

Ickleford
Primary School



Shared Values · Shared Aspirations · Shared Achievements

Religious Education Policy

Date of Approval: 31st May 2015

Date of next review: May 2017

Background to Religious Education at Ickleford Primary School

Ickleford Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled (V.C.) School. The 1996 Education Act states clearly the obligations a school with such a status has with regard to Religious Education. As a Voluntary Controlled School we do not teach from the standpoint of any specific denomination although we promote Christian values throughout.

Religious Education (R.E.) is not a national curriculum subject, but must be taught to all pupils as part of the Curriculum (Education Reform Act 1996). R.E. is not determined nationally and the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus 2012-2017, which we use as the basis for the planning and delivery of R.E.

Some families who send their children to this school are 'nominally' Christian* and some children are from practising Christian families; in addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity including: Sikh and Muslim; and some from non-religious backgrounds. R.E. is concerned with "learning about religion" and "learning from religion" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

Parents of a pupil at a V.C. school have the right to withdraw their children from R.E. Any parent who wishes this should consult the headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of R.E.

VALUES AND AIMS

We believe at Ickleford School that R.E. both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, distinctive Christian character, Values Education and the importance that we place on the development of the whole child is reflected in the R.E. curriculum: spiritually, morally, socially, culturally (S.M.S.C.) and intellectually.

Specifically, R.E. at Ickleford Primary School aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal religions represented in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in Hertfordshire;
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures including the local community;
- develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of principal religions;

* 'nominally' Christian – families who have nominated their faith as Christian but are not practicing Christians.

- enhance their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural** (S.M.S.C.) development by:

- a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
 - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experiences and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
 - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
 - d. expressing their personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way.
- recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2012-2017

Values Education

Values Education is a whole school ethos which deliberately and systematically promotes a set of universally held values. Through a process including: assemblies, class work (including R.E. and P.H.S.E. where appropriate), positive role modelling from all staff and the use of a reward system, the children will be provided with opportunities to reflect upon these values and will be actively encouraged to use them in their school life and wider community. The values represent a shared moral code to live by for both Christians, people of other faiths and those with no faith.

OBJECTIVES

Learning

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Religious Education has two closely related aspects:

Learning about Religion (AT 1) and Learning from Religion (AT 2)

These two attainment targets with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum. RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience.

In 'Learning about Religions' (AT1) children will:

- learn to identify, name, describe and give an account, in order to build a coherent picture of each religion;
- explain the meaning of religious language, stories and symbolism;
- explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

In 'Learning from Religions' (AT2) children will:

- give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues;
- reflect on what might be learnt from religion in the light of personal beliefs and life experience;
- identify and respond to questions of meaning within religion.

Teaching

Teaching the programmes of study should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on the six key areas:

- **Beliefs and teachings** - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
- **Religious practices and lifestyles** - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- **Ways of expressing meaning** - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
- **Human identity, personality, and experience** - e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships with family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- **Questions of meaning and purpose** - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- **Values and commitments** - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between these two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of R.E. at this school.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith;
2. role play; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters;
3. artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge;
4. parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community.

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, looking at artefacts, visits and faith visitors, pupils are always actively engaged in learning.

Planning

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school follows the Hertfordshire Primary Scheme of Work for RE which builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the Agreed Syllabus. This scheme models what pupils could learn about and from “the six principal religions through the EYFS and Key Stages 1 and 2”. We have used a combination of R.E. teaching through the creative curriculum, R.E. days and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

Short term planning of individual lessons is a matter for the class teacher. The R.E. Subject Leader is available to help with this and keeps a range of teacher’s resources as a guide. When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts of the programme of study is to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The work planned must be relevant to the needs of the pupils.

Time Allocation

In line with the requirements of the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2012-2017 we plan for R.E. to be delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS at Foundation Stage. At Key Stage 1, pupils spend 60 hours over 2 years (approximately 10 hours per term) and 156 hours over 4 years (approximately 13 hours per term) at Key Stage 2. Time allocation does include visits and R.E. curriculum days but not school productions related to festivals or collective worship time.

Presentation

Children's work is stored in a variety of ways to suit the outcome including: individual topic books, class books and separate R.E. books or folders and all will reflect the demands of the school's presentation policy. In addition, pupils present their work to a wider audience in class assemblies or displays.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The Agreed Syllabus sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the statements of attainment as outlined following the Eight Level Scale in the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2012-2017. Assessment in R.E. is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing.

Through activities for example: discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against the statements of attainment in line with other areas of the curriculum at the end of the academic year.

As a staff we routinely undertake moderation exercises to ensure that we are familiar with the statements and what they mean in the context of a pupil's work.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

Leadership and Management

The R.E. subject leader keeps in touch with local and national guidance on the teaching of R.E. by attending training courses at county or diocesan level and this is disseminated to staff. A yearly focus on the school's development plan, routine lesson observations and work scrutiny ensure the senior leadership team and school governors are aware of the development of R.E. teaching and learning taking place at Ickleford Primary School.

This policy is reviewed every two years to ensure it still represents the values and practices of the school.

May 2015