

Aughton Town Green School

Religious Education Policy

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and staff. This Policy has been approved by the Governors and will be reviewed by the Headteacher and RE Leader annually.

The context of RE

As a community school, Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus 'Searching for Meaning'. This is an ambitious curriculum and outlines the curriculum intent and methods of implementation that will enable all pupils to achieve well and attain high-level outcomes by the end of each key stage. The curriculum is taught from Reception to Y6 and reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.

The syllabus aims to support pupil's personal search for meaning as they explore what it means to be human. It follows the Lancashire 'Field of Enquiry' medium term planning model, but also specifies knowledge and skills, which build towards clear goals at the end of each key stage. This ensures that the curriculum is progressive, clearly sequenced and suitably ambitious. It is rooted in disciplinary knowledge based in theology, social sciences and philosophy.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. The taught syllabus is not designed to convert pupils, or to promote a particular religion or religious belief. As a school, we maintain that teaching about religions and worldviews should be sufficiently fair, balanced and open. We aim to promote mutual respect and understanding, whilst not undermining or ignoring the role of families and religious or belief organisations in transmitting values to successive generations.

Purpose and Aims of Religious Education

We believe that studying religious and non-religious worldviews is essential if pupils are to be well prepared for life in our increasingly diverse society. Pupils need to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to make sense of the complex world in which they live so that they can 'respect religious and cultural differences and contribute to a cohesive and compassionate society'.

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. Pupils learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Pupils are encouraged to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences so that they can hold balanced and well informed conversations about religions and worldviews whilst respecting the views of others.

Our curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
 - identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews; and
 - appreciate and evaluate the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- 1. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
 - express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues; and
 - appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.
- 2. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
 - enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all; and
 - articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Curriculum Structure – what we teach, when.

CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL ORGANISATION

The Lancashire Agreed Syllabus sets out a programme of Religious Education that explores shared human experience, religious traditions, beliefs and values and personal meaning.

In order to achieve the aims, the content of the Religious Education curriculum forming no less than 5% of the overall curriculum time, is delivered through the syllabus that allows progression. This equates to approximately one hour each week.

Religious Education is taught through the use of curriculum units and non-statutory lesson plans produced by Lancashire Education Department. A framework of half-termly units ensures an appropriate coverage and balance of the content in terms of religions to be covered. The balance allows for Christianity to form at least 50% but not more than 75% of the R.E. curriculum. The remaining Religions studied in addition to Christianity are; Islam, Judaism, Hindu Dharma, Buddhism, Sikh Dharma and non-religious worldviews. Islam and Hinduism are chosen for progression throughout the school whilst the remaining religions are studied for a minimum of one unit each and placed within the curriculum framework accordingly. These religions can be developed within the Creative Curriculum: teachers can consider linking a particular religion within a theme or teach the religion discreetly: a religion can be taught in weekly sessions or in, for example, a two or three week block.

At Aughton Town Green, Religious Education is taught in two ways. KS1 as a yearly set of themes for Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 is taught in a two-year cycle (rotating curriculum) in order to accommodate the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus; follow the same themes in Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. The Foundation Stage has been designed to enable children to learn prior to Key Stage 1. New unit materials for the Foundation Stage have been incorporated within the Early Learning Goals. Guidance for the contribution of R.E. to the Early Learning Goals can be found in the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus, pages 40-42. New non-statutory units for Foundation Stage 2 are available.

The themes of study are:

Key Stage Year Theme

EYFS – Reception – Special Places

Key Stage One - Year One - God

Year Two Worship

Key Stage Two - Year Three Founders and Leaders

Year Four Living the Faith

Year Five Sacred Books and Revered Literature

Year Six Life as a Journey

The focus of the syllabus is a study of "Beliefs and Values". Beliefs and values are lived through "Religious Traditions"; these are the observable features, the witness to belief. Pupils will explore "Shared Human Experience" to reach an understanding of religious traditions, which in turn can be regarded as a "window" to view beliefs and values. It is important that the children be given opportunities to respond individually.

Within the Scheme of Work, based on the Agreed Syllabus, learning activities are sequenced to ensure progression following the Primary Framework. Children are engaged in both learning about and learning from religion, through a broad range of teaching strategies, with effective use of specific resources; artefacts, I.C.T., food, story, and sacred texts. I.C.T. is progressively used to enhance the teaching and accessibility of R.E.

When appropriate and where possible, use will be made of home links and of links with faith communities to enrich the provision. Staff may invite parents into the class to bring personal experience to support the teaching of Religious Education. Staff will be aware of the need to avoid proselytizing by members of faith communities.

