



Religious Education Policy

September 2015

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Sonning Common Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity, and of other religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions, as well as *about* religions.

Religious education should enable pupils to:

- understand the nature, role and influence of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles in the world;
- pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value;
- formulate reasoned opinions/arguments in relation to controversial issues and truth claims;
- develop understanding of and respect for different beliefs and lifestyles.

The Legal Requirements for Religious Education

The legal requirements concerning the provision of Religious Education and an Agreed Syllabus flow, principally, from the Education Act 1996 (S. 375), the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SS. 69 and 71 and Schedule 19) and the Education Act 2002 (S. 80).

Religious Education **must** be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request.

Parents may request that their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the Head and school governors in advance to the unit of work to be covered.

Our school RE curriculum is based on The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2015-2020), and by September 2016 will replace the existing programme of study for R.E. The RE syllabus should reflect the fact that 'the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'

The Value of Religious Education to the whole school curriculum

RE is the opportunity to reflect on our experience and explore the beliefs, practices, values and attitudes that guide us through life by exploring the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles.

We all play a part in creating the world and society we live in.

What we believe, whether religious or not, contributes significantly to this.

RE helps pupils (and the school as a whole) to reflect on the ways in which beliefs influence how individuals and communities live their lives.

Teaching and Learning

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets:

1. Learning *about* Religions
2. Learning *from* Religions

Learning about religion (AT1) includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impacts on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed.

Learning from religion (AT2) is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion.

The *Engage, Enquire, Evaluate and Reflect* model of teaching in the Agreed Syllabus does not necessarily progress in a linear fashion, and may be revisited at any point during a unit of work. There is scope to leave the plans behind if the pupils' questioning and investigating opens up other interesting avenues for enquiry.

Early Years Foundation Stage - RE in Kites supports the achievement of the Early Learning Goals through appropriate subject content, according to the needs of the pupils. Pupils learn about religious festivals from Christianity and other cultures. Children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, special occasions, stories and books, places and objects.

Key Stages 1 & 2- The primary curriculum focuses on Christianity whilst also drawing from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, as well as non- religious worldviews, to provide appropriate depth and breadth to the exploration of the core questions and to meet the needs of the pupils. Reference to other religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles can be used to illustrate specific points, to reflect world events, or to include those represented in the class.

Resources

We are pleased to welcome visitors to our school to talk about their faith and beliefs, and we arrange visits to places of worship. A range of resources including digital media, drama, music and art is used to support teaching and learning.

Assessment and Recording

Not everything in RE can be assessed but opportunities will be provided at appropriate intervals for pupils to demonstrate what they have learnt about religions (AT1) and what they have learnt from a religion (AT2). This assessment can take place through questioning, discussion or written work. Pupils' written work provides useful evidence of attainment and progress.

Literacy

We expect pupils to apply the same consistent standard throughout their writing, whether it is in formal Literacy based learning based sessions or more topic based learning sessions.

Information and Communication Technology

ICT will be used not just as a tool for research and presentation but also to enable data bases to be created and films of re-enactments to be recorded.

Inclusion

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is the RE entitlement of all pupils in maintained schools and therefore supports the principles of inclusion as set out in the National Curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;

- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

As the subject matter of RE sometimes raises sensitive issues, it is important that teachers are aware of, and are sensitive to, the background and personal circumstances of their pupils.

It is expected that teachers of pupils with special educational needs will modify the RE provision according to their own situation, meeting the needs of the children in the most appropriate way. This also includes meeting the needs and challenges of the most able pupils.

We ensure that the RE curriculum is available to all pupils, with equal appropriate access regardless of sex, race, religion or ability.

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for the monitoring and development of the subject throughout the school.

This includes:

- attending cluster group meetings and relevant courses
- working alongside colleagues at both key stages
- updating resources/resource boxes
- checking medium term plans and advising on best practice
- monitoring progression
- looking at project books and talking to pupils about their work

Staff Training

Staff will be encouraged to attend courses and review resources. The Religious Education Subject Leader will have access to specific training to support and develop their role.

Dissemination

The Policy is available on the school web site and a paper copy is held in the main school admin office. A short summary will be included in the school prospectus. The policy and schemes of work will be available on request to parents, LA, OFSTED and others working for the school, through the Head teacher.

Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Religious Education Subject Leader and monitored by the Link Governor changes made to ensure that the Policy is relevant and up to date.