

## Religious Education Policy for Thirsk C.P.School

### **BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT OUR SCHOOL**

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all registered pupils. As RE is not nationally determined, the Local Education Authority provides an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2013-2018, which we use as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE.

RE is concerned with "learning about religions and beliefs" and "learning from religions and beliefs" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

### **Parental rights to withdraw children from RE**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE programme. Where parents have concerns about their children taking part in RE, they are asked to discuss their concerns first with the Headteacher. S/he will be able to discuss the RE programme and teaching methods in greater detail and give parents access to the RE unit materials and resources used. Agreement on alternative provision for the children would need to be reached should they be withdrawn from the RE programme.

### **VALUES AND AIMS**

We believe at this school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in North Yorkshire;
2. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;
3. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
  - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;

- b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
  - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
  - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **Learning**

Religious Education provokes 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. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

### **Teaching**

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and faith visitors, to ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning.

## **ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING** (see school Assessment policy)

Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing. (See North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus pages 30-31 and the pull-out. More detailed guidance can be found in North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus Guidance Document D: A SACRE tool for using the 8 level scale.).

Through activities, for example discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupil's achievements.

## **PLANNING**

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school uses the North Yorkshire units of learning for RE which builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the Agreed Syllabus.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. 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 but do not have to repeat topics. Short term planning of individual lessons is a matter for the class teacher. The RE Subject Leader is available to help with this.

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. There are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Provision for RE is in accordance with the school's equal opportunities policy.

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