

HORNSEA BURTON PRIMARY AND SKIPSEA FEDERATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

In response to the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act (1988) non-denominational R.E. is provided at Hornsea Burton and Skipsea Schools in accordance with the East Riding of Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus, achieving a balance of 'reflection and response' with 'knowledge and understanding' of religions.

"The purpose of the agreed syllabus is to:

- **enable schools to provide a quality religious education curriculum**
- **provide appropriate criteria to those responsible for monitoring its provision, including school governors**
- **enable parents and other interested parties to be informed about the provision of religious education in schools"**

(Taken from the East Riding Agreed Syllabus:
<http://www.eriding.net/re/syllabus.shtml>

At Hornsea Burton Primary and Skipsea Primary Schools we strive to achieve a positive caring ethos throughout each school and to develop feelings of self-worth, respect and a caring attitude among the pupils and staff. Our teaching of R.E. is structured to accommodate differences in age, ability and maturity of the pupils regardless of gender, or of ethnic or cultural origins. We believe the full potential of Religious Education will only be achieved if it relates to the whole life of each school.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At each school we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, in line with the recommendations outlined in the East Riding of Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;

- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- to respect other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the **East Riding of Yorkshire** LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children learn about religious and moral issues in a variety of ways; through discussion; working individually or in groups; using computers and audio visual materials; through having access to a range of religious artefacts. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in each school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching

the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

Curriculum planning in religious education in Key Stages 1 and 2

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:

1. Learning *about* Religions
2. Learning *from* Religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impacts on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the **East Riding of Yorkshire** LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage and follows the scheme of work suggested by the LA.

Rights of Withdrawal for Teachers and Pupils

Teachers have the right of withdrawal from teaching RE. Permission must be sought from the Governors and suitable arrangements made by the Head teacher. It is hoped

that by using the East Riding Scheme of Work all teachers will feel able to contribute to the teaching of RE within the school. All of our teachers currently teach RE in the school.

The right of withdrawal from R.E. will be respected in accordance with the Education Act (1988). If the parent/guardian asks that their child be wholly or partly excused from attending Religious Education at the school then permission will be given by the Head teacher. The school will continue to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from these lessons by it's parents/guardians, unless the child is lawfully receiving Religious Education elsewhere.

The role of the coordinator

The role of the coordinator is to provide leadership to support colleagues in planning and teaching Religious Education and to facilitate consultancy among the whole staff in order to utilise all expertise effectively. In carrying out this role, the coordinator will undertake the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that Religious Education is taught in accordance with the agreed syllabus
- Review the RE Policy as part of the Policy Review cycle
- Keep up to date with developments in RE and be analytical as to whether such development should be introduced in school
- Provide guidance and support by passing on appropriate information and arranging training when necessary
- Carry out an audit of RE resources and equipment in each school
- Monitor and evaluate pupil's work and ensure continuity and progression throughout each school and provide feedback to the Head teacher
- Build up a list of community resources, places to visit and visitors who can come into school.

Equal Opportunities

Teachers ensure that activities are equally appropriate for all learners and that all pupils have equal access to all resources and opportunities and that all resources are free of bias with regard to gender, race and culture. When pupils work in a group, all pupils will have the opportunity to express opinions and ideas and take an equal part in producing outcomes.

Inclusive languages e.g. "We believe....." will be avoided in favour of a more open approach e.g. "Christian people believe.....", "Some people believe....."etc. At all times an open and enquiring attitude will be encouraged.

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in accordance with the AT1 and AT2 targets as set out in the Agreed Syllabus Eight Level Scale which correlates with National Curriculum levels of attainment. We record the attainment grades which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our Federation to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store. There is a set of Good News Bibles for use in Upper Key Stage 2, as well as sets of Story Bibles for different ages. There is a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. These are stored with an accompanying inventory (set out in alphabetical faith order) making it easy to identify which artefacts belong to which faith. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books relating to each of the major world faiths. There are also sets of books relating to life issues such as 'Death and Bereavement', 'Divorce', 'Friendship', 'Bullying' etc. which can be used to support learning within the Agreed Syllabus or to help specific children/situations.

This policy was reviewed and updated in February 2015 and will be presented to governors for adoption at the Full Governing Body meeting of the Spring term 2015.