PLANNING

The school recognises that planning is necessary to achieve clear, achievable goals. Effective planning ensures that work is matched to pupils' abilities, experiences and interests. Opportunity will be given for the development of cross-curricular skills of oracy and literacy. Effective spiral curriculum planning ensures progression, continuity and subject coverage throughout the school. At the planning stage, motivation to the pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development will be considered. Planning provides criteria for evaluation of teaching and learning.

As indicated above, planning is undertaken on a half-termly basis. Within that framework, the planning for Religious Education will ensure an appropriate balance between consideration of shared human experience, learning about religious traditions, and about beliefs and values and an exploration of personal meaning.

Planning for these half-termly units is undertaken by the class teachers whose year groups are working together. The school makes use of the Lancashire materials for curriculum planning. Plans are made available to the co-ordinator at the beginning of half terms for monitoring purposes.

The teachers' knowledge of the religions studied is enhanced through applicable course provided by Lancashire County Council Advisory Service. Also whole school Inset Courses are delivered (if required) by the R.E. advisor/consultant.

INCLUSION

At our school, we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education complements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress.

We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, including gifted pupils, ethnicity and social circumstance, have access to the curriculum and make the greatest progress possible.

Curriculum Implementation – how we teach Religious Education well.

Effective pedagogy e.g.

- Well planned, clearly structured lessons, which drive forward key skills and knowledge.
- Sequenced lessons that connect chunks of learning over time.
- Accurate information, vocabulary and good subject knowledge.
- Clear instruction and modelling to introduce the key learning.
- Varied questioning techniques to stimulate discussion, promote enquiry, deepen learning and support assessment.
- Engaging resources and teaching strategies.
- Opportunities for discussion and reflection to develop personal meaning. Time is given for consideration of deep learning around ' bigger questions'.
- How teachers tackle sensitive issues.
- Use of Resources to support and extend learning.
- Learning is adapted to meet the needs of different pupils. Such as SEND pupils, who may have additional challenges and needs. Requiring additional support to access the curriculum.
- Reference to the Practice Code for Teachers of RE [see RE website for the 8 principles].

Assessment recording and reporting

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is used to inform future planning and to provide information about individuals throughout their time in this school.

Assessment techniques will ensure that teachers assess the on-going learning process and not just the finished outcomes.

These techniques should include:

- teachers' observation of pupils
- teacher – pupil discussion and teacher questioning
- pupils' drawings, notes, models, comments and written work
- pupils' on-going analysis of their achievements
- photographs of children engaged in Religious Education activities
- use of Computing as appropriate

Assessment must match statutory requirements for the subject, teacher assessment is statutory.

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy.

At Aughton Town Green pupils' progress in R.E. is assessed following two attainment targets, which are based on end of Key Stage statements:

AT1 – Learning about religion and human experience.

Results of attainment in Key Stage 1 and 2 are reported to SACRE, at the end of each school year.

RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

Records of pupils' achievements are kept to:

- plan pupils' future learning
- report progress to parents
- maintain a written record of pupils' learning
- provide a curricular record for each pupil
- fulfil legal requirements

Information on a child's progress in Religious Education will be communicated to parents in a written report at the end of each academic year.

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education is taught in accordance with our school's Equality Opportunity Policy. Stereotypes are avoided. Attempts are made to ensure that examples of religious figures reflect all aspects of diversity within society.

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.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and awareness of Prevent and British values.

Links with other subjects

Although Religious Education is taught as a **separate subject discipline**, opportunities arise in lessons for children to **apply skills** from other subject areas. For example in English, art, drama, computing, technology. This ensures that the curriculum is taught in a creative and engaging manner as well as being knowledge rich and ambitious.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Standard self-evaluation procedures are used to monitor and evaluate pupil achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of curriculum provision in Religious Education.

The subject leader will maintain a clear overview of the intent, implementation and impact of Religious Education through planned monitoring tasks included with the school's overall monitoring schedule. This might involve reporting to SLT and Governors to support their evaluation and contributing to the school's 'self-evaluation' in preparation for the next Ofsted inspection.

It is the statutory duty of the governing body to ensure that:

- Religious Education is included in the basic curriculum and that the school meets its statutory duties.
- Sufficient time and resources are devoted to Religious Education to provide a curriculum of quality.

Withdrawal

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We aim to provide an open curriculum, which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Our full guidance on withdrawal can be found on the school website.

Visitors and visits to places of worship

We enrich the curriculum by organising visits to places of worship in the immediate vicinity of the school. Faith leaders and other members of the community are also invited when appropriate to contribute to learning in the classroom as an additional valued resource.

Guidance on visits and visitors can be found in the school's visitor policy.

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits.