

Durley CE (Controlled) Primary School Policy for Religious Education

Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education is mandated by the Education Act 1944 as amended by the Education Reform Act 1988 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The provision of Religious Education is compulsory in all state-funded schools, but it is not compulsory for any of the children to take the subject.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

“a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world”. (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

At Durley CE (Controlled) Primary School. We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus 'Living Difference 111' and 'Understanding Christianity' programmes as our scheme of work and primary resources used for the teaching of RE.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

At Durley primary School, we intend that Religious Education will:

- Adopt an enquiry- based approach as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- The teaching of RE is not an attempt to convert pupils to a particular faith.
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice. As a school within our RE programme we will teach and give children a deeper understanding of Judaism in KS1 and Islam and Buddhism at Key Stage 2 alongside Christianity.
- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Nurture children's own spiritual development.

How is RE organised in this school?

Living Difference and Understanding Christianity bring together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. (See appendix 1 Long Term Planning)

Differentiation/SEN

Living Difference 111 and Understanding Christianity are written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential.

Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in reaching a best-fit assessment.

Recording and tracking progress

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, there is an overview sheet for each enquiry on which to record the progress of the whole class which is kept on an excel assessment sheet. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers. RE enquiries give teachers meaningful evidence to cite in the annual report to parents.

The Attainment Descriptors

As the locally agreed syllabus is reviewed and changes are made to the national requirements it may be necessary to move to a different method of measuring progress and attainment.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

External contributors

RE gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. RE plays an important part in teaching our school Christian values. We believe that a person's core values are strongly held beliefs about themselves and the world around them that help to shape their lives. Through our school policy for RE, we want everyone within our school community to learn to show **love** for one another, **respect** for each other's differences and **forgiveness** towards others and ourselves.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship including the Medina Mosque in Southampton, Holy Cross Church in Durley and Winchester Cathedral. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues Involving parents and carers

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression. Within our teachings, it is also important to uphold the Christian ethos of the school whilst still respecting the beliefs and views of others.

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- Response to RE comments on reports
- Curriculum newsletters
- Displays

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and will be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school will also review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.

As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Collective Worship where appropriate (probably NOT church schools).
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equality Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SMSC Policy

Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually.

Date of review: November 2019

Date of next review: November 2020

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Appendix 1: Curriculum Overview – Religious Education

(Incorporating changes from Living Difference 111 and implementing Understanding Christianity)

Key Concept (Living Difference 111). *Key Enquiry Question*, (Concepts and references to Understanding Christianity Big Picture)

Second religion: EYFS & KS1 – Judaism, Year 3 & 4 – Buddhism, Years 5 & 6 Islam

Overview of Religious Education Curriculum

Cycle 1

	Autumn 1		Autumn 2		Spring 1		Spring 2		Summer 1		Summer 2
Key Stage 1	CREATION Shabbat What do Jews remember when they celebrate Shabbat?	Harvest Service - Thanking	LIGHT as a symbol of Advent and Hannukah How is a Christingle used as a symbol of light? (UC)	Christmas Service - Celebration	SPECIAL PEOPLE INCARNATION What makes us unique and special? Why is Jesus special to Christians? (UC)	Easter Service - Symbols	SYMBOLS SALVATION Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter Garden? What does the cross symbolise to Christians? (UC)	Leavers service - Remembering	STORIES GOSPEL (Good news, Jesus a friend to the poor) What is the good news Jesus brings? (UC)	SPECIALNESS Special food and special places. eg. In the last supper and in other faiths. (LD111)	
Year 3/4	TRINITY (2A.3) GOD / INCARNATION What is the Trinity? (UC)		ANGELS Why are the angels in the Christmas story important for Christians? (LD111)		PEACE The Buddha Rupa (LD111) Why is the concept of peace important to Buddhists?		EASTER (2A.5)SALVATION: Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (UC)		STORIES GOSPEL: What kind of World did Jesus want? Why did Jesus tell stories? (UC)	SACRED PLACES How important are sacred places to Buddhists and themselves? (LD111)	
Year 5/6	SACRIFICE WW1 (LD111)		INCARNATION Was Jesus the Messiah? (UC)		COMMUNITY The Mosque and 5 pillars of Islam (LD111)		GOD/ INTERPRETATION How can God be holy and loving? (UC) Islam unit (LD111)		SALVATION What did Jesus do to save human beings? (UC)	rites of PASSAGE Journey of Life (LD111)	

Overview of Religious Education Curriculum

Cycle 2

	Autumn 1		Autumn 2		Spring 1		Spring 2		Summer 1		Summer 2
Key Stage 1	THANKING AND SHARING How and why is harvest celebrated? Sukkot, harvest (LD111)	Harvest Service - Thanking	CHRISTMAS INCARNATION Why does Christmas matter to Christians? (UC)	Christmas Service - Celebration	LOVE What are the most important commandments to Christians and why? (LD111)	Easter Service - Symbols	EASTER SALVATION Why does Easter matter to Christians? (UC)	Leavers service - Remembering	STORYTELLING What is a parable? Are there any special stories from other faiths? (LD111)	GOD and CREATION Why is the word God so important to Christians? (UC)	
Year 3/4	STEWARDSHIP Caring for the environment / What do Christians learn from the creation story? ((UC & LD111)		GLORY Jesus the light of the world (UC) INCARNATION digging deeper)		MESSAGES What is the value of stories with messages to Buddhists and themselves? (LD111)		SYMBOL What is the cross? (LD111)		BELONGING What is the importance of belonging to Buddhists? (LD111)	KINGDOM OF GOD What was the impact of Pentecost? (UC)	
Year 5/6	JUSTICE Stories of Justice (LD111) People of God: How can following God bring freedom and justice? (UC)		INTERPRETATION Birth narratives (LD111)		SACRIFICE How do Christians and Muslims use ritual within their faith? Ramadan and Eid-ul Adha? (UC) (LD111)		RESURRECTION What difference does the resurrection make to Christians? (UC)		CREATION Creation and Science: conflicting or complimentary? (UC)	IMAGERY Jesus through art Islamic art LD111	

