

Bomere and the XI Towns Federation

'With God all things are possible'

Matthew 19:26

Our school nurtures all pupils and those in our school community to flourish as individuals; educationally, spiritually and morally, promoting Christian values through the experience we offer to all. Our core Christian values are Hope, Love and Respect.



A STATEMENT OF POLICY

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

The following policy is a result of staff, parent, governor and pupil discussion, workshops, training, development and review of practice, and is based on LA guidance.

Date; February 2020 - updated January 2022

Both St John the Baptist CE Primary School & Bomere Heath CE Primary Schools are welcoming and friendly church schools that aim to provide children the opportunity to achieve their best academically, emotionally and socially. As church schools, we hold our Christian values at the heart of everything that we do. Our core values are love, hope and respect.

It is important to us that the children are happy and experience the best education possible. We value strong links and a close partnership between home, the church and school and recognise the importance of trust and shared responsibility in education.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education throughout the Bomere and the XI Towns Federation.

Legal Requirements

St John the Baptist CE Primary School & Bomere Heath CE Primary Schools are both Church of England Controlled Schools. 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 Reception classes 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 school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. 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 the Shropshire LA's Agreed Syllabus 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.

Aims

The broad aim of Religious Education throughout Bomere and the XI Towns Federation is to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and intellectual development of children. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. This is achieved by encouraging children to explore and respond to these aspects of religion and draw upon their own experiences. We help the children learn **about** religions as well as **from** religions.

We believe that good religious education should:

- Accept that the beliefs of all faith traditions should be respected.

- Develop an understanding of religious traditions, respect and tolerance which enables them to have an appreciation of the cultural differences in Britain today.
- Be seen as an entitlement of all pupils.
- Be taught in a way that is interesting, challenging and relevant to pupils.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on and explore their own beliefs, and investigation and reflect upon some of the most fundamental questions of life.
- Provide opportunities for involvement or experience of some of the creative and practical aspects of religious belief.
- Help develop empathy and sensitivity to others.
- Appreciate that symbols and artefacts from different religions can express human feeling and ideas.
- Provide opportunities for developing a sense of awe, wonder, joy and thankfulness.

We aim through our teaching:

- To provide a course of Religious Education within the framework of the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus document appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our schools, at their different stages of development.
- To contribute to the spiritual, social and moral development of the schools as a caring community and the pupils as individuals.
- To assist and encourage experience of Christian life and worship.
- Through study of major world religions to encourage and understand and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice in society today.

Entitlement

The children's entitlement is set out in the Federation Scheme of Work which has two attainment targets laid out in the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus. Religious Education learning should account for at least 5% of curriculum time, and as laid out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement, at least 66% of this learning should be based in Christianity.

The aforementioned two attainment targets are, by their nature, interconnected and reliant on each other.

A.T.1 Learning about Religion

Children should be able to describe and explain a variety of religious and non-religious world views preparing them for adult life as citizens in a plural society.

A.T.2 Learning from Religion

Children should draw from AT1 the understanding to articulate their own world view whilst appreciating that of others. From this process they should be able to come to a reasoned and reflective personal viewpoint.

Organisation

The RE curriculum is delivered mainly through the thematic approach. RE will be integrated into the general planning wherever possible and practical, according to the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus, and with reference to the Key Questions.

Act of Worship

RE teaching is included, although this is planned separately from class teaching. However a class RE focus may be further developed within the act of worship (e.g. dramatised Bible stories, children's own prayers written in class, linked personal writing).

Progression & Continuity

Long term planning ensures continuity and coverage of all concepts at a level appropriate to the pupils maturity.

Time Allocation

Notional time allocation of one hour per week for KS2 and 45 minutes per week for KS1. Time may be blocked.

Implementation

- Religious Education will be taught throughout the Federation. Mainly by the class teacher and may be supported from time to time by clergy from local churches and visiting speakers.
- Religious Education may be taught in a 'whole class' setting but with flexibility to allow for individual research, collaborative group work, discussion, questioning, reflection and direct experience when appropriate (e.g. making pancakes, pilgrimage, church visit, visits to places of worship, role play).
- A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
 - Teacher presentations, role play and storytelling.
 - Questions and answer sessions, discussions and debates.
 - Individual and group research.
 - Photographs, pictures and maps.

