



Religious Education Policy

Balfour Primary School

Date: March 2016

Date approved: 23rd March 2016 (FGB)

Review Date: Revised March 2019



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Religious Education Policy

Introduction

This policy is intended for all staff who has any involvement with children in the school, including teachers, teaching assistants and supply teachers. The key elements of this policy will be shared with all relevant parties, including pupils and staff and governors. This consultation process will enable us to ensure that we have a policy that is relevant and accepted by the school community as far as is possible. It is essential that everyone involved in the school is clear on the content of the policy and their relationship to it to ensure both theory and practice are followed consistently.

Relationship to School's Aims

Our principal aim is to create a learning community at Balfour Primary School that enables and encourages all children to succeed and to maximise their potential – as individuals, as lifelong learners and as citizens of our world. We aim to equip children with all of the skills and attributes that will enable them to succeed in their next stages of education and to then contribute successfully to society and in the workplace.

Rationale

In line with our school values and vision statement, we believe that teaching and learning in RE should stimulate curiosity, encourage a love of learning about different cultures and religions and a desire to continue learning throughout life. It should support and enhance our aims as a rights respecting school. RE should develop high level thinking and reflective skills, together with the ability to empathise with others, developing the personal qualities of motivation, self-discipline and commitment to continuing learning. It should further support pupils in considering and developing their own beliefs about and perspectives on religion. This learning must take place in a positive environment where divergent opinion is welcomed and respected.

Statutory Requirements

1. Religious education must be provided for all registered pupils including those with sixth forms. In maintained community, foundation or voluntary schools without a religious character, RE is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus.
2. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education.
3. Individual teachers have the right to withdraw from teaching religious education. (Teachers may withdraw from the teaching of RE unless they have been specifically employed to teach or lead and manage RE. An application to withdraw must be given in writing to the head and chair of governors. Pupils must not miss out on RE teaching because a teacher has withdrawn from teaching RE. The school must make alternative provision for the pupils to be taught RE.)

Goals

As a staff, we aim to develop children's Religious Education in line with the Agreed Syllabus for Brighton and Hove – in consultation with the Standing Advisory Service for Religious Education (SACRE). This syllabus affirms the important contribution that religions make to the education of all pupils growing up in contemporary British society.



The aim of teaching Religious Education is to develop the systematic knowledge and understanding of religions and world views so that pupils and students have opportunities to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions
- and worldviews
- develop insight and understanding of key religious beliefs, teachings and practices, forms of expression and the influence of religion on individuals, families and communities
- learn from the diversity of religious beliefs and worldviews
- ask meaningful questions about the meaning and purpose of life, the nature of reality, questions of right and wrong and the being of God
- develop their sense of identity, affirming their own faith or search for meaning
- flourish as individuals, within communities and as citizens in a plural society and global community.

This locally agreed syllabus gives particular emphasis to:

1. The diversity within Brighton and Hove
2. Conceptual development
3. The acquisition of particular skills and attitudes

Policy Content

The requirements of the Education Reform Act 1996, ch 56, section 375, [3] state that the Agreed Syllabus should '*reflect the fact that the religious traditions are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain*'.

It is a requirement of the locally agreed syllabus that the following religions are taught across the Key Stages:

In Key Stage 1:

- Christianity
- Judaism

In Key Stage 2:

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Islam
- at least one of the following: Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism

Skills:

Whilst it is recognised that there are no skills unique to RE, there are many skills required for this subject, some of which will have greater emphasis and resonance than others. Skills required fall into 3 categories:

Acquisition of knowledge

- Research
- Observation
- Listening and reading
- Enquiry
- Expression (ability to retell the meaning of stories/events)

Reflection, imagination and empathy

- Reflection
- Empathy
- Creative thought and expression



Academic skills

- Interpretation
- Analysis
- Communication
- Evaluation
- Synthesis (linking shared features of religions e.g. shared sacred texts of Islam, Christianity and Judaism)
- Application (how religious faith affects everyday life actions)

For further detailed explanations of the above, please refer to Appendix 2 of the newly agreed syllabus for Brighton and Hove.

Implementation and Methodology

It is important that the programmes of study for RE are adequately met and that there is continuity and progression.

The teaching of RE can be organised in several different ways, and this will depend on the topic being covered. It is up to each individual teacher to decide how they prefer to organise the delivery of RE, remembering that should a teacher wish, they may arrange for a colleague to take the lesson.

