

Learning is fun at

Park Hill Infants' School



Religious Education Policy

July 2022 – Version 1.2

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Version control

Date	Version	Status / Comments / Description
Autumn 2016	1.0	Original Revised Policy
February and June 2019 July 2019	1.1	Reviewed and re formatted Approved by FGB 9 July 2019
June 2022 July 2022	1.2	Reviewed and re formatted by Fiona Smith Equalities Statement added by Stephanie Croucher Ratified at P&A Meeting 11/07/22. All staff notified of new policy. Uploaded to school website.

Equality Statement for Park Hill Infant School

At Park Hill Infant School, we continue to teach our children about what it means to be strong, positive and productive members of society. We have always taught our pupils about equality and this remains an important part of our curriculum. We ensure that we always celebrate diversity, promote equality, demonstrate respect and stand together to challenge all forms of discriminatory language and behaviour.

We recognise that education is a vital tool for powerful, permanent and informative change. Our continuously evolving curriculum demonstrates our determination to use education to tackle issues of racism, homophobia and inequality. We strive to ensure our curriculum and supporting resources reflect values of inclusivity, diversity, equality and belonging. We do this by planning to meet the needs of all genders, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more-able, gifted and talented, of children with disabilities, of children from all socio-economic backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups, religion and cultural backgrounds, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At our School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school and local community which are currently Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. We provide Children with opportunities to reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding through exploring and expressing their own responses and personal beliefs. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.

Our objectives in the teaching of RE are to:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions
- be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
- have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society;
- compare modern religious UK traditions to that of other countries and time periods.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for RE 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 Reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only

after they 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 Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus developed by the local Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE). It meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that 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. At our school we have a large number of different faith groups and our syllabus is designed to give teachers the opportunity to bring in faiths which are represented in the classroom which may not be the focus faiths of the key stage. It is very important for the self-esteem of a child who comes from a strong faith background to hear their faith mentioned and valued.

Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning 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 promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching in RE enables children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Eid and Diwali 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.

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 authority and worship, sacred and inspirational writings, and lifestyle and celebrations. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups. Sometimes, they prepare presentations on a computer or share their experiences in assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, 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 tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- providing opportunities to work collaboratively within mixed ability groups;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- sometimes grouping the children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using adults as learning support to enhance the work of individuals or groups of children.

RE curriculum planning

We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the requirements of the Croydon Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018 and the guidance of the Local Standing Committee for Religious Education (SACRE). We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit of work, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

The RE lessons are planned on the foundation planning document each week. The class teachers write the plans for each lesson as a year group and list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. These individual plans are kept and often discussed on an informal basis with the RE subject leader. The RE subject leader collects pieces of evidence from classes to ensure consistency and coverage and that children are progressing within the subject. Through lesson visits and demonstration lessons, teaching is further improved and CPD is organised accordingly. Children are able to talk about their learning through the use of Learning and Thinking walls and displays as well as work within their books.

The Early Years and Foundation Stage

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in our Reception classes. In reception classes, RE is taught to the whole class with a particular focus on special times and special places of the different religious communities we have at Park Hill. The Reception class is the final part of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children work towards the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged birth to five. Religions are now specifically mentioned in the 'Understand the World' topic.

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

English

RE 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 during English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, in this way RE promotes the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to further develop their writing ability.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. 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.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE 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 multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. Children are invited to join in in collective worship during assemblies and in their own classes.

RE and Computing

Computing enhances RE, where appropriate, the children use computing to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children use PowerPoint to help them to make presentations on various topics, such as sacred symbols in different world religions. Younger children can take photographs of the class acting out a Bible story. They can then make a class storybook of it, by using 2Simple.

RE and Inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs in accordance with our 'All different, All equal, All achieving' philosophy. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make at least good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. (For further details, see separate policies on Special Educational Needs, Disability Discrimination, Gifted and Talented Children, and English as an Additional Language (EAL).)

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Work in RE may contribute to meeting targets set out in an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). Teachers will have regard for these targets when planning and designing tasks for RE lessons.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (e.g. a visit to a Church that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out the Nativity, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe lessons and discussions. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might further improve their work in the future.

We follow the assessment policy as set out by the Croydon Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each key stage. At the end of a term, the teacher makes a summary judgement and forms part of the foundation subject assessment about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected level of attainment.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of Bibles and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in RE. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books to support the children's individual research. We use a set of persona dolls to enhance the teaching of RE and to make the beliefs less abstract.

Monitoring and review.

The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the Headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and areas for development in RE and indicates areas for further improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of monitoring and review.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____