

MOREDON PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND Religious Education (RE) Policy

Philosophy

At Moredon Primary & Nursery School we believe that religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. We develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths and worldviews, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. Our Foundation stage children explore spirituality through the celebration of festivals from many cultures. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

At Moredon Primary and Nursery School we aim to:

- provoke challenging questions about God, ultimate, reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- develop an ability to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts.
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society, giving own views respectfully.
- In Key stage 2, develop investigative and research skills to enable them to make reasoned judgments about religious issues
- develop skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts and other sources of evidence.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Swindon LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups (mainly our vicar) to come into school and talk to the children.

Children study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- whenever possible using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children

High quality first teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have SEND. Differentiation occurs in the support and intervention provided to different pupils, through questioning, scaffolding and resources for individual pupils. This is an inclusive approach to individual learners' needs, ensuring language, questioning, concepts and ultimately learning is accessible to all.

Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Discovery R.E. scheme of work. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Foundation Stage

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We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five relating it where appropriate to the Swindon Scheme.

Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

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 English 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.

ICT

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 it's presentation.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. 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.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

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 pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors –

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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 pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning 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 pupils.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in line with the whole school foundation assessment policy. R.E. is assessed through assessing the skills taught, understood and met by each child in every term. This enable the formation of a clear picture over the year of a child's attainment and progress in R.E. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary.

Most of the work we do at Foundation Stage 1 is oral and very little written work is produced except at Easter and Christmas.

Resources

We have 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 where there is a box of equipment for each religion and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books to support the children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

The RE subject co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject co-ordinator presents the headteacher with an annual action plan which indicates areas for further improvement and feeds into the school improvement plan.

Signed: Jan Ferdous

Date December 22