



# Religious Education Policy - January 2018

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## The Aims of Religious Education

### RE aims for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards people who hold views and beliefs different from their own
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Cambridgeshire and
- the UK
- Encourage openness to ask questions and search for answers of meaning and purpose for
- themselves
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
- developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
- reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study

## Legal Position

- It is a legal requirement for pupils to have opportunities to learn about the principal religions in the UK. The school has chosen to follow “The Agreed Syllabus 2013 Religious Education in Cambridgeshire”
- In Cambridgeshire, the requirements for religions and beliefs to be studied are:
- **EYFS** Christianity and other religions or belief systems represented in the school and local area

- **KS1 Christianity + Sikhism**
- (four core units on Christianity and two on Sikhism plus six school-designed units)
- **Lower Key Stage 2 Christianity + Judaism and Islam** (four core units on Christianity and one on Judaism, one on Islam plus six school-designed units)
- **Upper Key Stage 2 Christianity + Hinduism and Buddhism** (four core units on Christianity, one on Hinduism and one on Buddhism plus six school-designed units)

Religious Education must reflect the fact “that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain”. (1996 Act, Ch 56 S375 (3)). Therefore at least 50% of our RE Curriculum will comprise of units which have a focus on Christianity (though not necessarily exclusively). See appendix A

## Withdrawing children from RE

As a school we encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have regarding the teaching of RE in school. Parents may request in writing that their children be withdrawn from RE and other arrangements need to be made to accommodate them.

## Visitors

- Representatives of religious communities can make a vital contribution to learning when visiting our school or acting as guides to their place of worship or community activity.
- When working with our pupils, representatives of religious communities should be aware that:
- Our school includes members of different faith groups and that it is important to show sensitivity to this diversity. Each child’s beliefs and experiences must be respected.
- The school insists that, whilst pupils are encouraged to respect the rights of different people to hold different beliefs, it would be wrong (a) to teach a belief as if it were a fact and (b) to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils.
- Teachers or members of staff will always be present when visitors are talking to the children.

## Attainment Targets

There are two attainment targets for Religious Education which supports the aims of the subject. The two attainment targets are sometimes distinct in planning but often interwoven in good teaching.

- AT1 – Learning *about* Religion and Belief
- AT2 – Learning *from* Religion and Belief

### AT1 - LEARNING ABOUT RELIGION AND BELIEF

- Enquiring into, investigating and understanding religions and beliefs
- This includes thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

### AT2 - LEARNING FROM RELIGION AND BELIEF

- Questioning, exploring, reflecting upon and interpreting human experience in the light of religions and beliefs studied.
- This includes communicating reflections, responses and evaluations about questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific religions studied.

## Enquiry-Based Learning in RE

RE is taught through enquiry based learning. In our planning, each unit of work is identified by a key question. This question is then explored through a number of smaller questions over a series of lessons.

An enquiry process encourages pupils to explore and examine questions raised by the teacher and themselves about religious beliefs and practices, through gathering information, and increasing knowledge and understanding (AT1) of religions. They should engage with the material, reflect on

questions of meaning and purpose for themselves and others, by responding in increasingly insightful ways (AT2). RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience:

It is important to ensure a balance between the two attainment targets. As they learn about Christianity and other religions and world views, pupils should be encouraged to reflect, to respond and to relate their learning to their own ideas and experience. This balance should be evident in the planning.

## **Continuity and Progression**

The units of work taught by the school can be seen on the whole school plan (Appendix A). The Core units are specified by The Agreed Syllabus and taught in the specified year groups. The key religions are spread across the whole school to allow for children to build on previous knowledge. There are also many multi faith units which encourage the children to make links between faiths and also review and consolidate their knowledge.

## **Cross Curricular Links**

There are many opportunities for cross curricular teaching of RE: art, literacy, dance, drama, geography, history, ICT, DT. A variety of teaching styles and approaches throughout the year will motivate the children and appeal to different children's learning styles. However activities must reflect the religious learning outcomes required by the different abilities. For example retelling the story of Christmas or decorating Easter eggs will not be challenging KS2 children to achieve high levels of attainment.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Cambridgeshire enables the teaching of RE to make a distinctive and significant contribution to these four aspects of pupils' development.

RE may often focus on spiritual and moral education within the curriculum, and makes a distinctive contribution to understanding cultural diversity through developing understanding of religions and beliefs. These opportunities for personal development contribute to high standards and aspirations for each pupil.

## Religious Education and Inclusion

RE can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly via its focus on promoting respect for all. RE is for all pupils, both from faith and secular backgrounds. Effective inclusion involves teaching and planning a lively, stimulating religious education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education, whatever their religious or philosophical background, so that all of them feel their contributions are valued
- meets all pupils' learning needs including those with learning difficulties and those who are gifted and talented, both boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds

Planning needs to ensure that a wide variety of learning activities are provided so that all pupils' imagination and interests are engaged. Creative approaches to RE are to be welcomed. They should be seen as something which may contribute to the raising of standards in the broad sense, rather than as an enjoyable distraction. Such creative approaches may include activities which develop thinking skills, critical dialogue, and the use of the expressive arts where appropriate. They will draw on and reflect the enthusiasm and expertise of teachers.

The whole school plan does allow some flexibility to include religions which are relevant to particular year groups or classes. Any changes need to be discussed with the RE co-ordinator to ensure a progression of knowledge and skill. Although new school based units can be introduced as long as the Core units remain.

## RE and Pupils with Specific Religious Needs

Teachers need to be aware of the specific religious needs and sensitivities of some pupils. For example, Muslim pupils should not be asked to draw or paint pictures of key religious figures, nor to take the parts of key religious figures in drama or role play. ICT activities will be unsuitable for pupils from Exclusive Brethren families. The Christmas period may be a sensitive time for Jehovah children who do not celebrate Christmas.

In most cases, the provision of alternative activities to fulfil the same learning objective (e.g. write a poem to express a response to the title 'Jesus in today's world' instead of making a drawing, painting or collage) will mean pupils can take part in the RE work without any difficulty. Discussion

with parents should allow schools to resolve any such issue sensitively.

## Assessment

Both AT1 and AT2 need assessing and lessons need to be carefully planned to allow children the opportunity to demonstrate the higher levels and both attainment targets. The objectives for the year group will be displayed in the front of the RE book in KS 2. In KS1, it may be in the folder or a class record kept by the teacher.

**Appendix A** Whole school plan

**Appendix B** Objective sheets for Year Groups

**Appendix C** Progression of skills

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### Policy Details

### Date

### Name

Policy approved by Senior Management:

Jan 2018

Claire Wood

Policy approved by Senior Governor

Jan 2018

Roger Coxhead

Date of next review: Jan 2020

**Policy Section: Section 1A – Curriculum Policies (Pupils)**

Policy reference: GCA - 1A/ 12 RE