



William Westley Church of England
Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Last reviewed: Jan 2015

Next review due: Jan 2018

William Westley Church of England School Religious Education Policy

General Introduction

The school believes that religious education has a vital part to play in the education of children of primary age. The subject is concerned with:

- ◆ developing knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and other principal religions;
- ◆ **encouraging respect** for those holding different beliefs;
- ◆ promoting spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development.

Religious education is an important school subject. It can make a substantial contribution to the general personal and social development of every child in line with the overall aims of the school.

Religious education has a particular part to play in pupils' spiritual development. We see spiritual development in terms of pupils' capacity to reflect on fundamental aspects of life. This is not to be viewed too narrowly in terms of R.E. and Collective Worship; other subjects should also contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

Religious education has a part to play in helping children to learn about the rich ethnic and cultural diversity found in this country and the wider world. It is also a valuable means of exploring attitudes about the roles of women and men.

Religious education is not concerned with nurturing people in a particular faith.

Religious education in this school is provided under the terms of the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. We endorse the view of R.E. stated in the Agreed Syllabus and the statement that the principal aim of R.E. is to enable pupils to:

'acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the UK, and encourage openness to ask questions and search for answers of meaning and purpose for themselves'

Work in R.E. will contribute to the development of certain general study skills. The subject is particularly suitable as a vehicle for developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. R.E. will involve intellectual challenge for both the most and the least able.

R.E. and Collective Worship are legally distinct. R.E. is an educational process, while worship is an opportunity to take part in the affirmation and celebration of certain basic values. While recognising the separate nature of the two activities, teachers will, on occasion, draw upon work in R.E. as part of worship, and vice versa.

Aims

In this, as in all other subjects, pupils are entitled to a variety of learning experiences. This variety should include an emphasis on:

- ◆ understanding religious concepts such as spirituality, mystery, values and commitment;
- ◆ developing general study skills such as observation, investigation, analysis and investigation;
- ◆ developing sound attitudes such as sensitivity, empathy, reflection and response.

The school will respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child from R.E. Parents should inform the headteacher if they wish to exercise this right. Alternative arrangements will be made to ensure the welfare of these children during the time when R.E. is taught. These arrangements will be discussed with the parents.

Religious education is about religious beliefs today and the challenges faced by all people, regardless of belief. Pupils are entitled to teaching that:

- ◆ stresses the link between content in religious education and the challenges of their everyday life;
- ◆ is inclusive, so that all can derive some understanding, irrespective of their own faith background;
- ◆ includes imaginative activities, such as story, drama and art;
- ◆ makes regular use of visits and visitors from local churches and other faith communities.

Planning

In the Foundation Stage teachers use the Foundation Stage curriculum to explore and learn about other religions and cultures. Throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, all pupils will have access to all the study units found in the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. In line with the legal requirements, at both Key Stages teachers will devote a majority of time to content relating to Christianity. Year groups will also take time to study other World Faiths: Year 1 and 2 will study Sikhism, Year 3 Judaism, Year 4 Islam, Year 5 Hinduism, and Year 6 Buddhism.

Detailed curriculum planning is available in the scheme of work, which states how pupils of different ages will study particular aspects of the Agreed Syllabus using **enquiry-based learning**. This policy simply describes the broad principles of planning.

The scheme of work identifies not only the content to be covered, but also the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will be developed through a particular unit of work in religious education.

Children will have opportunities for learning religious education both individually and through collaboration with others. When planning units teachers will identify particular technical terms and symbols to be covered.

It is expected that all pupils will visit some local churches and other places of worship during their time at school. The conduct of these trips will be in compliance with LEA guidelines on school visits.

Role of the Co-ordinator

The R.E. co-ordinator is responsible for

- Monitoring planning and assessment,
- Supporting teaching and learning,
- Developing subject knowledge,
- Ensuring good practice.

Any staff development needs relating to the teaching of religious education will be identified as part of the school improvement plan by the subject co-ordinator. This could involve:

- ◆ disseminating material from external courses;

- ◆ leading staff meetings and professional development days.

Resources

The school has a range of resources for R.E., some of which are held centrally in the year 5 classroom. There are collections of religious artefacts from the major world faiths, appropriate editions of biblical stories and children's bibles. Topic boxes can be ordered through the Schools Library Service and R.E. Resource Centre at Ely.

Equal Opportunities

At William Westley School we believe every child should have the opportunity to experience success in learning and achieve as high a standard as possible. We aim to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils in this curriculum area and we recognise individual pupil's learning needs.

Evaluation and Assessment

All parents will receive a written comment on R.E. in the annual report to parents. Statements of attainment will comment on the understanding of the knowledge skills and attitudes **not** on pupils' own religious beliefs or their spiritual development.

Assessment, in this as in other subjects, should seek to raise standards of achievement in the subject through:

- ◆ providing teachers with information on individual children's strengths and weaknesses in the subject;
- ◆ informing the planning of future work;
- ◆ involving pupils, in the assessment of their own work.

Review

This is a working document and it should be under constant review. Responsibility for monitoring and review lies with the subject co-ordinator.

This policy was ratified on :

Jan 2015

and will be reviewed by:

Jan 2018

Signed by the Headteacher:

Paul Bryant

Chair of Governors:

Mark Norman

Foundation Governors:

Mary Sutcliffe

Judy Quarrie-Roberts

Caroline Wilson