



Cleobury Mortimer Primary School Religious Education (RE) Policy

Subject Leader – Mrs N Mountjoy

School Aims

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Cleobury Mortimer Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.

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 major 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 style

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, Holi, etc, to develop their religious thinking. We organise 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 investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups. Sometimes, they prepare presentations on a computer and share these in assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, e.g. by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);

- grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

RE curriculum planning

RE is a foundation subject and 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 unit of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. This links in with the 'Progression of skills' document.

From September 2020 the school will follow a scheme of work, written by RE today, which works alongside the Key Questions from the RE Shropshire Agreed Syllabus 2014.

The curriculum ensures that:

- Christianity is taught in more depth;
- two other religions (Judaism and Hinduism) are taught in more depth;
- other religions taught provide pupils with enrichment experiences;
- there is evidence of attention being given to those faiths represented in the community;
- show how religious belief can be applied to life;
- there are a range of teaching and learning activities to ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest;
- RE is taught either as a discrete subject or as part of a cross curricular approach where appropriate;
- there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills, knowledge and attitudes in each unit;
- the progression planned into the unit of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school;
- visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship; (Due to Covid-19, this will need risk assessing and it may be that virtual tours can be taken online or a Teams meeting can be held during class discussions.)

We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the RE topics studied in each term during each key stage and where possible cross curricular links are made.

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.

Individual plans have been provided following the new RE scheme that we will be using from September 2020 and these will be discussed with class teachers on an informal basis with the RE subject leader to monitor and evaluate as we go through the year.

The Foundation Stage

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

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

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We try to use texts in Literacy that sometimes have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is RE's way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

Through our RE 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.

Through RE 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 multi-cultural 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.

RE and ICT

ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children use PowerPoint to help them to make presentations on various topics, such as sacred symbols in different world religions. Younger children can take photographs of the class acting out a Bible story. They can then make a class storybook of it, by adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text. Or, using software, to type up any of their work. A digital video camera can record a visit to a place of worship, and pupils can also find the various artefacts in churches by doing virtual tours on church websites.

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 special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

Teachers cater for each child and look at a range of factors to meet the individual's needs – classroom organisation, 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.

Assessment

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 RE by making informal judgements as we 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. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. The teacher will record the child's assessment onto a new spreadsheet assessment that has been created for the start of September 2020. This

information is used to assess the progress of each child, and for setting new targets. This information is then passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.

Monitoring and review

The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- Monitoring children's work and teacher's planning through book scrutiny;
- Lesson observations and pupil interviews;