



William Penn Religious Education (RE) Policy

Rationale

This policy document sets out the schools aims, principles and strategies for the delivery of Religious Education in accordance with the 'Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in West Sussex: 2015'.

Religious education is a legal entitlement for every pupil and forms part of the basic curriculum as set down in the 1998 Education Act. Religious beliefs and practices play an important part in the lives of many people worldwide. As a Quaker foundation school, religious education and understanding at William Penn play a particularly special part in our ethos. The school's Quaker roots influence many daily practices and are valued by the school community.

Aims

The purpose of religious education is to foster a better understanding of ourselves and others and through this deeper understanding, nurture a more sympathetic attitude to others, regardless of our differences.

Quaker values, including equality and social justice are supported through religious education and other curriculum areas (see cross-curricular teaching).

Objectives

The school aims to teach religious education so that children may:

- Acquire a knowledge and understanding of the origins, content and development of the Christian religion and of other religions, their traditions and beliefs
- Understand the importance of religious experience and recognise the ways in which these have been interpreted and expressed through a variety of religious traditions
- Appreciate the role of religious beliefs in personal practices, enabling them to develop their own spiritual values
- Identify areas of similarity and difference between the major world religions
- Consider the contribution of religion in the establishment of relationships, family life, friendships and communities
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people and respect their right to hold beliefs that differ from their own

How Our Objectives Are Delivered

Ethos and Environment

We recognise that all classes will have children with a wide range of prior knowledge and understanding of world faiths and religious practises and therefore we use a range of teaching and learning styles to ensure that all children, regardless of their ability or understanding, are able to participate, enjoy and learn. Open-ended questions, differentiated tasks and creative arts such as debates, research, quizzes, listening to readings from religious texts, music and online resources such as film clips, all enable the pupils to access the curriculum at their own level and to deepen their understanding through challenging and creative teaching.

Curriculum and Planning

It is clearly understood from the Agreed Syllabus, that RE in school is concerned with educating children about religion and for them to learn from religion. It is not concerned with inducting them in a particular faith; this is the responsibility and choice of the family or their faith community.

Religious Education is taught through a combination of class work, visits to places of worship, assemblies (including visits from local clergy and Quaker representatives) and whole school celebrations (such as Harvest Festival and the Christmas Carol service).

Whole school assemblies support the teaching of RE in a multi-faith context (for instance, the discussion of special days, festivals, pilgrimages or sacred places for people of different world faiths).

Long term plans include visits to places of religious significance such as the Year 5/6 visit to Worthing Mosque and consideration of the chapel during a visit to Arundel Castle in Key Stage 1.

The subject leader monitors planning annually and class teachers maintain records through Foundation Subject assessments. These also inform teaching plans for future lessons. The curriculum allows for 5% teaching time weekly in line with the recommendations of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus. It is anticipated that the actual amount of time given each week will vary.

Cross-Curricular RE

RE lends itself well to teaching across the creative and arts curriculum and is enriched by the regular use of computers for showing a range of media, internet research and teaching resources (for instance, www.reonline). Visits to buildings of religious and historical interest may also allow children to learn about religious architecture and beliefs (for instance, the Tudors and religious changes and symbolism).

Much of the citizenship curriculum (PSHCE) complements the religious education syllabus and children are able to consider values, ethics, consequences, changes etc through both subject areas.

Work completed in RE is recorded in RE exercise books/topic books. This also serves to inform teacher assessment.

Out-of-School-Hours Learning (OSHL)

Children are encouraged to find out more about the local Quaker place of worship (The Blue Idol) and children from Year 2 and Year 6 spend some time there prior to transition to Key Stage 2 or secondary school respectively. Each year, the school participates in a Christmas Service at Christ's Hospital Chapel.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of the standards of work in RE is the responsibility of the Subject Leader. The work of the subject leader also includes supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE and informing them of current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead for RE in the school.

The aspects of RE that are monitored include:

The knowledge of and attitude towards RE of children, staff and parents
CPD opportunities for staff

The methods of evaluation include:

- Reviewing schemes of work for content and coverage
- Reviewing books and children's work in general
- Discussions with children (pupil conferencing) to ascertain their understanding of the subject and the ways in which they would like to learn
- Discussions with staff and in-school guidance
- Reviewing programmes of activities and updating when required

Assessment and Recording

Teachers assess children's work and achievements in RE through observation during lessons and in marking their written work.

Assessments are made annually by teachers via the assessment guidance in the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus 2015.

RE may also be used to assess English skills, as it lends itself well to comparative text analysis and historical/social contexts of literature.

Parents are informed of their child's progress through their annual reports.

Resources

Annual bids will reflect current needs within school.

The school has several dvds that are stored centrally in the staff room.

Computers (used for Powerpoints and internet research/learning) are located in classrooms and stored centrally as outlined in the school ICT Policy.

The school library houses several books on world faiths and there are Bibles available in classrooms and the school library.

Each classroom displays a 'Quaker Values' notice board and school prayer.

A range of artefacts are kept centrally in the 'Blue One' storage container. There are 'Faith Boxes' that cover the religions of Judaism, Sikhism and Islam.

Withdrawal

When parents request that their child be withdrawn from religious education parents are interviewed by the headteacher to clarify the beliefs and practices that they wish their child to be excluded from. Because of the need to assure their safety, pupils who are withdrawn from RE lessons should work in another classroom.

Signed:

Date: