

Christ Church CE School Religious Education (RE) Policy



June 2015

Christ Church CE School
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Mission Statement

The Christian Faith is at the heart of our school community. At Christ Church we care for each other and learn together.

Christ Church is a small, caring school which is committed to a broad, balanced curriculum and to a continual raising of standards. We aim to contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical needs of every individual.

We are a Church of England school, with a strong commitment to the teaching of Christianity whilst supporting a multi-faith approach to the curriculum. We recognise, value and celebrate the rich cultural diversity that exists in our school.

The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in our positive, disciplined and calm atmosphere. We believe that effective learning takes place when children work in a purposeful and stimulating environment that supports a wide range of learning styles. Mutual respect between adults and children promotes excellent behaviour and well developed social skills. With this approach we seek to achieve high academic standards.

We aim to cater for each individual, taking particular account of any specific needs or abilities. We endeavour to ensure that all our children fulfil their potential and, within this context, we emphasise health and safety, enjoyment and achievement and the beginnings of responsibility for themselves and others. These skills will be carried forward to the next phase of education and throughout life.

The whole school community is committed to a collective responsibility for the implementation of the values inherent in this statement.

Our School Aims - Every Child Matters

The Ethos of the School

The school aims to provide a positive, disciplined, purposeful environment, within a Christian context. We aim to teach children to be caring, to exhibit good behaviour and appropriate social skills and to begin to take responsibility for themselves and others.

The Values of the School

The School aims to value every child and to contribute to the Spiritual, Moral, Cultural, Mental and Physical well being of our whole school community. We value the diversity of our community and we aim to promote the health and safety of everyone.

The Standards of the School

The School aims to teach a balanced Curriculum and to ensure that each child fulfils his or her potential. We aim to provide teaching and learning of a high standard. We believe that this is achieved when pupils are highly motivated, enjoy coming to school, and are appropriately challenged.

Date of policy: June 2015

Review date: June 2017

Introduction

- ❖ This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and teaching strategies for the teaching and learning of RE at Christ Church Primary School.
- ❖ This policy will be submitted to the Governing Body. Review of the policy will take place once every two years.
- ❖ This policy should be read in conjunction with Worship Policy.

Rationale and Equal Opportunities

Why have an RE policy?

Our purposes in developing a written policy for RE are:

- ❖ To raise the standards of teaching and learning of RE throughout the school.
- ❖ To enable us to have a unified and consistent approach to the teaching of RE throughout the school.
- ❖ To help teachers in planning and implementing activities for the children appropriate to their stage of development throughout the school.
- ❖ To provide a framework for monitoring, evaluating and targeting children's progress in RE and for developing, reviewing and revising our work as a staff.
- ❖ To have a joint statement and explanation of our policy available for parents, governors and teachers.

Aims and Objectives for the Teaching and Learning of RE

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Christ Church 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 strongly promote the children learning from religions as well as factually learning 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.
- ❖ to be given opportunities to learn about and from religion
- ❖ to be able to explore religion and pursue individual religious interest

Key Skills

The teaching of RE should help children to develop the ability to:

- ❖ think about questions of belief and value
- ❖ learn about and learn from religion.

The Legal Position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for RE meets the requirements of the 1988 Education reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they 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 and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the LDBS 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 religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and Learning Styles

- ❖ Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:
 - Learning about religion
 - Learning from religion
- * Learning about religion 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. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.
- * Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly in questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.
- ❖ 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, Passover, Eid, 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.

- ❖ Staff have received training on Godly Play and this provides a creative approach to teaching by immersing the pupils in the theme of the lesson.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ A Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 bible club (JAM club) runs on a weekly basis to allow pupils the opportunity to explore the bible and Christianity
- ❖ 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, including:
 - setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty
 - 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 classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

RE Curriculum Planning

- ❖ RE is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the LDBS Agreed Syllabus. 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 scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. The RE

scheme of work runs on a two year cycle, so paired classes teach the same curriculum, with the years running as Year A and Year B. This allows class teachers to share planning and resources.

- ❖ 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. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with the London Diocesan Board for Schools. We teach RE topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on the study of religious themes and topics in their own right.
- ❖ 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. We carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics.
- ❖ The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader. Due to the two - year rotation cycle, teachers have the opportunity to plan together and share examples of good practice.
- ❖ Godly Play should be carried out at least once a term, with photographic evidence recorded in the children's RE books.
- ❖ Pupils in Year 1-6 are encouraged to write prayers. This is done via a weekly rota and all prayers are treated confidentially. This encourages time to reflect and increases pupils' spiritual awareness, as well as providing an outlet for any concerns they may have individually or further afield (e.g world issues)

The Foundation Stage

- ❖ We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the nursery and reception classes.
- ❖ In the foundation stage, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Using 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.

Cross - Curricular Links

❖ English

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy Hour 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.

❖ Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

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.

❖ Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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 and exploration 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.

❖ ICT

ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet and CD-ROMs. 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, models and artefacts. 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 disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- ❖ When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - 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.
- ❖ We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple or St Paul's cathedral, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Trips

- ❖ Every year group, from year 1 to year 6 will visit at least one place of worship during the academic year. When they leave Christ Church Primary School, the children will have experienced a place of worship for each of the 6 major world faiths. We visit places of worship as guest and learners NOT as worshippers.

- ❖ Year 1 - Local Church
- ❖ Year 2 - Jewish synagogue
- ❖ Year 3 - Mosque
- ❖ Year 4 - Sikh temple
- ❖ Year 5 - Hindu temple
- ❖ Year 6 - Buddhist temple and St Pauls Cathedral

Resources

- ❖ We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of Bibles for both Key Stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in RE.
- ❖ Each classroom has an RE table, which includes a Bible, cross and candle, which can be used during time for reflection.
- ❖ Teachers are encouraged to share resources and artefacts acquired through travel abroad.
- ❖ Any resources which have proved particularly successful are shared and fed back to the RE subject leader.

Outdoor Reflection Area

All children have access to the outdoor reflection area for quiet prayer and reflection. Class teachers also utilise this area during RE lessons.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- ❖ 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. Self assessment is an integral part of our RE teaching. The teacher will record the attainment grades awarded at the end of a unit of work in the child's RE assessment folder. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

- ❖ We follow the assessment policy as set out by the London Diocesan Board for Schools. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each Key Stage. At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected level of attainment. This is recorded in the child's RE assessment folder. We use this assessment as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.
- ❖ Every class shares RE work through a whole school RE display, which is situated in the school hall. The display represents the theme that each class is studying at that time, and is changed termly.
- ❖ In the Foundation Stage, achievement in RE forms part of the Knowledge and Understanding of the World section of the annual written report to parents. Any significant RE work will be placed in the child's work portfolio.
- ❖ In KS1 and KS2, RE is reported on as a separate subject in children's written annual reports.
- ❖ Children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 complete RE and worship evaluations. This allows the RE subject leader to gain pupil feedback on RE lessons and assemblies, and informs the RE action plan targets.

Responsibilities

- ❖ 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

*gives the head teacher a subject leader action plan in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates areas for further improvement

*uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe RE lessons across the school.

*The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the head teacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations.

Monitoring and Review

- ❖ The effectiveness of this policy will be continually considered by the RE co-ordinator and senior leadership team. It will be on a two yearly basis or when deemed necessary.