

# Harrison Primary Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy



## Definition

We believe that Religious Education (RE) supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected within the RE curriculum. The purpose of RE is to promote the importance of children exploring their own lives in relation to what it can mean to live with a religious orientation on life, as well as other ways of life including those informed by a non-religious perspective. It supports the development of our children's own values as well as contributes to their own SMSC development. This enables children at Harrison Primary School to interpret and respond to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions to help them to understand about the world they live in and show tolerance and respect towards their own and others' cultural and life experiences. This takes the form of sharing or learning about religious stories, festivals, artefacts, places of worship, rituals and beliefs within a mutually respected environment where the faith backgrounds of both the staff and child's family is respected.

## Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. It is our intention to respect the beliefs of children, their families and staff, while ensuring that all pupils are provided with an understanding of collective worship in a safe and secure environment in which to grow and learn.

Whilst acts of collective worship are in the main of a 'broadly Christian character', they include as appropriate the chance to learn about other religions, beliefs and cultures since many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all faiths. Collective worship importantly concentrates on these, as well as those specific to Christianity.

Our respectful ethos and the key values (collaboration, honesty, equality, respect and responsibility) which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, and culturally are reflected in our worship. Our whole school learning behaviours (from the Harrison Learning Tree) of Citizenship, Attitudes to Learning, Responsibility and Excellence are embedded within collective worship. Participation in collective worship is valued as a special time in the school day; for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life, whilst helping them to understand their responsibilities as learners in supporting them and others to be successful.

Each week, in online celebration assemblies, we recognise children's achievements, learning behaviours and attitude, effort and contributions to our whole school community. Teachers nominate children who are recognised for a specific element (leaf) on the Harrison Learning Tree related to Citizenship, Attitudes to Learning, Responsibility and Excellence. These acknowledgements are celebrated in each class and shared with the whole school community via an online video assembly.

Through our weekly online celebration assemblies, we aim to help our children become increasingly aware of themselves as individual learners and citizens within the school/wider community by recognising these specific qualities and behaviours.

### **Aims:**

- To provide a wide range of encounters with religion which will help them form a view of the world that they can apply to their own experiences
- To help foster attitudes such as curiosity, open mindedness, tolerance, wonder, appreciation and respect through a process of enquiry into concepts, so pupils can develop an understanding for the wider community and world we live in.
- To provide a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored
- To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of some of the principal world faiths practiced in Great Britain. These include Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism with the opportunity to extend their knowledge of other world faiths later as the children move on to secondary school.
- To study matters of global significance- recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.
- To encourage and develop children's interest and opinions about simple concepts that are common to themselves and religions, and recognise and express their own values and beliefs.
- To enable children to consider the effects religion has on people's lives though conceptual enquiry.
- To provide opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief, and forge links with different groups in the local area
- To develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions studied.
- To question stereotypes and challenge assumptions by being encouraged to work both collaboratively and independently to reach informed conclusions about values, religious and non-religious views and traditions.
- To consider the significance and effects of difference and engage in dialogue which contributes to their developing ability to formulate a balanced and fair-minded judgement.
- To enhance their own SMSC development by
  - developing an awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences and how religious belief and practices can relate to them;
  - responding to these questions in the light of their experiences with reference to religious belief or practices studied;

- reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study;
  - expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and respectful way, as well as listening to others opinions with sensitivity to recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society in which we live, whilst making up their own minds. (Article 14).
- For R.E to develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their own, parents and other cultures. (Article 29).

### The legal position of RE within the school

Religious Education is not a National Curriculum subject; however it must be taught to all pupils in accordance with the legal requirements of the Education Act. As RE is not determined nationally, the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed syllabus for us to follow. At Harrison Primary School this is the Living Difference IV locally agreed syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. We follow the recommended time allocation of 36 hours for RE in the Foundation Stage and Keystage 1 and 45 hours in Keystage 2. For each key stage, there are pre-planned 'focus' traditions to be engaged with that work as building blocks in a process of enquiry across the school allowing children to deepen their conceptual knowledge as they progress through the school.

- **In EYFS** each unit is an enquiry into children's experiences of a concept linked strongly to the EYFS learning goals. Children will engage with aspects of what it means to live life in the Christian traditions along with a depth study of what it means to live within a second tradition (Judaism) to be studied the following year.
- **At Key Stage 1** children are required to engage with and study aspects of what it means to live life in the Christian traditions along with a second depth study. (Judaism) Since there is the requirement to learn about Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions, and the depth studies are both Abrahamic, the children will also complete an over view study looking at concepts within Sikh traditions and practice.
- **At Key stage 2** children are required to engage with and study further aspects of what it means to live life in the Christian traditions as well as depth studies of two additional religious traditions; one across year 3 and 4 and one across years 5 and 6. To ensure studies include both Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions, Years 3-4 will study Hinduism in addition to Christianity, Year 5 Buddhism and Year 6 Islam. There are also opportunities to study Humanist viewpoints too.

If there are children from other traditions in class, the teacher can also include these traditions in the curriculum-Links are made with other areas of the curriculum and other faiths and non-religious views including Humanist perspectives will be explored too through lesson time and collective worship where appropriate.

Enquiry lies at the heart of the Hampshire, Agreed Syllabus. Developing the skills of enquiry in children and young people is an important part of the work of the teacher of religious education. The Living Difference IV approach to enquiry of a concept has **five key steps** as illustrated in the elements of the cycle of learning for each concept visited and each unit taught: The steps of **Communicate, Apply, Inquire, Contextualise** and **Evaluate**, offer a secure process by which to enable pupils to progress in their ability to interpret religion in relation to human experience. Most importantly however, they provide opportunities for the children first to engage with their own experience of particular concepts, before enquiring into related religious as well as non-religious ways of living, represented in Great Britain and beyond. The steps of the cycle of enquiry taken together can be understood as the **skills**

which offer a secure process by which children can be introduced to what a religious way of looking at the world may offer as well as consider non-religious perspectives.

## **Withdrawal from RE**

RE is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from parts of, or all, RE lessons. Pupils who are withdrawn are supervised and provided with alternative activities, as agreed with parents. If children are withdrawn the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made by the parents if they wish to do so. Parents/carers are not legally obliged to state their reasons for withdrawing their child.

## **The role of the RE co-ordinator**

- To promote and sustain pupils' attainment in RE throughout the school.
- To support staff in order to develop effective teaching and learning in RE.

## **Strategies for teaching RE**

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 in relation to the key concepts studied within a particular religion.

A cycle of enquiry takes place over several sessions. The whole movement around the cycle is driven by the skills of enquiry which the teacher facilitates. The teacher's role is to facilitate the children's enquiry through dialogue and through activities which generate dialogue. In this way there will be a gradual development of thinking and reasoning skills over time.

We use a number of strategies to cover all styles of learning within the teaching of Religious Education that should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own. These are:

- cross-curricular activities which are either blocked or fully integrated into the curriculum.
- links are made with the creative arts and RE such as drama, art, music, literacy and computing.
- through a mix of whole-class/group and individual approaches.
- mixed ability groups with tasks appropriate for children's ages and abilities.

Wherever possible we use first-hand experience as a stimulus for learning. We encourage children to question the stories, the practices and beliefs they encounter and form opinions about them in a respectful environment where the children recognise that their thoughts and opinions will be valued by all.

When planning and delivering the RE curriculum, every effort is made to ensure that health and safety, equal opportunities and the special needs policies are met. For example, pupils with SEN have differentiated activities and specific targeted support which is co-ordinated by the Learning Development Co-ordinator.

The school has close links with the local church and outside visitors who also contribute to the RE curriculum and collective worship assemblies.

### Strategies for progression and continuity

Long-term planning is provided by the RE co-ordinator and the medium-term plans have been written by the RE co-ordinator in consultation with the year teams. Staff are responsible for their own short-term planning in order to tailor it to their class/ individual needs, with continued support from the RE co-ordinator if changes to planning or adaptations are needed. Planning now also works to reflect knowledge building blocks to highlight key vocabulary children learn within each unit of work and set out the developmental steps of knowledge built up about the concept within the religion studied.

Assessment procedures for RE are in line with the assessment and marking policy. Assessments are made to monitor attainment and progress in RE and to inform future planning. These will be related to End of Year Expectations (EoYEs) as set out in the locally agreed syllabus *Living Difference IV* that are what guide each lesson by key age- related learning outcomes as a focus for planning each step in the enquiry process (**Communicate, Apply, Inquire, Contextualise and Evaluate**). These ensure appropriate level of skills are being taught in our RE lessons as well as ensure progression of skills throughout the school.

Whilst concepts continue to remain at the heart of what RE teaches, the changes to the locally agreed syllabus now allow for a 'spiral curriculum'. The overarching idea of a spiral curriculum has been introduced in order to avoid linear or quantitative progression. Our curriculum has been designed for continuity across the key stages around the idea of 4 'Golden Thread Concepts' which are linked with A and B concepts/words that flow through the RE curriculum at all stages and therefore are revisited (2 each year) to deepen and broaden the children's knowledge of these key concepts and experiences of religious education over time. In particular, the aim is to deepen and broaden the children's experiential, intellectual and discernment moments they receive within a unit taught and across their RE journey through primary School into secondary. These are: **community, belonging, special and love** which children re-visit two yearly-in different contexts- within different religions studied.

### Strategies for recording and reporting

Attainment in RE is recorded by individual class teachers and reported to the RE co-ordinator. Children's work is assessed as a unit progresses, through a variety of methods, such as questioning, observation and analysis, but fundamentally evidence of achievement of the age related expectations and appropriate level descriptors for the stage of the enquiry process being assessed. This will be one key step each half term. On completion of one of the five key steps to be assessed within the teaching of the unit of work, class teachers will assess those children that are working as Secure, (meaning they have achieved ARE expected outcomes), Below (meaning they have not yet shown evidence of the expected ARE) or are Beyond (meaning they have achieved expected ARE outcomes with depth and are showing evidence into the next level descriptor or age related outcome).

### Strategies for the use of resources

A wide range of resources is available to enrich the RE curriculum, including posters, videos, (online resources) artefacts, books and websites. Resources are audited, evaluated and ordered by the RE co-ordinator according to the allocated budget. The resources are stored in the RE

cupboards along the top corridor. Resources are also encouraged to be borrowed also from the RE Resource Centre, Winchester which include fantastic RE topic boxes that help enrich the teaching and learning experience into the enquiry of concepts, particularly at the contextualise stage when children explore the importance of the concept within a religion studied.

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