

Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Date adopted by governors
April 2021
To be reviewed
April 2024

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

In the teaching and learning of Religious Education we will have opportunities to cover the following UNICEF articles:

Article 12: *You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.*

Article 13: *You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, and writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.*

Article 14: *Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children information about this right.*

Article 17: *You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.*

Article 28: *You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.*

Article 29: *Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*

Article 30: *You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion - or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.*

VALUE STATEMENT

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of R.E. at Blanford Mere Primary School. The school follows the Dudley Agreed Syllabus.

It promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school. It encourages children to understand, respect and tolerate, in order to prepare them for living in today's multi-cultural society.

R.E. fosters curiosity, open-mindedness, cooperation and responsibility.

AIMS

Our aims in teaching R.E. are to;

- Develop within pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices, experiences and insights.
- Develop within the pupils' an awareness of life experiences and religious questions which they raise
- Encourage the deepening or realisation of the pupils' own belief, and respecting the freedom of others to hold beliefs different from one's own.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL

Religious Education forms part of the school's contribution to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development of pupils.

This will be undertaken by:

Providing knowledge and insight into values and beliefs

Encourage pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences

Helping pupils to understand the principles of right and wrong

Encouraging positive relationships and participation in the community

Encouraging the idea of taking responsibility for one's own actions

Helping pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions

Helping pupils to appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING OF R.E.

Religious Education should;

- Be part of the school curriculum as an entitlement for all pupils
- Be taught in a way which is appropriate to the stage of development of the pupils
- Be relevant to the experience of pupils whether or not they have a faith background
- Not undermine the faith or cultural background of any pupil.

STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF R.E.

The R.E. curriculum is organised on a topic basis wherein;

- A programme of topics is followed throughout the school (see curriculum map)
- The following time allocations exist for R.E.

Key Stage 1 - 1 hour each week

Key Stage 2 - 1 hour each week

However, this time can be blocked where the experience shared by the pupils will be more valuable.

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN R.E.

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus;

1. Learning *about* Religions
2. Learning *from* Religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impacts on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

REMOTE LEARNING

Remote learning for Religious Education will be shared with families when they are absent due to the Covid related reasons.

Remote learning will not be available to those who are ill with a non-Covid related illness and would not normally attend school, or to those children whose parents choose to keep them at home when they have not been advised to do so. This is because children need to be in school and, in line with Government guidance, the school will strongly promote face-to-face contact through school attendance.

Work will NOT be set on the first day of isolation to allow staff time to prepare. Work will be sent from the second day onwards. Staff will prepare work the day before it is set and will ensure that it is published the following morning.

- A child who has a member of their household, who has tested positive for Covid-19 and are not permitted to attend school because they have been in close contact and have been advised to self-isolate;
- A child's whole bubble or identified pupils who is not permitted to attend school because they, or another member of their bubble, have tested positive for Covid-19.
- A child unable to attend school due to a local or national lockdown

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/INCLUSION AND GIFTED AND TALENTED.

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN and EAL are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. For example;

- Pupils with difficulties are given differentiated work if appropriate
- Pupils with particular ability and flair for R.E. who work more quickly are extended through the use of planned activities.

Within the teaching of RE we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as religious holidays and cultural experiences, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. One way of doing this is through our links with local religious communities and places of worship. We try to ensure that children have at least one local RE visit/visitor every year. Visitors are invited to whole school assemblies from a variety of local religious communities (see Appendix).

Through RE children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects.

STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY

Planning in R.E. is a process in which all teachers are involved, wherein;

- The foundation for curricular planning is the Whole School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors.
- Schemes of work for R.E. are developed by the co-ordinator and planned and delivered by individual class teachers.
- Work plans (including detailed lesson plans) are drawn up by individual teachers for each half term and monitored by the co-ordinator.

For pupils in the Early Years there is a separate but similar curriculum statement more suited to their needs from the Foundation Stage Documents.

THE ROLE OF THE R.E. COORDINATOR

The role of the R.E. Coordinator is to;

- Attend regular training and professional development
- Organise inset and training for other members of staff when necessary.
- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in R.E. throughout the school
- Support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the scheme of work and in assessment and record keeping activities
- Monitor progress in R.E. and advise the headteacher on action needed
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for RE
- Keep up-to-date with developments in R.E. education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

FEEDBACK TO PUPILS

Feedback about their own progress in R.E. is achieved through the marking of work. Effective marking

- Aims to help children learn, not to find fault, and comments aim to be positive and constructive
- Is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher
- Of written work is used sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time - this will vary according to age and ability.
- Target-setting and planning is informed by this marking structure.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils in R.E. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what, therefore, should be the next stage of his/her learning. Suitable tasks for assessment include;

- Small group discussions, perhaps in the context of a practical task
- Short tests in which the teacher gives questions orally and pupils write answers
- Specific assignments for individual pupils
- Individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress

STRATEGIES FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING

Reporting to parents is done three a year through 3-way interviews and annually through a written report. Reporting in R.E. will focus on each child's

- Development during the year, concentration on work covered, plus aptitude and attitude to the underlying principles covered.

CENTRAL RESOURCES IN R.E.

Central resources are the responsibility of the R.E. coordinator;

- They are held in the central resource room in the R.E. boxes that are labelled.
- A set of Bibles, books and teacher guides are kept in the library.

Artefacts should be used with great respect as many must be handled with certain 'rules' in mind. Teachers should read the artefact notes very carefully before showing them to the class. Each concept box contains most of the resources needed to explore the concept. Other resources can be found in the artefact boxes. There is an up-to-date list in the RE co-ordinator's file.

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

The 1944 Education Act, reaffirmed in the 1988 Act, gives parents the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE.

The use of the right of withdrawal should be at the instigation of parents (or students themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and should be in writing. It should make it clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. Where pupils are withdrawn from RE schools have a duty to supervise them though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

The head teacher will invite parents who wish to exercise their right of withdrawal to discuss their request with the school. Schools may ensure that parents who wish to withdraw their child from RE are aware of the educational objectives of RE, the importance of RE, what is being covered in the RE curriculum and that they are given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.

Whilst parents or carers have a right to withdraw their children from the subject of RE, they should note that children may also encounter religions and beliefs in other parts of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal. Every school has a duty to promote community cohesion and this includes helping pupils understand ideas about identity and diversity, including within a religious context and a context of non-religious beliefs.

APPENDIX

Regular visitors to Blanford Mere Primary School (2020-2021) include:

- Paul Wilmott (ARISE Church, Kingswinford) regular assembly speaker/dramatic story teller
- Rev. Giles (St. Mary's Church, Kingswinford)
- Wall Heath Evangelical Free Church, Kingswinford
- 'Open The Book' (Church of the Ascension, Kingswinford)