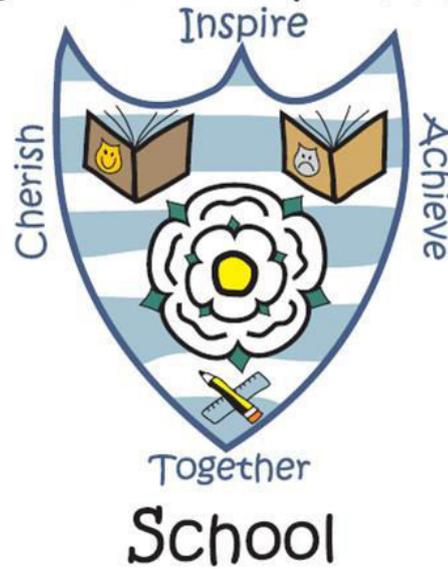


Birkwood Primary



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2017

Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'. Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes: "a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

Our School Vision

Our school ethos is underpinned by our aim to **inspire** our children by providing a curriculum that is creative, that responds and enables children to lead their own learning and that equips them with the skills required for the 21st Century. We aim to **cherish** our children by trying to look after and respect each other at all times. We aim to provide a caring environment, where all are inspired and empowered to **achieve** their true potential as unique and valued individuals. We aim for our children to achieve the best that they can, by challenging and supporting them. We are creative and flexible in providing a positive approach to learning in a safe, stable and exciting environment that will nurture each child's individual needs. Our school is welcoming, caring and safe; a family community working in harmony.

We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus (Barnsley, 2010) and use the Discovery RE programme as our scheme of work.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010
- RE: realising the potential Ofsted 2013
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013

Aims

Discovery RE meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above. By following Discovery RE at Birkwood Primary School, we intend that Religious Education will:

- Adopt an enquiry- based approach as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion
- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (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
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice

- 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, wonder and mystery
- Nurture children's own spiritual development

Discovery RE Content

Foundation Stage

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What makes people special?	Christianity
What is Christmas?	Islam/Judaism
How do people celebrate?	Christianity
What is Easter?	Christianity
What can we learn from stories?	Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism
What makes people special?	Christianity, Islam, Judaism

Year 1

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift would I have given Jesus if he had been born in my town, not in Bethlehem?	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity
Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Does celebrating Chanukah make Jewish children feel close to God?	Judaism

Year 2

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why did God give Jesus to the world?	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? OR	Judaism
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life?	Islam
Is it true Jesus came back to life again?	Christianity
How special is the relationship Jews have with God? OR	Judaism
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? OR	Judaism
Does completing a Hajj make a person a better Muslim?	Islam

Year 3

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Does celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child? OR	Hinduism
Does joining the Khalsa make a person a better Sikh?	Sikhism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
What is good about Good Friday?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? OR	Sikhism
Do Sikhs this it is important to share?	Hinduism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu? OR	Hinduism
What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Sikhism

Year 4

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God?	Judaism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?	Judaism
Is forgiveness always possible?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

Year 5

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion? OR What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God?	Sikhism Hinduism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
Are Sikh stories important today? OR How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Sikhism Hinduism
Did God intend Jesus to be crucified?	Christianity

Year 6

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother?	Christianity
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism
Does belief in Akhiraah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

How is RE organised in this school?

Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. The scheme of work links closely to the 'Ask it' strand of Open Futures, as the children are able to deepen their thinking skills and challenge their own personal views.

Differentiation/SEND

All pupils, including children with Special Educational Needs, will have full access to RE.

Learning in RE will enable children to:

- (i) respect themselves
- (ii) to challenge inequalities and discrimination associated with race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic status.

We will ensure that children's learning activities are related to their own experience and that opportunities are given for personal response and reflection.

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential.

Assessment

Children will be assessed in RE against the National Expectations outlined in the non-statutory guidance on RE and against the criteria set out in Discovery RE for each year group.

Parents will receive a report annually which outlines their child's knowledge and understanding in RE. They will also have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at parents' evenings on 3 occasions throughout the year.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision. Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

External contributors

RE gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos 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 champions democratic values and human rights.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme, as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme. Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

Alongside the use of this Scheme we also encourage visits to religious places and visitors into school to discuss different faiths and cultures.

Father David who is a Governor and Parish Priest at our local church St John the Baptist, is invited into the school to talk about his role in creating a positive and supportive local community. Visits to the church are also organised, linked to the liturgical year, to help children understand and respect the community and the Christian faith. Father David is proactive in developing the children's spiritual knowledge and understanding.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each other's views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues Involving parents and carers

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Headteacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child.

The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.

The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body reviews this policy every two years. The Governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

This policy will be reviewed in November 2019.

Signed _____ Headteacher Date _____

Signed _____ Chair of Governors Date _____