



## **Religious Education (R.E.) Policy**

**Acle St Edmund C of E Primary School**

**Policy Date:** March 2020

**Endorsed by Governors:**

**Review Date:** March 2023

**Subject Leader:** Miss Jackie Lansdell (teacher)

## Roles and Accountabilities

At Acle Primary we are committed to the provision of high quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured, and talents released.

## RE Policy Statement

Religious education is unique in our 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'.

The school adopts the principles of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (*Norfolk*) and supplement this with material from the Diocese.

## Aims

The broad aims of religious education (RE) are set out within the locally agreed syllabus and the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2016). The purpose of religious education at our school is to promote religious literacy. By this we mean that pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

The aims of religious education are to enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British Culture and heritage.
- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Know about and understand other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Show a well-informed, balanced and respectful attitude to religions and world views
- Engage in meaningful and well-informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

## Curriculum

The curriculum for RE is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

**Theology:** This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

**Philosophy:** This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

**Human/Social sciences:** This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

These three disciplines provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- At KS 1 pupils study primarily Christianity and Judaism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews.
- At KS 2 pupils study primarily Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews (such as Humanism).

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2016), at least 50% of curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of RE, and through additional RE days which focus on an aspect of the Christian Faith.

The use of the resource *Understanding Christianity* particularly supports the development of the theological perspective.

## **Teaching RE**

Religious education uses an enquiry-based approach to learning. This is based on the best practice framework in the Norfolk agreed syllabus. This approach enables pupils to focus on an enquiry question which explores aspects of the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories. Teachers are encouraged, where possible, to teach RE as part of their cross curricular thematic studies to promote maximum engagement, context and purpose, in line with our teaching and learning policy.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

## **Assessment**

Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines within RE. In broad terms the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

Pupils are assessed in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work and discussion. Progress is tracked using Pupil Asset.

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work.

In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The RE subject leader will monitor RE provision and standards within the school through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The subject leader is responsible for contributing to the school's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitor the role of religious education in upholding its contribution to the Christian ethos of the school.

## **Responsibilities for RE within our school (Head teacher and Governors)**

We aim to ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed
- standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- where appropriate, staff have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

## **Role of the RE Leader**

- To ensure that the school's policy is implemented and to keep up to date with reviews.
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes.
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement.
- To maintain and build priorities set by the school.
- To develop links with the local churches and Diocese.
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate.
- To liaise with parents to ensure all children receive their entitlement.

## **Entitlement and Inclusion - EAL, SEN, More Able**

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers should include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child should be given opportunities to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

## **The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims**

### *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, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'.

Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE, 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 cohesion*

RE makes an important contribution promoting 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 RE will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

## **Monitoring & Review**

The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

## **Links to Other Policies**

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Collective Worship

## **The Right of Withdrawal from RE**

We recognize that parents 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 of the school to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

## **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- We 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 should be made aware of its 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.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although we will ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, we will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, we have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on the school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from the school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.