

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Tadcaster East Community Primary School, in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act, provides Religious Education for all pupils registered at the school. Religious Education is part of the basic curriculum but not part of the National Curriculum. Religious Education has the same status and importance as any other subject and the same high standards are applied to Religious Education teaching and learning as to all other subjects. We teach Religious Education according to the aims of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus, which clearly states that Religious Education should not seek to urge religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs

Rationale

Through their work in RE children explore, analyse and reflect on a range of religious and non-religious responses to basic human questions of meaning and purpose. In particular Religious Education:

helps children to know about and understand the religious beliefs, values, experiences, practices and traditions by which people live and make sense of their shared human experience;

enables children to examine and draw upon their own experience through reflection and response.

Religious Education therefore has an important contribution to make to children's personal and social development and especially to their spiritual, moral and cultural development

Aims and Purposes

RE has two main aims: to enable children to learn about religions and to learn from religions. It aims to achieve this by providing opportunities for children to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- explore issues within and between faiths to help their understanding of different religions, beliefs, values and traditions;
- consider questions of meaning and purpose in life and different responses to these
- learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to begin to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;
- respond to what they are learning, drawing on their own experience and previous learning in RE and other areas of the curriculum
- develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;

- develop enquiry and response skills through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy;
- reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses

Objectives

- To foster children's feelings of awe and wonder, delight and mystery: to help them face and learn from painful experiences which they may encounter such as fear, suffering and death.
- To develop children's understanding that life is a series of significant stages
- To introduce children to the lives of key figures in different faith traditions and to people who have responded to their teaching
- To give children the language and experiences, which will help them to develop religious concepts and understanding of religious beliefs held by other people
- To familiarise children with sacred books, writings and stories
- To stimulate in children a curiosity about and a search for knowledge about worship, ritual festival and other expressions of religious practice.
- To develop skills in children – such as music, movement, art and design, so that they are able to respond to religious ideas which have been transmitted in such forms and, where appropriate, express their own feelings in such form.
- To help children develop the confidence to express their own beliefs and feelings about religion and show respect to those of others

Broad outline programme

The four main areas for the broad outline programme are as follows

- Learning processes
- Dimensions
- Faith traditions
- Life Experiences

Throughout the Key Stages the programme is organised on a three-year cycle. Work is planned to enable children in each Key Stage to work together on a shared topic but at a level and in ways, which are appropriate to their age and ability. In each stage children develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity alongside Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

In the Foundation Stage children are made aware that more than one faith tradition exists.

The full programme builds progressively on children's learning and experience and enables the school to meet fully the statutory requirements of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus

Teaching and Learning

Religious Education is an exciting, stimulating subject, which will be taught in a way that engages pupils in a variety of activities appropriate to their age, ability and previous experience.

Wherever possible the children will have the opportunity to learn through exploring and experiencing:

- places of worship
- meeting and talking to visitors
- handling religious artefacts, paintings and writings
- research, including use of video and the Internet
- class teaching/individual work/work in groups

Children will be given the opportunity to reflect on religion through:

- exploring and expressing personal values
- experiencing stillness
- evaluating their experiences and discoveries
- expressing their ideas with confidence and sensitivity
- developing appropriate responses when encountering other people's beliefs
- reflecting on their own progress in this area

Children will be encouraged to record their learning and experiences through

- drama/mime/role play
- dance/music
- art/technology
- written and oral work
- presentation and displays of work

Learning across the Curriculum

RE makes a very important contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

RE also contributes to children's personal and social development and their learning in health education and citizenship

RE has a valuable contribution to make to the development of key skills especially:

- Communication
- Working with others
- Information technology
- Problem solving

- Improving own learning and performance

Other key aspects of the whole curriculum which RE supports are:

- Thinking skills – learning about and learning from religions includes skills of research, selection, analysis, interpretation, reflection, empathy, synthesis, application of a range of beliefs and values to practical issues.
- Financial capability- exploring issues of value, basic human rights, responsibility for caring for others, the role of the voluntary organisations and giving to charity
- Enterprise education – analysing the beliefs and values which lie behind individual and community actions on behalf of self or others
- Creative thinking skills – exploring, analysing and reflecting on questions of personal fulfilment, vocation, aspiration and sources of inspiration and discovery; the connection between beliefs, values and the creative arts.
- Education for sustainable development – exploration and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs about the origin and value of life; the impact of these on how human beings understand the significance of the world and of themselves; how this is shown in the ways individuals and communities treat each other and the environment and use the world's resources.

Assessment, Recording and reporting to Parents

Pupil progress is monitored and assessed against the differentiated learning objectives for each unit and against the QCA eight levels of attainment.

Assessment is planned for and carried out on a regular basis through teacher's assessment of children's oral, written and creative work.

The Annual Report to parents includes information on the work covered in RE, and on pupils' knowledge understanding and progress in the subject.

Equal Opportunities

Provision for RE is in accordance with the schools equal opportunities policy.

In accordance with the aims of the school the pupils will develop an appreciation of and respect for the beliefs and philosophies of others. Pupils will be encouraged to value the rich variety of cultural traditions and lifestyles represented in Great Britain. It is acknowledged and respected that deep beliefs

are held in the area of Religious Education. It is therefore our aim to deal with any matters arising as sensitively as possible.

Provision for children with special educational needs, including more able children will follow the school's policies in these areas. Children's needs are carefully monitored and supported through teacher planning and assessment. This enables objectives, tasks, teaching methods, resources and teacher/adult input to be matched to pupil needs. It includes the use of more challenging objectives or extension materials and tasks for the more able

Resources

Pupils will have access to a range of resources including:

- visitors to school
- published materials
- visual and audio materials
- computers
- religious artefacts

Legal background

The school is required by law to teach RE to all pupils registered at the school. The RE programme must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in this country are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. The RE programme must meet the requirements of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus

Parental rights to withdraw children from RE

Under the Education Acts, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE programme. Where parents have concerns about their children taking part in RE, they are asked to discuss their concerns first with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will be able to discuss the RE programme and teaching methods in greater detail and give parents access to the RE unit materials and resources used. Agreement on alternative provision for the children would need to be reached should they be withdrawn from the RE programme.