

Oakham Church of England Primary and The Parks School

**Passion, Fellowship, Pride, Humility, Perseverance, Hope, Purpose
& Thankfulness**



Religious Education (RE) Policy

Date	January 2019
Executive Head Teacher	Steve Cox
Approved by Chair of Governors	Nick Cooper
Review Date	January 2021

“In loving Christian **Fellowship** we equip everyone to have a **Passion** for life and learning. To have **Pride** in our local community and be **Thankful** for all the parts which make us whole. Building **Hope** and resilience to **Persevere** and develop a sense of **Humility** and **Purpose** in our lives.” Our Vision is at the forefront of our thinking and decision making when writing, reviewing and updating all school procedures and policies.

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 Oakham Church of England Primary School and The Parks School we develop the children’s knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. 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 We encourage our children to be **passionate**: to **be courageous** and have the strength of character to stand up for what they believe to be right, to fight injustice and **stand firm**. Our values of **passion** and **fellowship** help us do this. We teach our children to have **pride** in God’s world; to **keep alert** for ways to build up ourselves, our school and our society; to care about the world God has given us, to look after it and ensure it is sustainable and able to provide for the needs of all. Our values of **pride** and **humility** teach us this. We encourage **Perseverance**; to **stand firm in your faith**, to ensure children have the resilience to learn from their mistakes, to provide a safe, caring environment where children develop morals, with space to develop their spirituality and own beliefs. This is seen in our values of **perseverance** and **hope**. We help children to find their **purpose** in their world; to **be strong**. We provide a meaningful education and opportunities so that children develop into well-rounded individuals where all abilities, skills and achievements can be celebrated. Values of **purpose** and **thankfulness** help us with this.

2 Aims

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples’ views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

The legal position of religious education

2.1 Religious Education in England is mandated by the Education Act 1944 as amended by the Education Reform Act 1988 [section 375 (3)] and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 [paragraph (5) of schedule 19]. The provision of Religious Education is compulsory in all state-funded schools.

2.2 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 the Foundation Stage class who are less than five years old.

2.3 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 school has a duty to supervise a child withdrawn from lessons, but not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. We will endeavour to give meaningful activities to any child withdrawn from RE lessons.

2.3 The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the Headteacher and school governors.

2.4 The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. As a Church of England Controlled school we are legally obliged to follow the Local Authority Syllabus; ours being the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus. 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. Our curriculum covers other world faiths, including non-faith beliefs.

2.5 The RE Statement of Entitlement (2016) directs us to give between 5-10% of the learning timetable to RE teaching. In Key Stage one, children receive between 45-60 minutes per week RE teaching; constituting 13%-17% of the teaching timetable. In Key Stage two, children receive 60 minutes per week RE teaching; constituting 16% of the teaching timetable.

2.6 As a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School, we are required by the L.A for 50% of our RE curriculum to be Christian teaching. However, we endeavour to adhere to the 2/3 Christianity set out in the Statement of Entitlement (2016). We reach this level of Christian teaching because within each R.E unit/Big Question considered, the views of the Bible, Christians and Christianity are used for comparison, evaluation and discussion. Only one term each school year is given solely to a different religion.

In addition:

- In Years 1 and 2; much of the timetable is given to the Christmas story in December; with literacy lessons and the nativity focussing on the Bible story; and at Easter the Key Stage one children plan and lead the Easter service at church; so much additional teaching time is given to the Salvation story.
- In Year 3 and 4; much of the timetable is given to the Christmas story and incarnation in December as the children plan and lead the Christmas service at church.
- In Year 5 children plan and lead the Harvest service in church each year; much time is given to understanding this Christian celebration of thanksgiving.
- In Year 6 children plan and lead the Leavers' Service; where in liaison with clergy they consider our value of thankfulness; and discover scriptures in the Bible where God has shown his guidance, peace and promises.

3 Teaching and learning styles

3.1 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.

3.2 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 Easter, Diwali, Passover, Christmas, to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

3.3 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. Classes also visit places of worship such as a Mandir, a Gurdwara or other Christian churches in the area.

3.4 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;

4 Curriculum planning in religious education

4.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Northamptonshire Diocese agreed Syllabus.

4.2 Our Key Stage One is Christianity plus one other world religion; this religion chosen is one that reflects the current cohort, so may change as the children within the classes change. In Key Stage Two all world faiths are taught, including non-faith and Humanism. Christianity units are taught using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource.

4.3 As we have mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a rolling programme. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics.

4.4 The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. S/he keeps these individual plans. The RE subject leader and the Head Teacher monitor these.

5 Foundation Stage

5.1 We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in Foundation Stage.

5.2 In the Foundation Stage classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Thoughts, stories and life experiences about, for example; Diwali, Harvest, Christmas, faith, Easter, Similarities and differences, customs, traditions, special times are woven into topics and objectives within the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged four 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 literacy lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and promotes 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 Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the Internet. They can take virtual tours of places of worship and find out about life in Britain and the wider world for different faith groups. 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. Topics of discussion may be based around drugs and health education, bullying, litter, the environment, additional needs of others, political decisions and issues in the local and national news. 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 doing so they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7 Teaching religious education to children with special needs

7.1 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 take into account the assessed ability level of each child, and are aware of their individual termly targets in English and Maths. (IEP or Provision Map targets). We also use Pupil Profiles to ensure that all staff are aware of the level and type of support each individual child needs in order to access a meaningful curriculum.

8 Assessment and recording

8.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark work in accordance with our marking policy. A class RE book is used to collect evidence of children's thoughts, opinions and reflections during class discussion time. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil over the whole topic. An assessment piece of work may be given to the class in which their response to the 'big question' for the term is asked for. This is done using the Primary Assessment Criteria within the Northamptonshire Diocese agreed Syllabus. This is recorded and shared with parents on the end of year school report.

9 Resources

9.1 We collect religious artefacts which are housed in the boxes within the 'Curriculum Store' to enrich teaching in religious education. The school has a good supply of RE topic books DVDs and computer software to support the children's individual research.

9.2 We use the Understanding Christianity resource to teach all Christian topics.

9.3 Within the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus there are links to various resources and places to visit for each religion.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also 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 subject leader discusses and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject with SLT and indicates areas for further improvement; these are prioritised and included in the school improvement plan.