Suggestions are:

- As a discreet subject, with a particular time slot of an hour per week
- Through a topic approach where a RE theme may complement a class topic
- As a series of mini topics, independent of the class topic, and covering the specific programmes of study
- Through another curriculum subject - e.g. history or geography - being covered at the time. For example Year 5 study Hinduism through literacy and geography learning, emphasizing the interwoven nature of religious and cultural
- Religious artefacts make a valuable contribution to RE. There are topic boxes for main world religions in the resources room.
- Active learning techniques might include poetry, creative writing, videos, ICT, art, music, recording, reading, visitors and visits.
- Children need to be encouraged to question and explore, through writing, talking, listening, reading and observing. Much of everyday life is RE. Look for a strand and RE is there. A good starting point is to find out what the children already know and where they 'are at'.
- Religious Festivals - much RE arises from the religious events which take place throughout the year. Our whole school focuses on events at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Diwali and key Jewish and Islamic festivals are studied too.



Time allocation

The locally agreed syllabus states: “Schools should allocate sufficient time to deliver RE successfully and to a high standard, enabling all pupils to make progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and associated skills. It is important to provide the time for pupils to explore the content in sufficient depth. The expectation is that a minimum of 5% of curriculum time should be allocated to RE in school.”

This equates to:

- Reception – 36 hours per year integrated into relevant strands of EYFS
- Key Stage 1 – 36 hours per year
- Key Stage 2 – 45 hours per year

Assessment and recording

Recording by children may take variety of forms, but there must be evidence of the work covered.

It may be a written account, diagrammatic, drama based, craft or musical. Children will be expected to learn by developing their skills of:

- Observation
- Listening and talking with pupils
- Judgements about written, oral, visual and practical outcomes
- Self-assessment and reflection

Progression will be found in the children's improved awareness and understanding of religious beliefs and practices, and how these are set within a specific religious tradition.

The approach adopted to assessment in RE should be in line with the principles of Brighton and Hove Syllabus and the school's own AFL and assessment policies. It has been designed so that assessment can be an integral part of the planning process.

Assessment should:

- assist the pupil in learning
- assist the teacher in curriculum evaluation and planning.
- provide information for pupils, teachers, governors, examination employers, the Authority and the Government
- include both formative and summative assessment

It must be recognised that there are a number of matters which are not appropriate to assess in religious education.

These matters include:

- those which pupils may wish to keep to themselves
- the validity of an individual's beliefs and values (religious education should be equally valuable and affirmative to all pupils, whatever their beliefs).

Display

It is important that interactive displays are used as well as displaying work the children have produced.



Roles and Responsibilities & Implementation Procedures

Planning

Medium Term Plans

A year group planner devises half-termly plans which are based on the locally agreed syllabus.

Short Term Plans

The short term plans are produced weekly by a year group planner which identify the objectives to be taught for each lesson and incorporating these into weekly lessons.

The short term plans take account of previous learning by building on skills and understanding that the children have acquired before teaching new concepts.

Places to Visit: Visiting a place of worship is an excellent introduction to a topic.

Some suggestions are:

- St John's, Knoyle Road, Brighton
- St Matthias Church, Ditchling Road, Brighton
- University of Sussex Islamic Society, Brighton
- Synagogue, Middle Street, Brighton

Governors

Governors are responsible for this curriculum area. They should receive an annual report about RE and ensure that they meet the statutory responsibilities in delivering the agreed syllabus

Parents

Parents have the opportunity to see children's work in termly consultation open evenings. They are kept informed of any proposed visit or visitor and have the right to withdraw their child from RE lessons should they so wish though SACRE guidance states that parents are required to provide work of a religious/faith/belief based nature if they choose to withdraw their child from RE and this right does not extend to RE themes being discussed in other areas of the curriculum.

Parents may withdraw their children from RE lessons or any part of the RE curriculum and the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Where the pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parents want the pupil to receive. These arrangements will be made by the parents; - the school is not expected to make these arrangements. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or by another school in the locality. If neither approach is practicable, the pupil may receive external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not significantly impact on the child's attendance.



Monitoring

The Co-ordinator, via agreed non-contact time with the school leadership and management team, will monitor teaching and learning through the school to ensure consistency across each year group and coverage. There should be a review of the policy every three years.

The RE Co-ordinator will monitor the policy in a number of ways:

- Review of planning in each year group
- Monitoring of pupil work (also carried out by Year groups)
- Classroom observations
- Pupil conferencing

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We aim to ensure that all children have equal access to religious education in the curriculum, and have equal opportunities to use a variety of resources as well as experience a balanced range of activities. At Balfour we are aware of the importance of the provision of equal opportunities for all regardless of age, gender, race or religion. This should be borne in mind when planning lessons, preparing resources and in direct teaching in terms of questioning. This policy complies with the aims and requirements as set out in our Equal Opportunities policy.

Cross Curricular Links

By its very nature Religious Education has strong links across other curriculum areas, in particular Geography and History. Creative opportunities are also identified and planned for to enhance learning, for example in art and ICT.

Health & Safety

In formulating this document we have ensured that current Health & Safety guidelines have been adhered to as set out in our school Health & Safety policy.

Review Procedures:

This policy will be due for review in April 2022.