



Religious Education (RE) Policy 2019- 2020 St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

Our school is a Rights Respecting School whereby all respect the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child and the responsibilities that come with those rights.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Focus Scheme of Work for Religious Education and the Agreed Syllabus for Liverpool.

The Aim of Religious Education

The aim of Religious Education is that:

'Religious Education will support children and young people in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes, through an exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in the contemporary world.'

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values and philosophy of the school. The school's philosophy and aims can be seen in a separate policy.

The Spiritual Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires schools to 'promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils at the school and in society' (paragraph 1:2) through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. Although schools are not specifically required to promote the social development of pupils, it is very much a feature of the life and work of pupils.

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary, Religious Education plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas such as philosophy in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children.

The Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School it has been agreed that having taken into account the requirements and guidelines presented in the Agreed Syllabus, the following religions have been selected for study.

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Islam

The Approach to Religious Education

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School the teaching of Religious Education according to the Agreed Syllabus for Liverpool is approached with the following principles in mind.

There are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of the children and the staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity and we value the links, which are and can be made between home, school and a faith community. We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils. We promote teaching in Religious Education that stresses open enquiry and first-hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children. The syllabus is implemented in school by means of a highly sensory approach, where children may look at and handle religious artifacts, hear religious music or taste food from a religious tradition. Work in Religious Education builds on the pupils' own experiences.

Time Allocation

The time allocated to Religious Education follows the recommendations in the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus.

As a result of the way in which the curriculum is organized at each Key Stage and in each Year Group, the amount of time allocated to Religious Education in any week may differ. Religious Education may be provided in a 'whole block' or the time may be divided up into smaller sessions. However, over the whole year class teachers endeavour to ensure that all children have equal access to the required amount of Religious Education curriculum time.

Curriculum and School Organisation

The Scheme of Work for Religious Education outlines in detail how Religious Education is planned and taught in each Key Stage and in each Year Group and indicates which religions have been chosen to be studied and which Curriculum Units have been selected for each year group. Details of the content of each Curriculum Unit can also be found in the Scheme of Work in a file located on the school's shared drive.

Subject planning and evaluation for work in Religious Education is incorporated into Year Group planning and evaluation, each half term or term. This is seen in teacher's Initial and Long Term Planning. Planning and evaluation of work within any curriculum unit is undertaken on a weekly basis by the class teacher and can be seen in their Short Term Plans.

Learning in Religious Education may be by means of direct teaching to the class or small groups: by providing direct hands-on experience with RE resources, such as photographs or artifacts; by teacher-prepared materials such as worksheets; through stories, poetry, drama; through visits to faith communities.

A range of reference materials for Religious Education is available.

Pictorial material, such as poster and picture packs videos and CD Roms are a valuable resource for Religious Education.

Children in each Key Stage may occasionally be asked to undertake some homework activities or tasks as part of their work in Religious Education.

Visitors from a range of faith communities may be invited into school to work with the children. Establishing links with local faith communities is therefore useful.

Links with other Subjects

Religious Education has links with other areas of the curriculum including English, History, P4C and Art. It is also linked to the way in which the school organizes its Collective Worship. Collective Worship is provided according to Government guidelines and while it is seen as being distinct from Religious Education, there are certain links, which can be identified. For example, during the variety of forms of collective worship there will be time given for the members of the school community to reflect; there will be opportunities for spiritual development, a particular Religious Education theme may be developed as the focus of their class assembly; the overall framework for Religious Education may be used in planning collective worship for the whole school; and visitors from one of the religions being studied may take part or be involved in a whole school assembly.

Religious Education also provides opportunities for teaching the following cross-curricular dimensions – Equal Opportunities, Personal and Social Education, RRSA and Education for Ethnic Diversity.

Teaching Religious Education

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary, Religious Education is taught by individual class teachers.

Class teachers are responsible for their own class organisation and teaching style in relation to Religious Education, while at the same time ensuring these complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school.

Within any one class, children are given the opportunity to work as a class, as individuals and as part of a group. Throughout KS1 the teaching of RE is often through circle time and assemblies. The choice of class organisation will be determined by the learning task or activity and the resources being used.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

It is recognised that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education – in its entirety or in part. If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from Religious Education then arrangements are made for that child to be withdrawn during Religious Education lessons by the class teacher.

If parents wish to keep their child/children in religious education lessons but wish for their child/children to be withdrawn from Religious acts of worship, arrangements can be made with your child class teacher.

*As a school we consider an act of worship as a collective gathering in which pupils worship via song and or prayer to any god/s. An example of this is our Christingle service at the local church.

The Curriculum

As with other curriculum areas, there is a Curriculum Coordinator who is responsible for Religious Education. They receive any written materials or information that arrives in school and pass it on to members of staff.

The Coordinators draw up an annual Action Plan for Religious Education each year. This is in the same cycle as the School Development Plan and so planning is from the autumn term to the following summer term. The Action Plan outlines what the plan to do in relation to the RE Policy Scheme of Work, resources, monitoring of Religious Education.

The Coordinator is responsible for monitoring planning by looking at class teachers' Short Term Plans; monitoring what is taught in Religious Education by spending time in classrooms and looking at children's books. They are also responsible for the purchase and storage of all RE resources.

Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious Education within our school. It is the responsibility of all staff, to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for Religious Education within the school, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress.

Evaluation includes a regular evaluation of the content of the Religious Education Curriculum to ensure that the Agreed Syllabus requirements are being fulfilled in the best possible way. Monitoring of teachers' planning is carried out to check that plans are actively put into action in the classroom. Pupils' progress and performance is evaluated.

Evaluation may take place by means of a number of methods including:

- Looking at children's work
- The analysis of teachers' planning as seen in Short Term Plans
- Discussion among groups of staff or the whole staff
- Classroom observation
- External inspection and advice

Evaluation will usually take place on an annual basis.

The evaluation and review of the policy for Religious Education and the Schemes of Work for Religious Education takes place on an annual basis. The RE Coordinators work together to consider any necessary changes or adaptations to the policy. These are then discussed and agreed by the whole staff before the policy document is amended.

Throughout the year, the whole staff are encouraged to feedback information and ideas to the RE Coordinators– this may include comments as to how a particular curriculum unit is progressing, and the work that the children are undertaking, or comments as to the availability and suitability of resources.

Policy reviewed: July 2019

Next review: July 2020