



Be the best you can be, every day.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

THIS DOCUMENT IS a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for Religious Education at North Downs School.

IT WAS DEVELOPED through a process of consultation with teaching and non-teaching staff and the governing body.

IT HAS BEEN TAKEN FOR APPROVAL to the Governors in January 2020.

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED in Spring 2021.

Our school aims are to ensure that:

- ❖ Our school is creative, exciting, positive and fun.
- ❖ Our teachers help us to get to where we need to be. They help us in ways we understand the most.
- ❖ Although we are all different, everyone gets treated the same, no matter how we look or think.
- ❖ We are encouraged to make good choices.
- ❖ We care for each other.

Religious education is a valuable and important part of the curriculum, supporting our whole school aims:

The Statutory Place of Religious Education

Religious education is seen as contributing to the whole education of the children within the school. The school approach is based on, and reflects, that adopted by the Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Through Religious Education the school is concerned with enabling children to to continue in, come to, or develop their own beliefs, ideas and attitudes whilst respecting the right of other people to hold beliefs different from their own. The school's intention is not to get children to believe that a particular religion is true or false, nor to encourage them to adopt a particular faith. Religious education is neither indoctrination nor a missionary activity.

The school encourages children to develop the skills needed for studying religion. An enquiry and investigative approach to Religious Education is encouraged so that children are able to ask questions, exploring openly their own and other's beliefs and experiences in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.

The school recognises the importance of children gaining knowledge of the beliefs and practices of faith communities and the concepts necessary to understand this area of learning. The school scheme of work is planned and structured to enable them to develop this.

The school also recognises that Religious Education touches on areas including beliefs, lifestyles and personal responses. All staff approach this area with openness and sensitivity, respecting the integrity of each religion and the responses of individual children to this exploration.

Aims of Religious Education

The school bases its aims for RE on those laid down in the Surrey Agreed Syllabus. To enable children to:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of the nature of religion and belief and the important contribution of religious and spiritual insights and values to the individuals search for meaning in life, whilst acknowledging that this may also come from a non-religious perspective;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of the other principal religions and beliefs represented in Great Britain, both through their history and their contemporary diverse expressions;
- Develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and beliefs and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Develop the ability to make reasoned, informed and creative responses to religious and moral issues;
- Recognise the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on the individual, on culture and communities throughout the world.

The nature of much of the work in RE is implicit and permeates the whole curriculum.

Religious Education contributes to the general aims of the school in a variety of ways, but in particular by,

Broadening the child's experience of:

- awe and wonder about the world;
- the mystery and complexity of the natural world;
- the children's own developing identity and self-esteem;
- how other people live, feel and react;
- what is involved in the membership of a group;
- feeling of belonging,
- feelings of belonging, responsibility, courage and compassion;
- other cultures and environments.

Developing attitudes which lead to:

- a respect for those with differing views;
- a development of empathy and sensitivity.

Developing abilities and skills in order to:

- recognise that language has a variety of uses;
- know that symbols of dance, drama, music and art, are forms of communication;
- express thoughts and feelings;
- relate to and understand other people.

What do we teach in Religious Education?

- Our scheme of work reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking into account the teachings and practices of other religious traditions. In

line with the locally agreed syllabus we address aspects of: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. We also appropriately take into consideration non-religious world views;

- Through our broad-based RE curriculum appropriate cross-curricular links are made;
- Our scheme of work is based on Surrey's locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education. The non-statutory guidance for foundation stage, KS1 and KS2 provided alongside the locally agreed syllabus, to support it has been drawn upon;
- Two dimensions of religious education form the basis for our work. These are identified as showing knowledge and understanding, and expressing ideas, beliefs and insights.

Planning/Schemes of Work

Each teaching unit is based on a key question which is explored through the unit's content. Expected attainment is outlined and the skills and attitudes to be developed through RE are explored.

