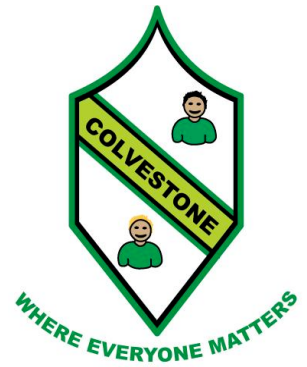


Colvestone Primary School



Religious Education Policy

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A STATEMENT OF POLICY

Religious Education teaches children about the nature of religious beliefs and practices and the importance and influence of these in the lives of believers.

Religious Education is part of the basic school curriculum and the Education Reform Act of 1988 requires that RE should be provided for all pupils. It must be "in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain". RE makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils.

Colvestone Primary School follows the aims of the 'Hackney Education Agreed Syllabus' for Religious Education. Children are encouraged to explore their own beliefs, (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. RE enables children to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society. Children are taught to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and to help challenge prejudice.

1. Aims

- To encourage a reflective approach to living, a knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices and a development of personal skills in forming reasoned opinions;
- To promote a tolerant understanding of and a respect for religious believers and the various philosophies of life in our multicultural society;
- To provide children with a basis on which much of our culture has developed;
- To develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity as the predominant religion in Great Britain and other principal religions represented in the country.

2. The legal position of religious education

The 1988 Education Reform Act and the Education Act 1996, stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The acts allow parents 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 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 LEA's Agreed Syllabus. The acts state 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, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Schools are advised to take into account additional religions and belief systems where there are adherents in the school community, e.g. by acknowledging festivals when they occur and making these 'special days' for children who celebrate them.

3. Cross curricular links

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas:

- **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 the Literacy Hour have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and this, is R.E's way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

- **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. 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.

- **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Through 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 so doing; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

- **ICT** Information and communication technology enhances religious education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet and CD-ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children might use *PowerPoint* to help them 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 adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text. Or, using desktop software, they can create a special book where each pupil has her or his own page; they also make a cover and binding for the book, and draw up a set of rules for its use.

4. Entitlement

The Agreed Syllabus sets out the entitlement to learning in religious education for all pupils in the school, irrespective of social background, culture, race religion and gender, differences in ability and disabilities. This entitlement contributes to their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. These are necessary for pupils' self-fulfilment and development as active and responsible citizens.

Children are required to follow designated programmes of study in order to achieve particular levels of attainment.

The attainment targets of Hackney's Agreed Syllabus summarise what we are trying to achieve:

- Learning about Religions (AT1) - Refers to how pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

1. beliefs, teachings and sources
 2. practices and ways of life
 3. forms of expression.
- Learning from Religion (AT2) - refers to how pupils, in the light of their learning about religion, express their responses and insights with regard to questions about issues about:
1. identity and belonging
 2. meaning, purpose and truth
 3. values and commitments.

Religious education must be taught within the following time allocations. 5% of the curriculum time should be spent on Religious Education. The statutory time is 36 hours per year at Key Stage 1, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage 2.

5. Organisation

Foundation Stage

Although RE is not explicitly mentioned as part of the Goals in the Foundation Stage, it is a local subject. It has to be taught to "all registered pupils" i.e. all the children in the Reception class including under fives. Effective educational practice in the Foundation Stage will provide experiences which will contribute to later work in religious education and also enhance pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Teachers have to deliver RE specific to the local Agreed Syllabus, which describes how religious education can contribute to the early learning goals.

At key stages 1 and 2, the Agreed Syllabus follows the same format as the National Curriculum programmes of study (The Education Act 2000, defines a programme of study as the 'matters, skills and processes' that should be taught to pupils). Staff are supported in their teaching of Religious Education through our scheme of work and the Religious Education Co-ordinator. There will be an integrated approach when teaching the two attainment targets.

Each class will timetable the minimum of at least 45 minutes of RE on a weekly basis. The teaching of RE should remain objective and educational in its approach, and never to convert or support any religion in particular. It should also attempt to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils regardless of their beliefs.

6. Resources

Religious Education resources are stored centrally, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of R.E topic books. Big books are also available for the six major faiths taught in the school. A set of 'Living Religions' posters are also available to class teachers, with suggested questions for whole class or small group discussions. Teachers can also order additional materials from the Islington Loans Services. All teachers will use I.C.T/ Media to enhance pupil understanding of R.E.

7. Assessment

Assessment will be in accordance with school assessment policy procedures. These will take the form of tracking achievement against the Key Objectives. Marking work against stated learning intentions will also contribute to making overall judgments for reporting to parents. Each study unit will be evaluated against stated learning intentions.

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. 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 improve their work in the future. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

8. Monitoring

The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education on a half termly basis. The Co-ordinator is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. The Co-ordinator has specially-allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject. Children's work in Religious Education is kept in PSHCE books, which are monitored during book scrutinies.

9. Equal opportunities

Religious education has always offered possibilities for encouraging sensitivity to a variety of beliefs and practices. It also offers, in each religion studied, the opportunity for learning what the various faiths have to teach about opposition to racial prejudice and discrimination. Studying what different religions have to say about moral values and respect for individuals will help pupils work out their own system of beliefs and moral codes and show respect for the different religious traditions of pupils in school. Through developing greater empathy and understanding, all stereotypes will be challenged in a positive way.

10. Community Links

The school is committed to offering an opportunity for active learning with practical first hand experiences for all pupils. This may be achieved through visits to local places of worship and talks by guest speakers from the local community.

11. Review and revision

This policy will be reviewed in 2014 by the RE Co-ordinator and is based on the school's understanding of the Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator will collect and collate the experiences and ideas of colleagues as they arise.

Reviewed September 2013 by Nasima Ephraim (RE Co-ordinator)