

RE Policy

The children are at the heart of all that we do at Seven Stars CP School and we have high expectations of them. Our aims are best summed up by our vision statement. We are committed to **improving the quality of the educational provision** for all our children which will enable them to reach their full potential and attain the levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that society demands for their future lives. High quality education at Seven Stars CP School will be achieved by:

- positive, caring and clearly focused leadership from the senior leadership team
- the whole staff team working together to do its best for our children's confidence
- the whole staff team having high expectations of our children's social, behavioural and academic performance
- well planned, exciting and challenging teaching that develops lively, enquiring and open minds in our children
- creating stimulating and attractive learning environments in which our children can take a pride
- fostering a calm, secure and purposeful working atmosphere that nurtures a positive esteem and self-image in all our children
- promoting respect for other people and their property
- working in partnership with parents, governors and the local community to enrich opportunities for our children

1. Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Seven Stars CP School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of divine spirit. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn about religions as well as from religions. In KS1 and 2 there is a systematic study of Christianity and

the other 5 principal religions in the UK (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism).

In KS1, pupils receive 36 hours of RE a year. In KS2, pupils are taught RE for 39 hours a year.

1.1 Our aims in the teaching of RE are:

To foster the development of positive attitudes in order to encourage pupils to see themselves as an equal, valued and valid part of the school and the community;

To awaken and develop an awareness of the spiritual side of life and that this is equally important as the physical and intellectual sides;

To know and understand the beliefs of others and respect their right to believe and to understand how religious beliefs and practices affect people's lives;

To discover the significance of commitment to a personal faith and to understand that a religious faith helps some people in considering and coming to terms with basic human questions;

To examine the questions relating to human existence and purpose;

To become responsible for one's own behaviour and to develop a willingness to act according to moral rules and to regulate behaviour for the good of another individual or the group;

To develop a willingness to see that others have a right to a point of view.

1.2 Our objectives in the teaching of RE are:

To study the festivals and ceremonies, traditions and rituals that mark the stages of life;

To link basic religious concepts to practices of everyday living and to examine the roles of family life in religion;

To appreciate the similarities and differences between religions and to enrich their understanding of religious vocabulary;

To respond imaginatively to religious ideas and consider the different ways in which individuals may come to a personal faith and commitment;

To study the beliefs, instructions and organisations of particular faiths;

To be sensitive to the feelings, beliefs and actions of others and to explore the ideas that caring should come before personal interests;

To help children explore the awe, wonder and joy of life in all its forms, particularly new life and growth;

To help children with experiences of encountering change such as death, suffering, inequality and conflict;

To examine ideas of right and wrong and to discover the importance of silence and reflection;

To distinguish between religious and other forms of understanding, for example, scientific, historical;

To reflect on their own experiences and to develop a sense of religious understanding;

To appreciate the value of their own personal faith/beliefs and have confidence to be able to discuss them with others.

2 The legal position of religious education

2.1 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. RE is part of the basic curriculum. It is taught in accordance with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus (Reviewed 2013). It makes contributions to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE is not taught to propagate religion in general or a particular religion, it is not to nurture or convert. It is an academic discipline with levels of achievements.

2.2 Parents who wish to withdraw their children, because of personal choice or religious affiliations are permitted to do so, once they have made a formal written request to the school, and this has been agreed by the head teacher and governors. A record of withdrawals is kept by the RE coordinator.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 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.

3.2 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, and Eid etc. To develop their religious thinking.

3.3 We recognise that in all classes, children have a wide range of differing abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- Setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- Sometimes grouping children by ability in the room (depending on the task), and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- Providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

3.4 RE can be taught through:

- Role play and drama;
- Story telling;
- Discussion and debate;
- Topic work;
- Reflection;
- Use of visitors;
- Use of local community;
- Tapes, films and videos.

4 Curriculum planning in religious education

4.1 RE is a part of the whole school curriculum, linking into the creative curriculum. The RE support units are used to inform the planning which outlines the key questions/concepts covered each term during each Key Stage and by each year group. The borough units are used as a basis upon which the RE overview was devised.

4.2 At the Foundation Stage RE is not taught as a distinct curriculum area. However, many of the early learning goals lead into the two RE attainment targets. Specific ways of linking the early learning goals are shown in the support units. These are in the 2011 Agreed syllabus support units for nursery and reception to adapt and use.

4.3 At Key Stage 1 and 2 there is a systematic study of Christianity and the other 5 principle religions in the UK (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism). There is opportunity for smaller religions to be studied as well as atheist and agnostic points of view within any of the support units. The units highlight opportunities to learn outside the classroom as well creatively through the arts, and scheme of work has RE skill sets that children should acquire across their time at school.

5 Religious education and inclusion

5.1 In line with the other school policies, RE aims to meet the needs of all children through planned differentiation and resources. This will take into account the need to adapt lessons to account for children's different learning styles, especially those to whom English is an Additional Language (EAL), children with Specific Special Educational Needs and the Gifted and Talented pupils.

5.2 Prevent

From July 2015 all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism.

This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views. Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

Many of the things we already do in school through the RE curriculum will help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

6 Assessment for learning

6.1 Children demonstrate their ability in religious education in a variety of different ways. Younger children in Key Stage 1 might, for example, concentrate on learning through a range of speaking and listening activities, whilst older pupils may write a 'question and answer' style report on what it may be like to be a member of a religious community in Britain today and outline what impresses them about this religious identity and community. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning.

Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

6.2 A system of assessment will be developed in line with the school system of assessment – this is ongoing and in development.

6.3 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in the R.E subject file. These demonstrate coverage and quality.

7 Resources

7.1 There are sufficient resources for all religious education teaching units in the school and are able to be ordered from Lancashire Schools' Library.

7.2 The libraries in school also contain a good selection of religious books.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 The coordination and planning of the religious education curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments
- in religious education and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;

8.2 The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is monitored and evaluated by the

Subject leader as part of the school's agreed cycle of monitoring and evaluating.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.