Teaching encourages children to investigate, question and respond, as well as gain knowledge and understanding. Units will vary in length and depth and may be delivered in different ways. RE will be taught as a discrete subject and, where appropriate, cross-curricular links will be made.

We plan appropriate activities linked to children's varying abilities and aptitudes. A range of activities involving, for example, writing, drama, discussion, questioning and the creative arts are used to focus learning. Religious artefacts may also be appropriately used.

RE is taught in each class. Different groupings for activities will be used e.g. pairs, small groups.

Assessment, Marking and Recording

- Marking and feedback are carried out in line with the school's Marking and Feedback Policy;
- Expectation for each unit provides an overview of what is assessed based on the Surrey Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Each unit is planned in 3 bands: expected (what the majority will attain), emerging (for those who have not yet reached the expected band) and exceeding (for those who have moved beyond what the majority are attaining). Children's attainment in each unit is assessed using this framework;
- An annual report to parents showing attainment and progress in RE is drawn up based on this system.

Equal Opportunities

In accordance with the Equalities Act (2010) and our school Equality of Opportunity Policy, all children have access to Religious Education irrespective of creed, race, gender and sexual orientation or ability. Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced education inclusive of all children. All faiths are presented in a respectful way and religious affiliation is not assumed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (including British Values)

Religious Education makes a strong contribution to the school's provision of opportunities for children's spiritual, moral and cultural development. It does this through the curriculum content, the skills and

attitudes it develops and the activities and experiences it provides. OFSTED monitor the school's work in developing British values principally through addressing the school's provision of opportunities for SMSC development.

Religious Education contributes in the following ways:

Spiritual development - children are encouraged to:

- Reflect upon their learning and to make personal responses;
- Engage in periods of silence;
- Consider ultimate questions dealing with purpose and meaning.

Moral development - children are encouraged to:

- Reflect upon their behaviour and attitudes;
- Consider reasons for choices which they and others make;
- Engage with, and respond to, moral codes from other religions.

Social development - children are encouraged to:

- Reflect upon their behaviour and how it affects others;
- Consider that society is made up of people with differing beliefs, attitudes and practices;
- Respect others;
- Develop the ability to 'stand in others' shoes'.

Cultural development - children gain a knowledge and understanding of:

- The religious aspects of a variety of cultures;
- Various rules and customs which affect lifestyles of different people.

Religious Education contributes to the school's work around British values through, for example:

- Democracy- addressing issues of equality and fairness;
- The Rule of Law- addressing issues of justice and exploring how people of different faith traditions have worked for justice;
- Individual liberty- religious teaching on the value of the individuals and their life in society;
- Mutual respect and tolerance- inter-faith dialogue, respecting others.

Right of Withdrawal

Parents have a right, "on grounds of conscience", to withdraw their child from the whole, or part, of the RE curriculum. This right stems from 1944 when Religious Instruction, rather than Religious Education, was taught. The school asks any parent who wishes to exercise this right, to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the extent of the withdrawal and how it will be implemented. Any request will be confirmed in writing by parents. Parents may provide alternative material for their child to use during their withdrawal. The school will ensure supervision.

Teachers have the right, "on grounds of conscience", to withdraw from teaching Religious education. This right stems from 1944 when Religious Instruction, rather than Religious Education, was taught. Any teacher who wishes to exercise this right, should first discuss this with the Headteacher and how the withdrawal

will be implemented. Any request will be confirmed in writing by the teacher. Any withdrawn time, remains directed time.

Home School Links

When appropriate children may be asked to:

- Find out more information from family and other adults;
- Collect material/artefacts from home;

Links with Local Faith Communities

- Visitors from different faith communities and members of children’s families may be invited to school where appropriate to talk about their own religious beliefs and practices;
- Visits to a church or to other places of worship may periodically be arranged.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Teacher planning, children’s learning and resources are reviewed regularly to inform an annual subject leader’s audit.

Signed (Chair of Governors)

Date.....

This policy also links to:

PSHE policy

Equal Opportunity policy

Collective Worship Policy