

The Abbey CE VA Primary School, Shaftesbury, Dorset

Religious Education Policy

Statement

The Education Act 1996 states that the curriculum for every maintained school will include provision for Religious Education for all registered pupils. In a voluntary aided school, Religious Education is delivered in accordance with the trust deed of the school. The Abbey CE VA Primary School has adopted the Dorset SACRE Agreed Syllabus 2011 'Asking the Big Questions: Faith, Religion and Belief' and "Understanding Christianity" resource as the basis for planning Religious Education - the syllabus supported by Salisbury Diocese. This agreed syllabus meets the requirement to 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions presented in Great Britain' by providing a structural framework for the teaching of Christianity at each key stage, and units for the introduction and development of other principal religions.

In Reception, RE lessons are taught using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. In particular through the People and communities strand of Understanding the World.

Aims

Religious Education at The Abbey Primary School aims to:

- ❖ Provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human and consider how the world's religions have responded to them.
- ❖ Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its impact on our local community, and our society today.
- ❖ Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of some of the other principal religious traditions and secular world-views in Britain today.
- ❖ Develop pupils' awareness and understanding of beliefs, teachings, practices, and forms of expression; helping pupils understand how belief can contribute to some people's identity and sense of belonging, can raise questions of meaning, purpose and truth; and challenges pupils to reflect and respond to issues of values and of commitment.
- ❖ Encourage pupils to think about their own beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the values of the school community. Develop pupils' sense of respect for their own religious traditions, beliefs and practices and those of other people.
- ❖ Encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, to enable them to flourish individually within their communities, to act with personal responsibility and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.
- ❖ Promote opportunities to share, explore and value religious belief and non-religious belief and in this way seeks to make a major contribution to our pupils' spiritual and philosophical development and their sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- ❖ Encourage pupils to develop the ability to be still, to think deeply, to reflect and to appreciate times of stillness and of silence.
- ❖ Challenge pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, values, faith and ethics as informed by religious and secular worldviews and then to be able to communicate their responses.
- ❖ Have an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning as it enables them to develop respect, empathy and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to challenge prejudice, negative discrimination and racism.
- ❖ Develop skills and attitudes which will support children's personal, moral, social and cultural development
- ❖ Have an important role in developing philosophical and theological thinking and in developing in pupils the capacity for critical thinking.

S.M.S.C. Development

Religious Education has a significant role to play in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritually it creates regular opportunities for personal reflection on issues of feelings, relationships and values. Pupils are encouraged to consider personal values in the light of others' values and commitments. Morally pupils are encouraged to explore concepts such as justice, fairness and truth. Socially attitudes of respect, sensitivity, open-mindedness and self-esteem are developed. Pupils consider how religious beliefs lead to

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particular actions and concerns. They encounter people, stories and music from various cultures, thus developing respect for cultural differences.

Pupil Entitlement

Time allocated to Religious Education follows the recommendations of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus, requiring an allocation of not less than 5% of curriculum time.

As a result of the way in which the curriculum is organised at each Key Stage and in each year group, the amount of time allocated to Religious Education in any week may differ. Religious Education may be presented as a block of teaching time or divided into shorter sessions. It may be taught as a specific subject or presented as part of a wider topic. Over the whole year class teachers endeavour to ensure that all children have equal access to the required amount of Religious Education curriculum time.

Approaches to teaching Religious Education

Teaching Religious Education is approached with the aim of developing an understanding of the significance of Christian beliefs and practices, at the same time as encouraging a respect for *all* faith communities. In approaching R.E. as a subject, knowledge and belief are not assumed; neither are they excluded. R.E. should always be taught in a way that is appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils and in a way that is relevant and meaningful.

Religious Education teaching should adopt a range of strategies, including class, group and individual learning activities. In order to make R.E. a lively, engaging subject, a variety of teaching methods are employed including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, dance, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, videos and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible, the aim is for 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.

Organisation

Religious Education is allocated 5% of curriculum time. This time is independent of that allocated for Collective Worship.

Using the Dorset Agreed Syllabus, the staff have developing a scheme of work consistent with the ethos of the school and the aims of this policy. The Dorset Agreed Syllabus provides a framework for planning and assessment in Religious Education and enables continuity and progression between year groups. Use of this scheme also allows for continuity and progression between primary and secondary schools.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is an essential part of the effective teaching of Religious Education. It is a vital part of the teaching and learning process and, as such, is planned into the scheme of work. It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of pupils, through marking work and skilful questioning. Learning objectives are taken from the Dorset Agreed Syllabus and are appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupils. Learning objectives are clear and achievable.

Assessment of these learning objectives provides evidence of the progress of pupils. This evidence informs future planning, ensuring appropriately challenging work for each pupil and allows for effective communication of pupils' progress to parents. There is recognition that certain aspects of Religious Education are not appropriate for such assessment.

Records of pupils' progress, with reference to the attainment targets for Religious Education set out in the non-statutory framework, are kept and recorded on the school's online tracking system yearly to allow the subject leader to track pupil progress through the school.

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Monitoring Standards

Monitoring is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious Education within school. It is the responsibility of all staff to monitor and evaluate their delivery of the curriculum for Religious Education in order to ensure that pupils make the greatest progress possible. Overall monitoring of provision within school is carried out by the subject leader.

Monitoring includes evaluation of curriculum content to ensure the requirements of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus are being fulfilled in the most effective way. Pupils' progress and performance are evaluated through monitoring their work and through pupil interviews.

Governors

Foundation Governors monitor the progress of the SIAMS toolkit and the impact of R.E. in school. They meet regularly as a monitoring committee.

Responsibility for Religious Education in school

Teachers are responsible for the delivery of Religious Education to individual classes, following the schemes of work for each year group. They are responsible for planning, in line with the agreed syllabus, and for assessing and recording evidence of pupils' progress to inform further this planning.

The subject leader is responsible for maintaining an effective policy in consultation with the governing body and for developing a scheme of work, providing a clear learning framework throughout the school. The subject leader is responsible also for supporting staff in the planning, delivery and assessment of Religious Education and for obtaining and organising a suitable range of resources. S/he has a responsibility to monitor developments in Religious Education as a subject, and to establish links with local religious communities. The most important responsibility of the subject leader is to ensure that R.E. is a valued part of the curriculum and is celebrated as such.

Right of withdrawal

In our school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education, in its entirety or in part. This is stated in the school prospectus. If a parent chooses to withdraw his/her child from R.E., then arrangements are made in consultation with the headteacher. Parents with concerns about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education in school are encouraged to discuss them with the headteacher.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils are entitled to provision of Religious Education. Where special educational needs influence learning in Religious Education, work may be differentiated or teaching and learning styles adapted.

Reviewed by Vicki Green, May 2017

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Equality Impact Assessment – initial screening record

1. What area of work is being considered?

R.E. Policy

2. Upon whom will this impact?

Whole School Community

3. How would the work impact upon groups; are they included and considered?

The Equality Strands	Negative impact	Positive impact	No impact
Minority ethnic groups		X	
Gender		X	
Disability		X	
Religion, Faith or belief		X	
Sexual Orientation		X	
Transgender		X	
Age <small>(N/A to pre-school and school children)</small>		X	
Rurality		X	

4. Does data inform this work, research and/or consultation, and has it been broken down by the equality strands?

	NO	YES	Uncertain
Minority ethnic groups		X	
Gender		X	
Disability		X	
Religion, Faith or belief		X	
Sexual Orientation		X	
Transgender		X	
Age		X	
Rurality		X	

Does the initial screening highlight potential issues that may be illegal? YES / **NO**

Further comments:-

The R.E. policy is inclusive of all children. It teaches children tolerance of all faiths and beliefs learning to value our freedom of speech.

Do you consider that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required? YES / **NO**

Initial screening carried out by Mrs V.Green/SD Committee

Signed: Louise Sandy Date: 15th May 2017

Comment by Headteacher:

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