

Rollesby Primary School and Nursery

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of life's most fundamental questions. At Rollesby Primary School and Nursery, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, 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 and world views. 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 religion and belief well as about religions.

The aims of Religious Education are to help children:

- develop an understanding of the word religion;
- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and world views.
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- 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 traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

The Legal Position of Religious Education

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

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 Norfolk LA's Agreed Syllabus 2012 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.

Teaching and Learning Style

The Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2012 advocates: "A broad understanding of enquiry-based learning which encompasses an environment in which learning is driven by a process of enquiry owned by the children." This syllabus advocates that enquiry-based learning 'inspires children to learn for themselves, bringing a real research-oriented approach to the subject' (Dr Bill Hutchings, University of Manchester).

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 extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, 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 and talk to the children.

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 discuss religious and moral issues working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in class or assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- 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.
- mixing ability groupings to provide peer support.

Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with Norfolk LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. The RE subject leader works out this plan in accordance with the 2012 Agreed Syllabus' programmes of study for Foundation stage, KS1 and KS2. We ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus. Teachers can use the Norfolk website <http://www.ecre.co.uk/> as a basis for their planning.

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In the reception class, religious education is taught by introducing pupils to the key concepts that will be studied in depth at a later date. Aspects of religious education also form an integral part of the topic work covered during the year.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through teaching 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 so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Equal Opportunities

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children.

Assessment and recording

Through effective assessment and recording we aim to raise the standards of RE in our school. In our school we use the level descriptors and assessment material provided in the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2012. E.C.R.E medium term plans are cross referenced to the level descriptors. Using observations, informal judgments, marking and levelled work, teachers will level each child in the class at the end of each unit using a best fit model. Children will all receive a comment regarding their progress in the end of year report and at the end of each Key Stage.

Resources

Resources for religious education are kept in the library where there is a box of equipment for each religion studied. There are age appropriate bibles or bible story books and a collection of religious artefacts, which we use to enrich teaching in religious education.

Monitoring and Review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are 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.

Reviewed by Governors: Summer term 2016

To be reviewed in: Summer 2019