Holymead Primary School

Religious Education Policy 2021

Religious Education (RE) is an important part of the school curriculum and is taught relevant to the child's stage of development and experience. It can be a focal point for the development of a range of attitudes and values which are fundamental to a fair-minded study of religions and to the spiritual dimension of human life. There are three statutory aims of the RE curriculum: to develop successful learners, confident individuals and positive contributors. It is important when investigating religion to respect and value the contributions made by any learner.

Aims of RE

- To develop curiosity and wonder.
- To develop an awareness of one's own cultural and religious beliefs.
- To develop open-mindedness to other people's beliefs, religions and cultures.
- To develop an awareness of self, including self-worth and awareness of one's own attitudes and view-points.
- To promote respect for a variety of beliefs, cultures and religions through appropriate role modelling and challenging stereotypes and negativity.
- To develop an appreciation that religion and beliefs can play an important part in people's lives.
- To develop understanding of both learning about and learning from religion and belief.
- To have access to lively, challenging and compelling learning experiences which stimulate their mental, emotional and social development.
- To mature in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To share their own views, ideas and experiences in a supportive learning environment, without fear or embarrassment.
- To provide the children with the opportunity to ask relevant questions.
- To develop both dependant and inter-dependant learning in RE.
- To express their own ideas and responses in a variety of ways such as exploration of artefacts, art, creative writing, oral work, the use of ICT, drama, story, music and quiet moments of reflection.

Guidelines

- In order to ensure that the statutory programmes of study in this agreed syllabus are covered in sufficient depth, both Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 have to provide a minimum of 36 hours per year. In Key Stage 2 the minimum requirement is 45 hours of RE per year. This also allows for the flexibility to link RE with other subject areas.
- The school follows the Bristol Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, 'Awareness, Mystery and Value' (2011). The syllabus provides an investigative and enquiry based approach, supported by the unit key question titles, which are then followed by a series of supplementary questions which provide the direction of the individual unit. Each year group has three units to follow.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage, children explore Christianity and at least one other religion from either Hinduism, Islam or Judaism. In Key Stage 2 the requirement is to study Christianity and at least three other religions which must include Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

- In KS1 the units provide an important balance between learning about and learning from and ensure full coverage of the six areas of enquiry.
- In the Foundation Stage, RE can make an active contribution to all six areas of learning but will make a particularly important contribution to 'Personal, Social, Emotional Development', 'Communication, Language and Learning and Knowledge' and 'Understanding of the World'.
- Teachers and the subject leader will assess the children's progress through formal observations, pupil conferencing, work and planning reviews. This is in line with school procedures.
- Parents may choose to remove their children from all or part of the RE provided after discussion with the head.
- It is not the role of RE to engender belief. Therefore, when talking about religion, it is important to state, "Christians/Hindu's believe that…". A child may of course wish to state, "I believe…", but this does not insist that other children believe.
- A variety of teaching methods should be used to teach RE, such as role play/drama, stories, music, art, exploration of artefacts, written work and quiet moments of reflection. Visitors and trips and also encouraged.
- There will be lessons focussing upon 'British Values' throughout the academic year. This will include an opportunity for the pupils to explore a lesson focussing upon showing tolerance towards other religions.

The following skills are central to RE and should be reflected in learning opportunities. The syllabus places an important emphasis on the development of skills at all stages of learning.

Observation: The opportunity to look at and handle religious artefacts e.g. pictures, symbols and places of worship.

Reflection: The opportunity to reflect on feelings, relationships, experience, ideas, questions, beliefs and practices.

Empathy: The ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others. To develop the powers of imagination to relate to feelings such as love, wonder, sorrow or bereavement. To develop a glimpse of how others see the world.

Information Handling: The ability to identify, name, describe and give accounts of religious materials. To know how to use different sources as a way of gathering information.

Enquiry: The ability to ask relevant and appropriate questions. The capacity to listen to others and hear correctly what they are saying.

Interpretation and Analysis: To draw meaning from artefacts, stories, images, poetry and other forms of artistic impression and symbolism. To develop the ability to look for similarities and differences. To distinguish between opinion, belief and fact, recognising bias, caricature, being aware of prejudice and stereotyping and distinguishing between the features of different religions.

Self-understanding: The ability to draw meaning from significant experiences in their own and others' lives from religious questions and answers.

Application: To explore aspects of human experience. To encourage children to apply religious ideas to life and to apply previous knowledge with new ideas.

Critical Thinking and Evaluation: To develop the ability to weigh the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teachers and individual conscience. To identify one's own standpoint and to recognise stereotyping.

Reflection: To engage with wonder at the natural world, at human endeavour and creativity. To explore emotions pertaining to life and death and to the unexplained and the spiritual. To have the opportunity to be still, reflect and feel at ease with silence.

Investigation: Children will have the opportunity to ask relevant questions, know how to use a variety of sources in order to gather information and to know what may count as good evidence in understanding religion(s).

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be monitored by the RE subject leader. At the end of each unit of work, assessments will take place by the teachers and any issues discussed with the subject leader. The scheme of work will be assessed at the end of each school year and any changes discussed with the subject leader. Monitoring will be done by the subject leader on a regular basis (see subject leader's timetable) and feedback given to the year group teachers concerned and the head teacher.

Conclusion

It is the aim of the school to raise the awareness of a variety of religions, cultures and beliefs within an atmosphere of mutual respect. This should be done through enjoyable, creative and challenging experiences.

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RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS
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GOLD – RIGHTS RESPECTING

Article 14: (freedom of thought, belief and religion). Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children guidance about this right.