

RED ROSE SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) POLICY

Updated: October 2017

All policies are to be read in conjunction with the School's statement of its goals (Sec1 Chap1), ethos (Sec1 Chap3) and curriculum planning (Sec3 Chap4). This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Religious Education (RE) taught at Red Rose School.

DESIGNATION OF SCHOOLS HAVING A RELIGIOUS CHARACTER

The Red Rose School is a school with a religious character, defined as being a Christian School. [Designation of Schools Having a Religious Character (Independent Schools) (England) (No.3) Order 2003, 23rd December 2003.]

AIMS

At Red Rose School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. 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 as well as about religions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RE

Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary 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. It can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these.

RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. RE can also make important contributions to other parts of the school curriculum such as citizenship, personal, social, health and economic

education (PSHE education), the humanities, education for sustainable development and others. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally and cross-culturally.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils 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.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community cohesion

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

- **The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- **The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
- **The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.
- **The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

In summary, religious education for children and young people:

- provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.
- develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- teaches pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- prompts pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADTEACHERS

Headteachers, must:

- ensure that RE is provided as part of the school's basic curriculum.
- provide an annual report to parents or carers giving brief particulars of progress and achievements in all subjects including RE.

PARENTS

Parents and carers can obtain information on their child's RE from the school. They should receive information from the school on how their child is progressing in the subject.

The right of withdrawal

The parent of a pupil has the right to request in writing that the pupil be excused from all or part of the RE provided. They do not have to provide a reason and the school must comply with their request.

PUPILS

All pupils are entitled to receive RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum at school which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

BREADTH AND DEPTH IN THE AGREED SYLLABUS

Breadth and depth in RE for all pupils can be achieved if the following are taken into account:

- Pupils should develop understanding of concepts and mastery of skills to make sense of religion and belief, at an appropriate level of challenge for their age.
- RE should provide opportunities for pupils to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect and relate their learning in RE to their own experience.
- Building on the statutory requirements, it is recommended that there should be a wide ranging study of religion and belief across the key stages as a whole.
- Not all religions need to be studied at the same depth or in each key stage, but all that are studied should be studied in a way that is coherent and promotes progression.
- Pupils should have the opportunity to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives, and subject matter should facilitate integration and promotion of shared values.
- The study of religion should be based on the legal requirements and provide an appropriate balance between and within Christianity, other principal religions, and, where appropriate other religious traditions and worldviews, across the key stages as a whole, making appropriate links with other parts of the curriculum and its cross-curricular dimensions.

GOOD PRACTICE FOR HEADTEACHERS

As well as meeting the legal requirements schools should ensure that RE is:

- of a high standard, where expectations are clear to pupils, parents, teachers, governors, employers and the public
- coherent and shows progression, particularly across the transitions of the key stages and post
- contributing to the school's duty to promote community cohesion and high standards of achievement
- well understood by the school community, who have confidence in the school's provision and achievement.

TEACHING

We base our teaching in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with national curriculum adapted for our school's local situation. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. As we have mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.

Short term plans lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson.

CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO THE TEACHING OF OTHER SUBJECTS

Literacy

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of Literacy by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and CD ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Our pupils undertake AQA Unit Awards.

RESOURCES

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units.