



Religious Education Policy

Written: January 2020

Next Review: January 2022

Chair of Governor signature: _____

Date: _____

1 Aims and Objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St Meriadoc CE Infant Academy we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the major world faiths, with a specific focus on Hinduism. 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.

1.2 The aims of religious education are for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the UK
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs (both religious and secular) values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own; living in a society of diverse religions
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Cornwall and the UK
- Encourage openness to ask questions and search for answers of meaning and purpose for themselves
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - o Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them.
 - o Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
 - o Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Attainments are assessed around:

- Learning about Religion: beliefs, teachings and sources
- Learning about Religion: practices and ways of life
- Learning about Religion: forms of expression
- Learning from Religion: identity and belonging
- Learning from Religion: meaning, purpose and truth
- Learning from Religion: Values and Commitments

There is a linked Progression of Skills and Knowledge Components for each of the above areas. Every term children are assessed against these statements which are recorded on our dedicated RE Assessment Tracker. Children's RE attainment and progress is also discussed in RE focused Pupil Progress Meetings.

2 The Legal Position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and the Education Standards and Framework Act 1998. The SSFA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The SSFA allows parents to request:

- That the pupil may be wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education provided by the school may in certain circumstances receive Religious Education of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of a school session (5.71 [3J [b] SSFAJ
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education provided by the school may receive Religious Education of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.

Teachers - with specific exceptions, teachers may withdraw from teaching Religious Education and they should not be discriminated against for their Religious opinions or practices.

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity.

3 Teaching and Learning Style

3.1 In line with the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus RE lessons are taught using an enquiry-based approach. All topics have an RE question to explore throughout the duration of the topic, such as for Heroes and Explorers topic: Was Jesus a hero? Pupils are encouraged to explore and examine questions raised by the teacher and themselves about religious beliefs and practices and none, through gathering information, and increasing knowledge and understanding.

3.2 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.

3.3 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 Christmas, Harvest, and Easter etc. to develop their religious thinking. We use a range of activities, e.g. discussion, art, dance and music, as appropriate, to explore religious topics. We organize visits to the local church and visitors come into school to give real life experiences on other faiths.

3.4 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 using computers and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in Collective Worship.

3.5 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);
- 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.

4 Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

4.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus and incorporate RE Today's 'Understanding Christianity' material. 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.

4.2 RE teaching underpins the school's bespoke curriculum, The Blossom Curriculum. Children follow the progression of Skills and Knowledge Components throughout their time here and this continues into St Meriadoc Junior Academy for smooth transition and continuity of learning. The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied each term throughout the school, which is also built around our core Christian Values – Faith, Love, Respect, Perseverance and Forgiveness. These are then planned into medium term and short-term plans by the teacher. There is also a list of long-term memory facts, linked to the progression of skills and knowledge components, that we endeavour children to remember. These are taught through dedicated long-term memory focused weeks throughout the topic to revisit and recap prior learning using research-based long-term memory techniques from Professor Rich Allen of Green Light Classrooms. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects to create cohesion in our learning.

5 Early Years Foundation Stage

5.1 We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in nursery and reception class.

5.2 In nursery and reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As our foundation children follow the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education 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.

6 Contribution of Religious Education to the Teaching of Other Subjects

6.1 English

Religious education 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 English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our 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.

6.2 Computing

We use Computing where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

6.3 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 behaviour. These are taught through our Christian Values characters, which are also linked to British Values. 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.

6.4 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. Children have taught Philosophy sessions weekly to develop their questioning and spirituality. We are also a Rights Respecting School, where we teach children about their rights as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our focused rights as a school are:

Article 12: the right to a voice.

Article 14: The right to a faith.

Article 28: The right to an education.

Article 29: The right to be the best we can be.

Article 31: The right to relax and play.

7 Teaching Religious Education to Children with Special Needs

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. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We consider the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

8 Assessing and Recording

8.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and speak to children during Verbal Feedback session to push children's thinking. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the national curriculum expectations and our Progression of Skills and Knowledge Components document. This is recorded in our bespoke RE Assessment Tracker and discussed during dedicated RE Pupil Progress Meetings.

8.2 The RE Lead triangulates assessment judgements, through lesson observations, books looks checked against Progression of Skills and Knowledge Components documents and pupil conferencing. RE book looks are also carried out across the Rainbow Multi Academy Trust schools.

9 Monitoring and Review

The RE Lead is 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. The RE Lead is also responsible for liaison with outside agencies including the Diocese through attending workshops and the regular meetings provided. The RE Lead also attend National RE Conferences to keep up to date with current RE practices.