- ICT, television, video, film, tapes, CD, radio and PCs to research and communicate ideas.
- Creative arts; art, music, poetry
- Religious Education may be integrated with other subjects as appropriate for example, ICT, History and PSHE.
- Classroom support will be welcomed under the guidance of the teacher, e.g. skilled individuals and parents etc.

Resources

Religious Education resources will reviewed and updated regularly considering budgetary constraints.

SACRE (2021)

Teacher's resources are available in the staffroom/PPA room. Artefacts are boxed in the admin store.

A collection of Bibles, Gospels & non-fiction texts are available in the school library. The internet and computer software is available to support the children's individual research.

Artefacts are available through the RE advisor (01743 254545) and the Schools Library Service.

Guidance for children should be given by teachers on the safe of handling artefacts to ensure respect and sensitivity to the customs and beliefs of the faith.

Relevant visits are planned and included in the schemes of work.

Visitors should be given guidance prior to their input. This should clarify their role and the parameters in which they should work.

Links with the Local Church

Pupils' visit the church as part of the RE lesson as relevant to planned work. Such visits may be to find out about christenings, the church building, and the communion service. The vicar will usually take part in the lesson.

School led services take place regularly to celebrate festivals such as St John the Baptist Day (St John the Baptist CE School), Christmas/Christingle.

Pupils are also invited to take part in church services such as:

- Mothering Sunday
- Harvest Festival

- Rogation Sunday
- Palm Sunday

The vicar is invited to help lead acts of worship on a regular basis, supporting and supplementing the planned programmes.

The diocesan foundation governor makes regular visits to the school and shares in the act of worship.

Equal Opportunities

See Equal Opportunity statement.

Religious Education as an essential part of the curriculum should be relevant, worthwhile and accessible to all. It should express that all pupils are loved and valued by God as part of creation. We aim to help the children in our school to respect themselves and to be sensitive to the needs of others.

The teachers' planning tries to ensure that work set is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all children.

Teachers challenge stereotypical comments or images about faith, traditions and comments such as "all Jews" or "all Muslims".

It is planned that at Key Stage 1 pupils will find out about Sikhism as well as Christianity. At Key Stage 2 they will also consider Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. This is not at the exclusion of other faith traditions where relevant. The focus is to minimise confusion whilst ensuring that the coverage of religions included in the scheme of work is as broad and balanced as practical.

All beliefs and views are given equal respect.

Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and More Able Pupils

Children with special educational needs will work alongside the other children in their group, as in other curriculum areas, but differentiation in approach, language and expected outcome will be appropriate to the varying needs in the class. We aim to meet the full entitlement of every child in our school. To optimize inclusion the children's differing needs for learning (including children with special educational needs) will be addressed through differentiated activities.

Although a child may have limitations in other areas of the curriculum, it should not be assumed that he/she lacks the capacity to respond to the spiritual or religious dimension of life.

Planning, Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting

In order to show progress towards the end of Key Stage outcomes, the staff appreciate that assessment of progress in RE should be undertaken with sensitivity, based upon the teacher's observations of the child in class or group discussions, activities or recorded work.

Planning is based and delivered on a 2 year rolling programme due to mixed age classes within the school.

We assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons and through marking. Assessment is based upon the child's ability in understanding various ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour, as well as the ability of a child to reflect on their own experiences and the experiences of others and respond to them in a thoughtful and constructive way.

Children's standards and achievements in RE are assessed in line with the School's Assessment Policy.

Children's standards and achievements in RE in the EYFS are assessed in line with the School's EYFS Policy. Assessment in the EYFS includes both on-going assessment of children's work as noted above but at an age appropriate level. The EYFS Profile is used to assess children throughout and at the end of the academic year.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Executive Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. The RE coordinator/s will:

- assist the Headteacher by monitoring Long Term and Medium Term plans
- manage resources
- endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in RE and disseminate this as appropriate.
- be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- be responsible for drawing up and action plan for RE.

The Place of Christianity

The curriculum content is in full accordance with the legal and diocesan guidelines.

Christianity should be portrayed as a world religion. This is included in geographical and historical studies of other countries, as well as inclusion of global concerns, topical events, charity work and finding out about people e.g. Mother Teresa.

PSHE & Citizenship

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. 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.