

Monksmoor Park CE Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Date ratified by Governors:
23rd September 2020

Dates reviewed by Governors:

1. 9th December 2020
2. 9th March 2023

Note: This document takes account of the most up to date central government information and guidance, at the time of writing (see footer). It is subject to change as guided by government policy.

Introduction

“Religious Education in a Church School should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person”.

(Taken from the Statement of Entitlement – Church of England Education Office 2019).

At Monksmoor Park CE Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high quality RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the ‘Understanding Christianity’ resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil’s own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the Diocese of Peterborough RE syllabus we learn about other religions and worldviews, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian values and vision are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

National and Local Context

Monksmoor Park CE Primary School is a new primary school located in the heart of the local community, currently serving children from Nursery to Year 4. We provide a range of opportunities for pupils to make links between beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied. We have close links with the Holy Cross Church in Daventry and are supported by Reverend Dawn who is a member of our governing body. She leads Collective Worship in school weekly and additionally visits the school to support RE lessons and community events. We offer our children visits to the Holy Cross Church for them to gain first-hand experiences of Christian worship.

Our Vision

Our vision of ‘Nurturing all to flourish and aspire’ is supported by RE in providing a caring environment where children feel secure and able to express their own views and beliefs. A range of religions and viewpoints are explored and children are encouraged to value their own opinions and beliefs, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others. RE makes an important contribution to the teaching of our Christian values, as pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the school and of the wider community. Through the teaching of RE, our children will have the tools they need to grow up to be responsible citizens of the world.

Aims and Intentions

The principal aim for Religious Education is **“to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief”**.

(Taken from the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus and based on continuing Diocesan Adviser work on the Purpose of RE – www.reonline.org.uk/news/revision-rethinking-re-a-conversation-about-religious-and-theological-literacy/)

Religious Education (RE) Policy

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church Schools as taken from the “Church of England Statement of Entitlement 2019”. For pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs, using an approach that critically engages with biblical text;
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied;
- Engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience;
- Recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain’s cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places;
- Explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith;
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning;
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none;
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Legislation and Guidance

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents’ request.

(DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28)

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in Key Stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to ‘all registered pupils at the school’, it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or playgroups.

Right of Withdrawal

In keeping with the law, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. Parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. The school must ensure that suitable supervision is provided for the pupil. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all pupils admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making such a decision.

Staff always refer to the Subject Leader or Headteacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. There are no pupils withdrawn from RE at present.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governors

The Governors are responsible for ensuring that RE is taught as effectively as possible. They work alongside the Headteacher and RE Lead to support teachers to provide an excellent RE education.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's RE policy and take any necessary action. The Headteacher works with the governors and RE Lead to monitor the effectiveness of RE teaching and support the RE Lead to ensure the day-to-day running of this policy.

The RE Lead

The RE Lead is Emma Williams. The RE Lead has the following responsibilities:

Policy, knowledge and development

- Reviews the School RE Policy annually;
- Devises a whole school Long Term Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Decides which religions are to be included at which key stage, based on the syllabus requirements;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient across the school;
- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy;
- Ensures that SEN and EAL policies are promoted in RE;
- Promotes RE with staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- Audits available resources, buys new ones and deploys appropriately;
- Keeps up-to-date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

- Reviews, monitors and evaluates the provision and the practice of RE;
- Identifies trends, makes comparisons and knows about different groups within the school;
- Monitors planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
- Provides observation feedback and reports on findings;
- Samples pupil's work;
- Evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment;

Supporting and Advising

- Leads curriculum development and ensures staff development through courses, in-house meetings and training;
- Keeps up-to-date with new developments and resources, including accessing the Diocese of Peterborough termly RE Newsletter;
- Supports non-specialist teachers and staff;
- Works alongside colleagues to demonstrate good practice;
- Prepares statements about RE for parents and governors, as required;

The Class Teachers

The role of the class teacher is to follow this policy; ensure their planning and teaching is in line with the school syllabus; use resources to teach RE effectively to all children in their class, including those with EAL and SEN; engage with RE training and CPD and act on advice given.

Cross-curricular Links

RE supports the development of a wide range of educational skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues, which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in RE on different occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts;
- Consume food;
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to the guidelines set out in the school's Health and Safety Policy in these circumstances.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This will be in accordance with the school's curriculum policy.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- Contributes to British Values (mutual tolerance, respectful attitudes, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews;
- Enables pupils to develop their religious literacy;
- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews;
- Supports the development of other curriculum areas and a wide range of skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs;
- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs;
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it;
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Curriculum Balance and Time

Our teaching and learning pedagogy uses an enquiry-based approach that engages with text and beliefs and helps to develop religious and theological literacy. We organise our RE curriculum in accordance with the Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office. RE is taught for 60 minutes per week in Key Stage 1 and will be taught for 75 minutes per week in Key Stage 2. RE forms part of our continuous provision in EYFS. As we are a church school, Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group, forming 50% of curriculum time. Collective Worship does not count as part of this entitlement and is delivered in addition to RE curriculum time.

Quality Assurance

We ensure that there is external verification of standards in RE. Our Ethos Team, consisting of the Headteacher, the RE Lead, our Parish Reverend and some of the Governors work together on the school's SIAMS self-evaluation tool to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of RE in our school.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

School policies regarding special educational needs, the gifted and talented and differentiation apply to RE. Teachers will work to remove any academic barriers to support the full engagement of all pupils. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This, of course, may not relate to their general educational 'ability'.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in RE will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in "Understanding Christianity" and the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus;
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Diocesan Syllabus;
- Be updated on Learning Ladders at least on a half-termly basis;
- Be used to inform and adapt future planning;
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- Follow the school's marking and feedback and assessment policies, identifying progress and achievement as well as effort;
- Include pupil self-assessment;
- Examine work in both pupil's individual RE books and class floor books;
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress through the use of Learning Ladders to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development;
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

An annual report for RE informs parents of their child's progress and attainment, as required by law. We will make specific, individual, accurate comments on each child's progress in RE in this report, based on regular monitoring of work and with regard to the end of phase outcomes. We will transfer this information to new schools when pupils leave us.

Metacognition and Long-Term Memory

Teachers plan exciting and immersive activities that are memorable for children, encouraging learning to move into their long-term memory. We incorporate multisensory activities that tap into the whole brain and allow children to make better connections. The use of knowledge organisers aids memory and encourages children to recall and make links to previous learning. Children who are struggling to commit learning to long-term memory are identified and strategies and interventions are put in place to support them in developing their working memory skills.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that all staff and governors will review this policy annually.

Self-Evaluation, RE and Inspection

The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and areas for development of the subject, in line with guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Striving for Excellence

We know that RE makes a powerful contribution to children and young people's learning. It provides them with the chance to explore the big ideas of religion and belief and to think about what matters in their own lives. We look at the continuing role of religion in contemporary British and global society.

We aim to make our school a challenging but safe space for pupils to explore their own and others' religious, spiritual and philosophical convictions critically and responsibly. We give opportunities to engage in dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.

High quality RE supports the development of the whole child. It also has a significant contribution to make to whole school improvement.

We continuously strive for excellence for all our pupils in Religious Education.

Named RE Subject Leader:

Headteacher:

Date:

Review Date: