

Ashford CE Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Updated Policy: October 2018

Signed: Phil Wells

Approved by FGB: 15 October 2018

Chair of Governors

Religious Education Policy

Vision and Values Statement:

We are a caring Christian community where everyone feels valued, safe and adopts an "I can" attitude. All we do is underpinned by our Christian values which means we celebrate individuality and achievements through mutual respect and high aspirations. We believe that each one of us has the ability to achieve our highest potential and dreams, through a journey of life-long learning.

Principles

At Ashford Church of England School we believe that all children are entitled to equal access to learning in accordance with their need regardless of race, sex, creed, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age.

"A Church School nourishes Christians in their faith, encourages those of other faiths and challenges those with no faith." *former Archbishop Robert Runcie*

Religious Education throughout the school provides a foundation of Christian teaching relevant to the needs of the present day. It aims to give an appreciation of all that is embraced by the term 'religion' in its widest sense. We hope to do this in such a way that children in our school will be supported and encouraged as they practise their faith and that they will grow in the virtues of love, understanding and tolerance.

RE is taught in accordance with the aims of the Non-Statutory National Framework for Religious Education and the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement (2016).

Our Aims

Our RE curriculum aims to support and contribute to the vision of the school as a whole by:

- encouraging and enabling children to express and explore their own beliefs
- developing children's knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and other principle religions, their beliefs, values and practices
- helping children to understand and appreciate the beliefs of others
- assisting children in their personal search for the meaning of life
- assisting children in developing self-worth and a respect for others
- encouraging spiritual awareness of people and the natural world
- encouraging positive Christian values and helping children to explore them for themselves
- ensuring that RE is intrinsic to the whole curriculum and life of the school

Legal Requirements

In accordance with the 2016 Statement of Entitlement, we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The teaching of RE comprises between 5% and 10% of the curriculum timetable. This equates to 1hr per week in KS1 and 1hr 20 minutes per week in KS2. This is separate from requirements for Collective Worship. During the Early Years Foundation Stage, children explore RE throughout their curriculum, incorporating the EYFS LDBS planning into their planned learning.

The Scheme of Work

The School has adopted the LDBS scheme across the school. This is taught in half-termly units with a clear skills progression as pupils move through the school. An introduction to other faiths is part of the scheme with 2/3 of learning being Christian based. The other faiths studied are Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam. The scheme is strongly enquiry based and encourages discussion, drama, Biblical reading and an understanding of Anglican practice.

In addition to the core RE scheme additional RE days and focus sessions around our Christian Values and our iShare Learning themes.

Learning and Teaching

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two attainment targets

1. Learning *about* religions
2. Learning *from* religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impact on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupil's reflection on and response to their experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupil's skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

Through RE children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Teaching and learning styles are varied throughout the school and include some whole class, group, paired and individual learning experiences. Understanding and learning is assessed at the end of each unit.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as PSHCE and our Collective Worship, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

Religious Education introduces children to the significance of belonging to a community and to the diversity of communities in the wider world. It teaches respect for values such as freedom and democracy, and the fundamental equality of all people.

Within each classroom there is an area for reflection with a Bible, Cross, a copy of the Lord's Prayer, the memory Bible verse of the current iShare Learning Theme and the school vision and values statement. There is also an ongoing class RE book that is a record of learning and experiences which is added to during the course of the year.

Inclusion

In all our planning and teaching, it is the aim of the school to develop an inclusive curriculum. We aim to ensure that the RE curriculum is accessible to all children regardless of gender, race and ability.

Ashford Church of England School is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Governing Body recognises that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy as it is the governors' aim that no-one at Ashford Church of England School should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.

Right of withdrawal

Our Christian ethos pervades all areas of school life but we welcome those from all faiths to become part of our community. At the beginning of a person's relationship with the school, for example on a tour of the school for a new child or at an interview for a new member of staff, it is explained that by becoming part of a faith community, there is an agreement to embrace and accept our ethos by taking part in RE lessons and acts of worship. Of course, we accept that in some cases, parents may wish to exercise their statutory right, under section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to withdraw their children from this, and that parents are not obliged to give a reason for requesting withdrawal. Teachers may wish to do the same with regard to the teaching of RE, although this would be unusual given the religious character of the school they have chosen to work in. Such requests should be made to the Headteacher in writing. We trust, however, that through open communication at the outset and a clear message about the vision and values of the school, such situations will be rare.

Assessment and Reporting

The LDDBS scheme planning incorporates clear assessment areas for each half term. These are linked to the on line assessment grids that each class teacher completes at the end of each unit. The attainment targets are clear and descriptive with structured questions designed to enable the teacher to assess each pupil. The results are used to monitor progress and to inform or adjust future planning. As the year progresses a picture of understanding and learning in RE evolves.

Each class uses a Class RE Book throughout the year in which they record events that have happened to the class and to each of them individually. They include pictures, photographs and notes that build into a diary of the life of the whole class. This is used to inform and monitor learning at AT2 in addition to RE books used during lessons.

Parents are informed of the pupil's progress during parents meetings and in the end of year reports.

The Role of the RE Leader and Monitoring

The teaching, monitoring and resourcing of Religious Education is led by the RE Leader in close collaboration with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. RE planning, teaching and the quality of work in children's books is monitored regularly through learning walks, book scrutiny and planning reviews. This is to ensure we continuously strive to develop and improve on planning, the quality of RE teaching and the achievement of pupils.

Changes to the scheme of work will be made as and when necessary to respond to school monitoring and the national picture. The governing body has a key role in monitoring the effectiveness of RE teaching around the school with the RE link Governor regularly coming into school to take part in Learning Walks and observation of RE teaching together with the RE leader and members of SLT. It is the role of the RE Leader to work with teaching staff in developing the confidence and skills necessary for delivering high quality teaching and ensuring high achievement in RE.

Diocesan support

Support from the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDDBS) is highly valued and intrinsic to the work of the school. It is delivered in a variety of methods: training; advice; moral and spiritual guidance to leadership and staff. The LDDBS provides a programme of training for both Newly Qualified Teachers and more experienced staff seeking leadership and pedagogical development in which the school actively participates. The LDDBS works in close collaboration with the school, highlighting opportunities for development and celebrating successes which can then become models of good practice for other schools.

Resources

Resources are stored in a central location for ease of access by all staff. A continual review of available resources enables them to be updated and refreshed regularly. Each year group in KS2 has a set of Bibles that are used during In Class Collective Worship and during RE lessons.

Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy and the Collective Worship Policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the RE subject leader through a regular programme of monitoring to include lesson observation, learning environment audits, scrutinies of planning and books and pupil voice interviews.

Our link RE governors will also meet regularly with the RE leader to see practice in the school and look over progress against the annual RE action plan.