

Religious Education Policy

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Author: Amy Edwards
Owner: Amy Edwards
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Our Vision

“Shine brightly in learning and life.”

Inspired by Matthew 5:16 — *“Let your light shine”* — we believe that every child has a unique light within them. Through nurturing aspiration, respect, courage, and community, we empower every child to shine brightly, both in their learning and in their lives, making a positive difference in the world around them.

We are committed to creating a positive, safe and nurturing Christian environment, where all members of the school and wider community will be respected and valued.

Within God’s love, we will support and encourage one another to grow and flourish... to be the very best we can be.

All we do at our school will be underpinned by the above vision. This policy should be read and understood from this perspective.

Rationale

We will promote an environment where all children feel known, accepted, and valued as individuals, within a caring community, where our Christian faith affects not only what we teach, but also how we teach.

Aims

At Shaw CofE Primary School we aim that Religious Education will:

- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- Enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians.
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society. To develop pupils’ abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice learning about religions other than Christianity in the process.
- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

- Develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery.

The contribution RE makes to the curriculum Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and 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.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective R.E. will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

- 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. 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. R.E. subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote our Christian values of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that promotes democratic values and human rights.

Procedures

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 based on Project Emmanuel. Teachers adapt and supplement the schemes of work as appropriate for their class. 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.

RE is taught according to the Trust Deed that also takes note of the Salisbury Diocesan Guidelines. R.E. is taught to pupils weekly. RE is part of the curriculum, and as such, has an equal standing with other subjects within the school curriculum.

RE, according to the 1988 Education Act “must reflect the fact that the religious traditions are in the main Christian, whilst taking into account the practices of other principal religions in Great Britain”.

In this school Christianity is our principal study. In addition, the following apply

- In Key Stage 1 --- Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism
- In Key Stage 2 --- Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism

RE does not seek to persuade or indoctrinate, but help children in their own personal search for meaning, purpose, and value in life. R.E is taught in accordance with the long-term curriculum map available under the Learning and Education section of our website. In addition, R.E. can link with the Act of Collective Worship. A variety of methods and strategies are employed in order to address the differing needs of individual pupils. Visits and visitors are beneficial and encouraged, when appropriate.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

At the end of each unit of work, teachers will assess the children based on their work and contribution's during class activities. On occasions, where relevant, an assessment task may be given. Attainment of the children will be recorded on the year group RE tracking sheet where progress throughout each year can be monitored. Children will be judged to be working towards, working at or working beyond the expected standard. Parents receive an annual report of their child's progress in RE.

Monitoring

The RE subject leader and Senior Leadership Team will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data, through lesson observations, through work sampling and through pupil interviews. This information will feed into the Church school self-evaluation process.

The Right of Withdrawal from RE

At Shaw CofE Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, 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 occasion, 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 Shaw.

The right of withdrawal of any child, requested by a parent will be respected, on receipt of a letter addressed to the Headteacher