



Brookside School

Religious Education Policy

The learning and teaching of Religious Education at Brookside School aims to develop children's intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual understanding of both themselves and the world in which we live. Religious education fosters co-operation, self-confidence, independence and tolerance in our multicultural world.

Objectives

To enable pupils to:

- Appreciate the distinctive nature of religion and the important contribution of religious and spiritual insights and values to the individual's search for meaning in their life.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity, and of other principle religions represented in Great Britain.
- Develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural education

The legal requirement

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. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once parents have given written notice to the school governors.

The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention 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.

Teaching

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Nottinghamshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and that it should, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

At Key Stage 2 the main focus of study is Christianity. At least 50% of time is spent on teaching about Christian beliefs, practices and ways of life.

In addition to developing their knowledge of Christianity, pupils will also study aspects of Judaism and Islam, building on the work covered at Key Stage 1. They will also be introduced to aspects of Hinduism for the first time.

Teaching on Christianity occurs within each year group. However, the teaching of other religions has been spread across the school. This will enable the pupils to build up a working knowledge of a particular religion and reduce the danger of pupils becoming confused. Each religion will be studied under three main headings: Beliefs and Teachings, Worship, Festivals and Practices and, Ways of Life.

Learning.

RE has specific learning outcomes. These refer to what pupils should know, understand and be able to do (skills), by the end of a particular unit of work. These have been developed using the QCA level descriptors and relate to each of the attainment targets

Progression in Key Stage 2. The two attainment targets for RE are:

- AT 1 LEARNING ABOUT RELIGION: knowledge and understanding
- AT 2 LEARNING FROM RELIGION: explore, reflect and respond to religious beliefs, values and experiences.

Throughout Key Stage 2, we provide pupils with increasing opportunity to;

1) LEARN ABOUT RELIGIONS BY:

Developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity, aspects of Judaism and Islam and being introduced to aspects of Hinduism. This includes:

- Encountering the key objects, people, places and activities associated with the religions studied e.g. visits to the local church at St. Mary's;
- Studying the lives of people who are held by members of their faith to be examples to others, looking particularly at how these people lived out the beliefs and values of their faith;
- Extending their awareness that certain features, e.g. festivals, worship, a sense of community, are shared by more than one religion, although expressed differently;
- Considering the meaning of symbols, stories and symbolic language for members of faith communities;
- Encountering the key beliefs of the religions studied,
- Considering the impact of religious beliefs on individuals and their local community.

2) LEARN FROM RELIGIONS BY:

Developing positive attitudes towards other people and enhancing their own spiritual and moral development through:

- Considering the value of certain religious practices in their own lives, e.g. prayer, periods of reflection, celebrations;
- Talking about stories which focus on values, relationships or religious teachings, and considering the relevance of this to their own lives;
- Exploring questions of the meaning and mystery of life;
- Developing an understanding of what it means to belong to a community.
- Discussing the differences between fairness and unfairness, right and wrong, and the nature of individual responsibility;
- Developing creativity within the curriculum, expressing ideas and feelings in the forms of art, music, drama etc.

Assessment for learning: Skills and processes to be assessed through religious education.

The children's progression in RE depends upon the development of the following general learning skills applied to RE. At Brookside School we focus on these skills when developing a range of activities, which then provide the children with opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities in RE. They ensure that teachers will move pupils on from knowledge accumulation and work which is merely descriptive to a higher level thinking and more sophisticated skills. These skills are:

- REFLECTION
- EMPATHY
- INVESTIGATION
- INTERPRETATION
- EVALUATION
- ANALYSIS
- SYNTHESIS
- APPLICATION
- EXPRESSION

Children are encouraged to evaluate their beliefs and attitudes through a range of discussion, written and sometimes role play. Pupil achievement is assessed at the end of each year and recorded in the annual record or achievement.

Equal opportunities

In our school RE is taught as a whole class subject and treated in the same way as the core and foundation subjects – using a variety of experience and teaching and learning strategies.

Attention is given to this area through the use of concrete and tangible approaches to the teaching of RE in Brookside School. Work is differentiated to include all children in the teaching and learning of RE. More able pupils, on the other hand, may excel in the area of abstract thought and are encouraged, by their teachers, to develop skills such as synthesis and evaluation.

All children are taught the school's adopted scheme of work irrespective of their ethnicity, culture or ability.

Curriculum links

The teaching of RE is compulsory and has an agreed syllabus. Although it is a distinct subject area there are opportunities for it to be linked with other subjects. This can only be done, however, where there is clear awareness of how it relates to these areas.

Opportunities may also arise at other times in the school day. For example, looking at picture of the Earth from Space, in the 'Earth and Beyond' topic, may be used to stimulate feelings of awe and wonder, and this is one of the aims of RE.

The assembly programme has many identified links with the learning and teaching of RE.

Assessment for learning

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during the lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been complete and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work some classes make a summary judgement of the children's skills using the traffic light system. All teachers give good quality oral and/or written feedback to the children with regards to their work. The children then have time to process this information to help them move forward with their next piece of work. The subsequent progress is used as a basis for assessing the development of each child and for passing on information both to the next teacher and to the RE subject leader.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education units and regularly supplement our existing stock. There are a good range of both books and artefacts in school. There is also a set of Bibles, which are stored centrally in the school library. The subject is also bolstered by the use of ICT and most importantly the embedding of teaching using the Interactive Whiteboards.

Monitoring

The subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject leader has specially allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Review and Evaluation

The RE subject leader will complete an annual review identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and highlight any areas for further development. At the end of each financial year this contributes to be an annual whole school evaluation held in March each year.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in keeping with the Policy Review Cycle. This planned programme of review puts subjects together that have common strands of learning, and is included in the annual School Improvement Plan, published in the Spring term of each year.

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