

Bierton Church of England Combined School Religious Education Policy

'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven' *Matthew 5:16*

Through our Christian Values:

Love

Cooperation

Respect

Responsibility

Honesty



Context of Religious Education at Bierton

Religious Education (RE) enables children to investigate and reflect on some of life's biggest questions. RE assists students in forming values and beliefs that are reflected in behaviours and communication. RE is important because it equips students with cultural, social, moral and spiritual knowledge that aids in mental and physical development within society. The lessons learned in RE prepare students for responsibilities, experiences and opportunities later in life. At Bierton CE Combined School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths, and we address some of the fundamental questions in life. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn 'from religions' (exploring and responding to human experience) as well as 'about religions' (developing knowledge and understanding of religion).

Bierton CE Combined School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school therefore, we deliver RE in line with the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. As a Church of England school, with strong links with the local church, we encourage a Christian ethos that involves the school, the church and the wider community working together.

Aims of Religious Education at Bierton

At Bierton CE Combined School, our aims for RE are in line with following aims for Church of England schools set by The Church of England Statement of Entitlement:

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

Through enquiry based, challenging and engaging RE, we aim for pupils to recognise the impact that faith has on society. Pupils will be encouraged to explore the 'Big Questions' of life, whilst developing a sense of awe and wonder.

Religious Education Scheme of Work

Units and lessons are based on the Diocese of Oxford RE Scheme of Work. The scheme is founded on an Engage, Enquire, Evaluate and Reflect model of teaching which does not have to progress in a linear fashion. Each section can be revisited at any point during a unit of work. A key focus of the scheme is giving children an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and consider what difference their learning is making to their thinking and acting. Each unit has a 'Big Question' which has been created to allow children to experience AT1 (learning about religion) and AT2 (learning from religion) in every unit. Christianity will be the main religion taught, in accordance with the national guidelines. In addition, Judaism will be taught in KS1 and Islam and Sikhism covered in KS2.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) prepares pupils at Bierton for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Bierton's Christian Values

At Bierton CE Combined School, we have Christian Values at the centre of our school ethos. These values are for all pupils and staff to live by and apply to their lives, in and out of school. The values are Love, Cooperation, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. Children learn to understand the importance of these values and how to apply them to their lives and behaviour. When embedded in school life, these values create a happy, nurturing environment in which children can learn and grow. Each half term, we focus on one of the values. We explore each value in collective worship and in class. Children can nominate each other for a particular value on 'good deeds' slips and these are discussed and celebrated in class and then collected in values jars. When a jar is full, the children receive a whole school treat. High standards of behaviour are set and supported by the Bierton Christian Values. Children are given 'Sparkle time' to reflect their effort with behaviour and activities are organised once a week for them to enjoy during this time.

Collective Worship & Prayer

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time. They must also be "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils". At Bierton CE Combined School, we value this special time in the school day as it gives children space to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner. We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children, with whole school and key stage assemblies. Collective Worship focuses on topical issues and events, children's SMSC development or celebrations of children's achievements. Collective Worship includes the sharing of a relevant bible passage and time to light a candle and pray.

Bierton CE Combined School places a high value on prayer and reflection. Every day children are given time to pray, both before lunch and during assembly time. Children share prayers they have written but are also encouraged to think of a spontaneous prayer with a focus on thinking about others. All children are given the opportunity to write prayers for the whole school prayer box and their class prayer book. We have elected Year 5 & 6 'Prayer Leaders', whose role it is to select and read prayers during Collective Worship, light the prayer candle and change the Liturgical table cloth on the prayer table in the hall.

Every week, Collective Worship is led by local clergy. All pupils and staff attend this worship.

Each classroom has its own prayer table. This is a special, respected place in the classroom. On each prayer table there is a bible, a cross, a candle, the classes prayer book or box and a Liturgical table cloth. The tables may also display the Bierton Christian Value

of the term and children are invited to bring in objects that are linked to the termly Christian value. Each class has elected Prayer Table monitors. These children are in charge of keeping the prayer table neat and changing the liturgical cloth.

Religious Education displays in classrooms

Every classroom has a dedicated Religious Education display. These displays include the Bierton Bird with the Christian Values, Children's bible, copy of the Lord's Prayer and the Key Question for the area of RE being discussed. Children can then add to the display with their ideas about the question. The Bierton Bird is changed each half term to reflect the current value. Children are encouraged to think about what this value means to them and create a piece of art on a 'feather' which creates the plumage on display.

Foundation Stage

Foundation Stage children are taught RE through the Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning goals. Learning outcomes are found in the section Personal, Social and Emotional education. RE is planned for within the creative curriculum.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Good teaching in RE allows children to learn about world religions whilst reflecting on what these religious ideas and concepts mean to them. In order to make RE a vibrant subject, we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection during the school day.

Pupils at Bierton experience Christian religious traditions, such as Easter and Christmas, as well as learning about religious traditions of world faiths such as Diwali and Hanukkah. Staff organise visits to the local church and invite visitors into school both from faith communities and those with humanistic views.

Special Educational Needs, Gifted and Talents Pupils & Disadvantaged Pupils.

At Bierton CE Combined School, we are inclusive to all pupils. Through our RE 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. All RE is taught in line with the school's Special Educational Needs, Gifted and Talents Pupils & Disadvantaged Pupils policies.

Assessment

All assessments are made in line with our school Assessment Policy. Teacher assessments are made against the Statements of Attainment as outlined in the 'Unit Assessment Record Sheet'. End of unit assessments are made based on the work covered and the teacher's own end of unit tests, if appropriate. All assessments are collected and analysed by the Religious Education Coordinator.

Monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The Religious Education Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the teaching of RE across the school. This is achieved through book scrutinies, lesson observations and discussion with pupils. It is also the responsibility of the Religious Education Coordinator to support colleagues in the teaching of RE and for sharing current developments in the subject, including leading staff meetings.

The Head of School and Religious Education Coordinator are responsible for completing the SIAMS Self-Evaluation Tool Kit and in providing updates to the Governing Body as required.

Withdrawal

Under the terms of 1988 Education Reform Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. At Bierton CE Combined School, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Bierton CE Combined School.