

# Rothersthorpe CE Primary School



## Religious Education (RE) Policy

**'Everyone is valued as an individual'**

*'Love your neighbour, as yourself' - Mark 12:31*

### **Vision**

At Rothersthorpe CE Primary School, everyone is valued as an individual and helped to develop and progress in their own unique way within a Christian environment. The curriculum we offer is not merely academic, but embraces the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. The development of good social, interpersonal skills and enthusiastic, but also thoughtful and caring attitudes in all our pupils is central in preparing our children for life in Britain and a global society.

### **Aims and Objectives**

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Rothersthorpe CE Primary we develop children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions, 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. 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.

### **The Aims of Religious Education are to help children:**

- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain.
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition.
- To be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- Develop an understanding of religious tradition and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today.
- Observe, articulate and understand the differences between the different faiths.
- Develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues.
- Have respect for other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society

### **The Legal Position of Religious Education**

Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life and all state schools... must teach religious education... all schools must publish their curriculum by

subject and academic year online. *'The National Curriculum in England: Framework document'*, September 2013, p.4

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, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from Religious Education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have written notice 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. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Local Agreed Syllabus 2018 for Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland, 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, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

#### **The aims of the Local Agreed Syllabus are for pupils:**

- to develop religious literacy;
- to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and world views represented in the United Kingdom;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- to develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

#### **Teaching and Learning**

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what 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. We also enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Passover 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 to talk to the children.

The 2018 local syllabus recommends that all key stages use 'Enquiry' methods and when planning and delivering units of work. When planning units of work a range of approaches to learning that match different types of enquiry should be used, for example:

- 'Big Questions' are used as the focus of an enquiry
- use experiential and creative activities where pupils can develop their insight into the 'experience' of religion
- use reasoned argument and debate where pupils can explore controversial issues
- using investigative and interpretative skills where pupils need to gather, analyse and present information

- planning sequences enquiries to make sure pupils build effectively on prior learning and can see the relevance of their investigations
- the enquiry process allows pupils' to progress in RE and this progression is defined and assessed.

**The benefits of enquiry approaches are:**

- Pupils develop a deeper understanding, going beyond simply learning facts to handling ideas and questions;
- Pupils increase confidence as learners; discussion is no longer so teacher-led; and
- More sustained learning is achieved, not the fragmented pattern of work often seen in RE.

**Curriculum Planning in Religious Education.**

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus and use the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build on prior learning and that planned progression built into the schemes of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases- long- term, medium-term and short term.

- The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term, during each key stage, over a rolling two year cycle. The RE leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues.
- The medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. These plans are based on the units of work agreed in the Local RE Syllabus. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans regularly and consults with teaching colleagues.
- Short-term plans are written by the class teacher based on the agreed units of work from the Local RE Syllabus.
- Foundation Stage also follow the Local Agreed Syllabus and 'Understanding Christianity' resource, and Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered in the Reception class during the year.

**Contribution of Religious Education to the teaching of other subjects**

**Personal, Social and Health Education, (PSHE) and Citizenship**

Through our Religious Education lessons we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behavior. 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 the teaching of Religious Education 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 of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in doing so, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Our school uses the **Values for Life** scheme for collective worship, which develops 18 Christian values in a three year rolling program. The scheme provides detailed plans for weekly worship, including

stories and festivals from many faiths and cultures and suggestions for an interactive display that can be a focal point for reflection, prayer and participation from the school community.

Our school organises a 'Spiritual Week' every three years where children in all classes are able to spend quality time reflecting and completing a range of spiritual related activities. This 'spiritual care week' is organised by the RE Leader and supported by the Well-being Lead, as well as Foundation Governors and local Church representatives.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Through our RE teaching we provide opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. The school sets appropriate learning challenges and responds to each child's different needs. We endeavor to enable all pupils to access the Religious Education curriculum and will consider changes to classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation so that individual pupils can learn more effectively.

### **Assessment and Recording**

We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a unit of work we make a summary judgement in relation to Attainment Target 1 and 2 laid out in the Agreed RE syllabus. We use these for assessing the progress of each child and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. The RE Leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates levels of achievement and progress.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Foundation Governors meet with RE Leader three times a year to monitor and review Religious Education and Collective Worship. Lesson observations and book scrutiny are carried out and, on a rolling program identifying subject focus, the RE Leader undertakes lesson observations and pupil focus discussion groups. The RE Leader also meets informally with colleagues to support their teaching of RE and make necessary changes and updates to the RE curriculum.

### **References/Documents**

- *'The National Curriculum in England: Framework document', September 2013*
- The 1988 Education reform Act (ERA).
- Church of England Vision for Education 2016 – Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good
- The Local Agreed Syllabus 2018 for Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough & Rutland
- Primary Assessment Statements 2018
- Valuing All God's Children 2017

### **Linked Documents**

- Collective Worship Policy
- SMSC Policy

**This policy was reviewed December 2018**