allocation

The time allocated to Religious Education follows the recommendations in the Agreed Syllabus document, that each unit of Curriculum requires an allocation of not less than 5% curriculum time. It is our intention that the basic minimum of 40 hours of Religious Education each year will be taught. 80% of our R.E. time will be devoted to Christianity and 20% to other Faiths.

As a result of the way in which the curriculum is organised at each key stage and each year group, the amount of time allocated to Religious Education in any week may differ.

Religious Education may be provided in a 'whole block' or the time may be divided up into smaller sessions. However, over the whole year, class teachers and the R.E. curriculum team endeavour to ensure that all children have access to the required amount of Religious Education curriculum time.

Worship time will provide another substantial portion in the Christian life of our school.

The Approach to Religious Education

Heyhouses Church of England Endowed School is by its very nature a Christian foundation, built and maintained with the support of the Church and seeking to provide a recognisably Christian education which is both distinctive and of the highest quality.

The teaching of Religious Education according to the Agreed Syllabus is approached with the following principles in mind;

There are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of the children and staff.

We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity and we value the links, which are and can be made between home, school and a faith community. We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils. We promote teaching in Religious Education that stresses open enquiry and first hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children. The syllabus is implemented in school by means of highly sensory approach, where children may look at and handle religious artefacts, hear religious music or taste food from a religious tradition.

The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires schools to ‘promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school and in society’ (paragraph 1:2) through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. At Heyhouses, Religious Education plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children.

The Christian ethos of the school is reflected not just in Religious Education lessons and Collective Worship, but also in general behaviour, attitudes and expectations within the school. The Mission Statement for our school reflects these aims in the desire to provide each child, not only with a caring environment in which to develop mentally, physically, socially and spiritually, but also with a clear understanding of Christian beliefs, values and attitudes.

Curriculum and School Organisation

The Scheme of Work for Religious Education outlines in detail how Religious Education is planned and taught in each key Stage and in each Year Group by means of the primary framework for R.E. Details of the content of each Curriculum unit can also be found in the Scheme of Work in the form of content descriptors taken from the Agreed Syllabus.

Subject planning and evaluation for work in Religious Education is incorporated into Year Group planning and evaluation, each half term or term. This is seen in teacher's initial and Long Term Planning. Planning and evaluation of work within any curriculum unit is undertaken on a weekly basis by the class teacher and can be seen in their Short Term Plans.

Teaching Methods

At Heyhouses, Religious Education is taught by individual class teachers or Higher Level Teaching Assistants. However, the right of any member of staff to withdraw from the teaching of Religious Education is recognised and respected.

Class teachers are responsible for their own class organisation and teaching style in relation to R.E, while at the same time ensuring these complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school. The content of the lessons should include some or all of the following:

- Opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year.
- Visits to places of worship, especially the local Parish Church, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community.
- Liaison with the local Parish to enable these visits and links to occur.
- Support for the pupils; confident use of religious language.
- A well-used set of Bibles
- Access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence.
- Encourage of mutual respect based on Christian values, where teachers and pupils are able to talk openly and freely about their

own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule.

- Pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- Pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- Pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith.
- Pupils with no religious background to face the challenge of the Christian faith.

Teaching may be by means of direct teaching to the class or small groups. The Vicar of St Annes Parish Church assists in the teaching of R.E.

Special Education Needs

Work should be differentiated as appropriate to ensure the curriculum can be accessed by all members of the class.

The Blackburn syllabus provides teachers with suggested activities which allow all abilities to achieve objectives aimed at their level. See units for details.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

It is recognised that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education – in its entirety or in part. This is clearly stated in the School Brochure. If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from Religious Education then arrangements are made for that child to be withdrawn during Religious Education lessons by the class teacher in consultation with the Head teacher.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship gives the school community an opportunity to reflect on and share a theme appropriate to their spiritual development. The planning of the Collective Worship is undertaken by the Head teacher and lead by senior staff members, the Vicar or Curate. Class teachers will be responsible for organising a class assembly to explore a special theme during the time of lent. The Half Termly themes for Assemblies are issued to staff in order for preparatory or follow up work to be undertaken on a planned basis where appropriate. Services are held in Church on regular basis e.g. at Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

Links with The Church

The Church is close to the school and is used as part of the teaching of Religious Education by different classes. The Vicar and the Curate have a highly visible profile within the school and are regularly involved in leading the Collective Worship as well as making informal visits to the school to chat to the children.

Links with other subjects

Religious Education has links with other areas of the curriculum including English, History and Art. The subject also provides opportunities for exploring the cross-curricular dimensions of the Personal, Social and Emotional development of the children.

Evaluation and Assessment

Evaluation and assessment is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious Education within our school. It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for Religious Education within the school, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress. Evaluation and assessment will also be undertaken by the R.E. Curriculum Team under the guidance of the Curriculum Coordinator.

Evaluation includes a regular evaluation of the content of the Religious Education Curriculum to ensure that the Agreed Syllabus requirements are being fulfilled in the best possible way. Monitoring of teachers' planning is carried out to check that plans are put in to action in the classroom.

Pupil's progress and performance is difficult to assess because so much of it is highly personal. However assessment will take place by means of the following methods;

- Looking at children's work.
- Monitoring of teacher's Long and Short Term Plans.
- Discussion among groups of staff as well as the whole staff.
- Classroom observation.
- External inspection and advice.

Evaluation forms will be completed by class teachers on a half-termly basis, at the end of each unit, using the whole school Religious Education evaluation forms. More informal assessments will take place during practical R.E. lessons through observation, photographic evidence and informal note-taking on individual children's responses.

The evaluation and review of the policy will take place on an annual basis. The curriculum team work together to consider any necessary changes or adaptation's to the policy.

The Religious Education Curriculum Team

As a Voluntary Aided school, the management of R.E. at Heyhouses 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. Although the Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in the school, the curriculum team is responsible for the development of R.E. as a subject throughout school. The team is as follows:

Subject Leader: Ruth Hutchinson
Shadow: Elizabeth Hodgson
Team Members: Sarah Bashora
Christine Rae
Kirsty Fletcher
Governor: Father David Lyon

The Curriculum team draws up an annual action plan in conjunction with the School Development Plan. The action plan outlines what the Curriculum team plan to do in relation to the R.E. Policy, Scheme of work, resources, monitoring of the subject and includes a budget plan.

The Curriculum team is responsible for helping staff to plan, evaluate and assess the teaching of the subject as well as organising the purchase and storage of resources. They are expected to attend any relevant courses, including local area forums to further their subject knowledge and to feedback to other staff where appropriate.

Resources

A wide variety of Religious Education resources are currently available in school. These include children's reference books including Bibles, teacher's resource books, packs and notes, pictorial resources such as posters and photographs, videos and CD ROMs.

Key Stage 1 teacher resources are stored in The Rainbow Room. Some children's reference books are stored on the shelf outside the Head Teacher's Office.

Key Stage 2 teacher resources are stored in the Resource corridor and in the Library.

Conclusion

The R.E. at Heyhouses School seeks to support the overall aims of the school to provide a broad, balanced curriculum within a caring, supportive environment. It provides the school with its distinctiveness as a Church School and a focus for its development. For this reason, it is crucial in maintaining the Christian ethos, which is so central to the school identity.

Policy updated October 2017
To be reviewed October 2018