

RISE PARK PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Signed MDU Chair of Governors

Date 2/2/16

Rise Park Primary and Nursery School

Religious Education (R.E.) Policy

Aims and objectives

The aim of Religious Education is to enable children to investigate and reflect upon some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Rise Park Primary and Nursery School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths and we address the fundamental questions concerning, 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 faiths, with particular emphasis on the main faiths of the children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have faith and develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. The teaching of RE at Rise Park Primary and Nursery school is concerned with "learning about religions" and "learning from religion" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

We believe at our school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
2. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
3. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions
4. enhance their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
 - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
 - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
 - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
 - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. develop an understanding of religious traditions and to recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within a religiously diverse society.
6. have respect for other people's views, and celebrate diversity in society.

Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children:

- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;

- to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions or value systems adhered to in the UK;
- to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
- to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

Teaching and learning styles

The teaching of RE within our school, contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provides opportunities for reflection on six key areas.

- Belief and Teachings – e.g. stories, prophets, founders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death
- Religious Practices and Lifestyles – e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artifacts, lifestyle choices, effects on individuals
- Ways of Expressing Meaning – e.g. art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, silence/stillness
- Human Identity, Personality and Experience – e.g. preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people
- Questions of Meaning and Purpose – e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences
- Values and Commitments – e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, moral dilemmas

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

We base our teaching and learning style 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 and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover, etc. to develop understanding of theirs and others.

Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT, works of art, artefacts, visits and visitors.

Throughout the planning of RE, aspects of all six principal faiths are explored over key stage one and two. We have used a combination of teaching RE through topics (or blocks of work where more than one curriculum area is linked together in a coherent way) and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

There are many opportunities for cross curricular teaching and learning and to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues throughout the curriculum. Moral questions will be raised and 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. Children's skills in speaking and listening and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

RE and Inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE 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 organization, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment for Learning

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress (in line with our marking policy). Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a labelled box of equipment for each religion studied. There is a good supply of RE topic books, photos, DVDs and artefacts within our school. In addition to these we use and value the contribution of visitors and use a wealth of websites to share interactive activities and video clips.

Monitoring and Review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring teaching and learning in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. As previously mentioned, the RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the Medium term planning on a termly basis.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five year olds. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notices to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the LAs Agreed Syllabus, and it meets all the requirements set out in the document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religious.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Signed:

Date: