



# Religious Education Policy

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Only our best will do!

## Albrighton Primary School

### Religious Education (RE) Policy- including Collective Worship

#### Aims

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Albrighton Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights, beliefs and practices. (AT1 - learning about religion). We enable children to deepen or realise their own beliefs, and respect the freedom of other people to hold beliefs different from their own, so preparing them for adult life as citizens in a plural society (AT2 - learning from religion).

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness that many people believe human life depends upon an ultimate being or sustaining creative power often referred to as God;
- Reflect upon the experiences and the mysteries of life and to recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief;
- 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;
- have respect for 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 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 Shropshire LA'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.

The taught syllabus:

- Christianity is included in each Key Stage
- other world religions are included as follows; Reception and Key Stage 1 at least one other religion; Key Stage 2 at least two other religions.

Time allocation:

Minimum recommended teaching time to fulfil the statutory requirements is:

- Reception/KS1 - 25 - 30 hours in each year
- Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 - 35 hours in each year

### **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, Christmas, Eid 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 during whole school assemblies.

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 discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they share these during school assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our 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**

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with Shropshire 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.

Our Scheme of Work for RE takes into account these key ideas and concepts:

Identity, diversity and belonging;

- range of beliefs in a faith, ceremonies  
RQ 1,3,5

Practices and ways of life;

- how people live lives within that faith community  
RQ 14,2

Expressing meaning;

- how to demonstrate meaning through symbols, symbolic actions or colour  
RQ 10

Values and commitments;

- shared values and expectations of their followers

RQ 4,6

Beliefs, teachings and sources;

RQ 9, 8, 13

Meaning, purpose and truth;

- how do religions give sense and purpose to life/death

RQ 7, 11, 12

The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of religious themes and topics.

Key questions form the starting point for whole class discussions. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus and when revisiting religious questions we can ensure challenge and therefore progression. These are updated due to changes in other curriculum areas.

### **Foundation Stage**

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In the EYFS the delivery of RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year and takes place within Knowledge and Understanding of the world. Clear links are made with personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and creative development.

The EYFS curriculum should provide challenge and allow children to:

- develop awareness of their own views and feelings and be sensitive to the views and feelings of others;
- begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Religious Education in the Reception Class will also provide opportunities for children to:

- Become aware of, and able to express, their feelings of joy, sadness, wonder, awe and mystery.
- Care for themselves and for others.
- Become aware of what it means to trust and to be trusted, to be loved and valued and to feel secure in belonging.
- Learn how to listen, thank, say sorry, express appreciation and rejoice with others.
- Appreciate, enjoy and care for their environment.

- Develop greater awareness of their feelings when encountering the special and precious, the wow! And the wonderful.
- Explore some of the signs and symbols used in religious and everyday life.
- Become aware that certain people, including their wider family, places, objects and clothing can have special importance.

Work covered in the Reception class should ensure a smooth transition and prepare children for the style of questioning and thinking required at Key Stage 1.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. This underpins the school ethos as set out in our collective worship policy.

### **The purpose of collective worship in our school**

At Albrighton Primary School, we believe that our collective worship:

- is a special time in the school day and should engender a sense of occasion
- provides opportunities for spiritual development
- is identifiably Christian and references are made to Jesus and his teachings
- can take many forms and that the school provides opportunities for worship rather than worship itself
- gives children the chance to reflect on the great questions and mysteries of life, as well as "the ordinary"
- should be educational and will help us to meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for RE
- should be approached from an 'inclusive' stand point and that all staff and pupils can participate, contribute and benefit
- is approached sensitively and does not assume that staff and pupils are committed or practising believers
- uses prayer from an educational use as well as from personal conviction
- encourages children to learn about and be sensitive to other faiths
- can be a time for celebration e.g of children's achievements and special times
- provides a time to reflect on common values and morals
- fosters a sense of school identity as we all come together in one place
- gives us the chance to be joined by members of the wider community

### **The legal requirements**

Schools are required by law to:

- provide a daily act of worship in which all pupils can take part. Refer to the Educational Reform Act of 1988 which states that "all pupils must have a daily act of worship but they do not all have to be present at the same time. Other groupings are permitted
- ensure that the majority of acts of worship taken over a term will be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character"
- ensure that the broad traditions of Christian belief reflected in the act of worship should be appropriate to the family background of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes
- ensure that staff and pupils can opt out of attending on the grounds of conscience

### Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a Sikh temple, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

### PSHE/Citizenship (See also separate policy)

- At Albrighton Primary we want children to begin to take an active part in the life of their school and its neighbourhood.
- Through Citizenship, pupils learn about themselves as developing individuals and as members of their communities, building on their own experiences and on the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development.
- All areas of the curriculum provide opportunities for children to gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

### Links with the Community

- Children make visits to churches in Albrighton
- Children also visit other places of worship - Gurdwara (Hadley and Wolverhampton)
- Visiting clergy, from a variety of nearby churches, conduct school assemblies throughout the year. They are advised about what is being currently covered in the RE theme for collective worship.
- Groups of children take part in church services at St Mary Magdalene church, Albrighton and at RAF Cosford.
- The head teacher makes occasional contributions to the parish magazine.
- School takes part in Education Sunday Services.
- School regularly has fund raising events for charities i.e. Operation Christmas Child
- Senior citizens are invited to our Harvest assembly where they have tea and a Harvest parcel

### **Resources**

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. Individual classes have a bible and there is a centrally stored collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. Resources are supplemented by topic boxes from the library service and multicultural service. Any gaps in the provision of RE are reported to the subject leader to ensure resources are up to date.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Policy and practice in RE are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis in accordance with the school curriculum development planning cycle.

Signed by Chair of Govenors: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by K. Martin May 2018

Policy Review Date: May 2021