

St John's CE VC Primary School

Religious Education (R.E.) Policy

Introduction

At this church school, all aspects of school life reflect a Christian ethos and this policy is based on Christian principles. We aim for all children to work together to fly high like an eagle; this includes their development in Religious Education.

What is it?

Religious Education looks at the beliefs, practices, celebrations and festivals within Christianity and a wide range of other religions. Alongside learning *about* religion and belief, lessons also focus on what children can learn *from* religion. Developing children spiritually is a fundamental part of our Religious Education.

Why is it important?

Religious Education encourages children to develop an empathetic understanding of what it means to be a practising member of a religion and to appreciate how religious convictions are played out in everyday life. It also provides an opportunity to think deeply about faith and to develop spiritually.

We believe that a broad understanding of different religions and worldviews provides children with a context for who they are, as HUMANS. It gives them opportunities to learn from the wisdom that religions and worldviews offer, the ways in which they talk about living well together, and the answers that they give to life's big questions.

What do we aim to achieve for the children?

- A knowledge and understanding of the religious traditions of United Kingdom which are, in the main, Christian, whilst taking a detailed account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Within this, that pupils appreciate the similarities and differences of different denominations and that Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.
- An understanding of the ethos of a Church school and the content, language and symbolism of the Christian faith as a way of understanding our meaning and purpose in life.

Spiritual Development:

- Learning how to reflect, question, compare and explain their views.
- Developing the ability to discuss key life questions of meaning and truth.
- Considering what each of us may learn from religion.

Personal Development:

- Developing self-esteem and a range of key attitudes of curiosity, fairness and respect.
- Developing a range of key skills: investigation, interpretation, reflection, empathy, evaluation, analysis, synthesis, application, expression and self-understanding.
- The consideration of what each of us might learn from religion.

Moral Development:

- Learning to consider the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.
- Studying a range of moral issues such as justice and integrity .

Social/Cultural Development:

- Tolerance and respect for the values and commitments of believer from a variety of religious traditions
- Promotion of inter-faith harmony by considering the relationships between religions

How do we do it?

- We adhere to and following the guidelines for the teaching of R.E. in accordance with The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, "Awareness, Mystery and Value 2011." <http://amv.somerset.gov.uk/> (For details see St John's Primary School Religious Education: Yearly Overview, Long Term Plans and Medium Term Plans).
- It is expected that at least 5% of curriculum time will be spent on R.E.
- R.E is usually taught as a discrete subject. In addition to this, aspects of R.E. often form part of many areas of the curriculum such as music, art, design and technology, dance and class projects.
- We focus on the idea of 4 concepts of spirituality: self, others, world and beyond. We plan a series of encounters (Windows) that open up the possibility of reflection (Mirrors). Finally, the children are given an opportunity to put into action what they believe and value (Doors).
- Teaching our school Christian values and teaching key Personal, Social and Health Education (P.S.H.E.) skills forms part of our R.E. lessons. (P.S.H.E. is also taught as a separate lesson.)
- We use key questions to promote children's thinking.
- Wherever possible we will make the most of artefacts, computing, art and media to engage and enhance the pupils' learning.
- We have strong links with All Saints Church and its vicar who supports us by: A) Providing guidance with planning the R.E. curriculum and R.E. lessons. B) Visiting classes to talk about Christianity and supporting individual pupils in class. C) Allowing us to visit All Saints at various times in the religious calendar to support different aspects of our R.E.
- In addition, we are kindly supported by Redland Parish Church, who regularly enhance our Religious Education Curriculum by carrying out workshops and trails with children from Early Years to Year 6.
- St John's also has strong links with Churches from a range of denominations. For example, Reverend Dougie Burnett from the United Reformed Church: often leads services, visits R.E. lessons, collaborates on projects, supports our development of Godly Play and the children in Early Years lead a special service at this church at Christmas.
- Visitors from a range of faiths visit classes to talk about the beliefs and practices of their religion.
- Based on the R.E. assessment and prior learning, appropriate activities are planned for the children. This includes extension activities and support for the lower attaining children where appropriate, particular consideration is given to children eligible for pupil premium or who are disadvantaged. Giving each child the opportunities and resources available in order to ensure that, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, every child has the best chance at progressing across the curriculum.

Recording

Written records of learning are kept in an R.E books and in the Class Worship Books. Photographic evidence is kept in the R.E. Portfolio.

Regular evaluations of R.E. are undertaken by the pupils, through annual pupil voice questionnaires, by staff and governors through observations. This information is reviewed by the R.E. Co-ordinators and the Foundation Governor and shared with staff. Changes are then implemented as appropriate.

Withdrawal

Parents/carers who wish to withdraw their child from R.E are made aware of the programme of teaching and its intention to be open and respectful of all pupils' personal beliefs. They are given the opportunity to discuss this if they wish and the decision to withdraw is reviewed on a yearly basis.

Conclusion

Our aim at St. John's Primary School is to give every child the opportunity to develop an understanding of the beliefs, values and attitudes of others and to respect and appreciate the diversity of the lifestyles of members of the society in which they live. We aim to engage learners in reflection and to develop an understanding of the nature of commitment. We hope that through learning about Christianity and other religions, children will recognise and understand their own personal beliefs, values and attitudes.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Collective Worship Policy

Spirituality Policy

Equalities Policy