



The Holme Church of England Primary School

The Good Shepherd Trust
Academies in partnership with the Guildford Diocese Education Trust
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Diocese of Guildford

Religious Education Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Responsible Body
February 2016	February 2019	Headteacher	Governing Body

Legal Requirements of Religious Education

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core nor a foundation subject. The Education Act 1988 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”. It has special status as part of the Basic Curriculum (section 2, Education Reform Act 1988). The legal requirements concerning RE are:

- RE should be taught to all pupils in full-time education, except for those withdrawn at the wish of their parents on religious grounds (cf. ‘Right to Withdraw’ below).
- RE should be taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus that “reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain” (Education Reform Act 1988) and does not seek to “convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils” (Education Act 1944).

Our Philosophy

This policy has been created to ensure consistency and progression in the school’s approach to RE. We believe that RE makes a distinctive contribution to pupils’ moral and spiritual learning. RE is concerned with exploring human experience, spirituality, considering challenging questions and reflecting upon issues of truth, faith, belief and ethics, as well as learning about the beliefs, teachings and practices of individual religions. We always aim to show children that religions are living faiths operating within a modern world. Thus, we believe that RE has an important role in preparing children for adult life by preventing discrimination as it enables children to develop a respect and sensitivity to others, as well as developing a confident identity of their own.

Section 78(1) of the Education Act 2002 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 later life.’ Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained within the broad based RE curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and beliefs and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding sets coherent and agreed policies for the school including the implementation of the National Curriculum and the Surrey programme of study for Religious Education.

RE makes an important contribution to our duty to promote an understanding, tolerance and acceptance of the diverse nature of our communities: the school and local community, as well as our national and global community. Our RE Curriculum gives particular opportunities to promote our Christian ethos of respect for others, to challenge stereo-types 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.

Aims of RE

Through the provision of RE at The Holme pupils are helped to develop attitudes, knowledge and skills that enable them to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain, both through their history and their contemporary expression;
- develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural education;
- develop enquiry and response skills through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy;
- recognise the influence of beliefs, values and tradition on the individual, on culture and on community;
- develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principle religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development;
- encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs, (whether they are 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. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives;
- 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 to help challenge prejudice;
- prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to the communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion; and
- develop a sense of awe and wonder in the world in which our children live'

As a Church of England school, at The Holme we emphasise Christianity, however we do not seek to use RE to compromise the integrity of pupils' own beliefs, but instead respect everyone's right to choose their own faith.

The RE Curriculum

At The Holme, we have adopted the Guildford Diocesan Guidelines for Religious Education. RE teaching can be integrated into a topic or taught discretely, however at least one unit must form the basis of one half-term's main topic. We believe that the best learning comes from first-hand experiences. Therefore, RE is taught using a variety of methods including storytelling, art and craft, examining photographs and paintings, listening to personal testimonies, individual research, drama, dance, music, handling artefacts, visits to places of worship (both actual and virtual) and, where possible, visits from believers. As with all curriculum subjects, there are no statutory requirements as to curriculum time for RE. However, in-line with the Guildford Guidelines, the following minimum hours should be devoted to RE:

- EYFS - there is no set time allocation for Foundation Stage but schools will need to ensure that the statutory units of work are given appropriate coverage within schools' Foundation Stage curriculum;

- Key Stage 1 and 2: 5% of teaching time, ie equivalent to 1½hours a week.

In KS1 80% of RE is spent learning about Christianity. In KS2, this reduces to 70% of RE. In EYFS, the balance of teaching about different religions with teaching about Christianity is linked to the balance of faiths within that year’s intake of pupils.

At The Holme, we have found that RE is more effective when we block allocated time. Collective Worship is not considered to be part of RE and therefore is not counted as part of the recommended allocation of time. RE is also supplemented by Pause Days.

Assessment and Reporting

At The Holme, we use the Diocese of Guildford guidelines assessment sheets at the end of unit to assess children’s attainment. This enables us to track both the quality of RE across the school and to support individual children more effectively. We report children’s achievements to parents as part of our annual reporting.

Withdrawal from RE

Parents/carers may make a clear request, in writing, to the head teacher that their child be withdrawn from RE. However, it should be noted that requests for withdrawal are often based on a misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of RE and discussion of this with the Head Teacher, class teacher and/or RE Leader is vital before a decision to withdraw can finally be made.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school Collective Worship and Values-Based Education policies.

Headteacher:	Ruth Worswick	Date:	February 2016
Chair of Governing Body:	Jeff Batchelor	Date:	February 2016