



Shaw CofE Primary

RE Policy

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Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

“a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world”. (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

This fits with our school Mission and Biblical Underpinning:

“To explore God’s amazing universe, keeping children at the heart of all we do.”

“For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.” JER 29:11

At Shaw Church of England School we explore God’s amazing universe together. The places we explore are what makes up our curriculum. Learning is a journey of exploration. We will never stop learning as the journey never ends! Everyone connected with Shaw School is part of Mission Shaw in some way.

Shaw CE Primary school endeavours to provide a happy, caring, family environment where children feel inspired. We know that every child matters – whatever their skills and abilities, whatever their background and whatever their aspirations. Belonging to a safe and nurturing community, founded on strong Christian values, children will develop an array of skills that will equip them to meet the challenges of our ever changing world and to make their own positive contribution to our global society.

Shaw CE Primary School is a primary school which is part of the White Horse Federation. We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus in Wiltshire. We use the Discovery RE programme supplemented by the Understanding Christianity materials as our scheme of work.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010

(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)

RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential)

A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.reconcil.org.uk/re-review-report>)

The aims of our RE, using the Discovery RE Scheme of Work and Understanding Christianity

Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity meet the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and are aligned to the non- statutory guidance described above.

By following Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity at Shaw CE Primary school we intend that Religious Education will:-

adopt an enquiry- based approach as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children’s own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.

provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.

teach children about the key concepts of the religions studied to ensure that they gain a deeper insight into what it means to be a member of the religions studied. In particular, for Christianity, they will develop a growing

understanding of the concepts – God, Creation/Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and Kingdom of God.

- encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (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.
- enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- prompt 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.
- develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- nurture children’s own spiritual development.

Discovery RE Content

Discovery RE covers all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion in each group forms the pattern. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group. (DR = Discovery RE, UC = Understanding Christianity)

Foundation Stage :

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied:
What makes people special? (DR)	Christianity, Judaism
Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas? (UC)	Christianity
How do people celebrate? (DR)	Islam/Judaism
Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? (UC)	Christianity
What can we learn from stories? (DR)	Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism
What makes people special? (DR)	Christianity, Islam, Judaism.

Year 1:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied:
Who made the world? (UC)	Christianity
Why does Christmas matter to Christians? (UC)	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship? (DR)	Christianity
Why does Easter matter to Christians? (UC)	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children?	Judaism

Year 2:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time? (DR)	Christianity
What is the Good News that Jesus brings? (UC)	Christianity
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life? (DR)	Islam
What do Christians believe God is like? (UC)	Christianity
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging? (DR)	Islam
Does completing a Hajj make a person a better Muslim? (DR)	Islam

Year 3:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions Studied
Does celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child? (DR)	Hinduism
What is Trinity? (UC)	Christianity
What do Christians learn from the Creation story? (UC)	Christianity
Why do Christians call the day Jesus died Good Friday? (UC)	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? (DR)	Hinduism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu? (DR)	Hinduism

Year 4:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God? (DR)	Judaism
What is it like for Christians to follow God? (UC)	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? (DR)	Judaism
Is forgiveness always possible for Christians? (UC)	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? (DR)	Judaism
When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? (UC)	Christianity

Year 5:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God? (DR)	Hinduism
Was Jesus the Messiah? (UC)	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? (DR)	Hinduism
What do Christians believe Jesus did to save Human Beings? (UC)	Christianity
Do beliefs in karma, samsara and moksha help Hindus lead better lives? (DR)	Hinduism
What does it mean for Christians if God is holy and loving? (UC)	Christianity

Year 6:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God? (DR)	Islam
What would Jesus do? (UC)	Christianity
Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? (UC)	Christianity
What difference does the resurrection make for Christians? (UC)	Christianity
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (DR) (Double unit)	Islam

How is RE organised in this school?

Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Understanding Christianity focuses on the key concepts of the Christian faith. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Enquiries start either from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied, or using a text to explore its meaning.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

It is up to the teacher of each class to decide how the RE curriculum will be covered. They may choose to teach 1 session each week, or teach the whole unit as an "Experience Day".

Differentiation/SEN

Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity are written as universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. To further help teachers differentiate for children in KS1 and 2 classes with special educational needs, each enquiry has level exemplars for the full range likely for that age group, allowing children to evidence all levels of understanding.

Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in reaching a best-fit level.

Recording and tracking progress

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, there is an overview sheet for each enquiry on which to record the progress of the whole class. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers. Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity enquiries give teachers meaningful evidence to cite in reports.

The Attainment Descriptors

Please be aware that the levels contained in Discovery RE match the current nationally agreed attainment descriptors at the time of implementation. As the locally agreed syllabus is reviewed and changes are made to the national requirements it may be necessary to move to a different method of measuring progress and attainment.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

External contributors

RE 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.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues –

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression. As a church school we uphold the Christian ethos of the school whilst still respecting the beliefs and views of others.

Involving parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

* Response to RE comments on reports

* Curriculum newsletters

* Displays

* (Where RE is integrated- topic based homework as appropriate).

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.

The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Collective Worship
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SMSC Policy

Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.