



Religious Education Policy

The Aim of the R.E. curriculum

The aim of the R.E. curriculum links firmly with the vision and values of the school. All R.E. taught at Spring Hill will be in accordance with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus, its key aim being 'to enable pupils to reflect upon, develop and affirm their own beliefs, values and attitudes through the exploration of shared human experiences and by considering the place of religion within the contemporary world.' Central to the Agreed Syllabus and R.E. work in Spring Hill is the question. 'What does it mean to be human?'

The Legal Position of RE

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 reception class who are less than five years old. 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 (see withdrawal). 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 Lancashire SACRE Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. 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.

Principles

- The R.E. curriculum will incorporate opportunities to learn both about religion and human experience.
- R.E. has a particularly important contribution to make to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of children.
- All R.E. work will support the school's belief in the importance of developing the children's English, especially through the use of discussion.
- As in all subjects at Spring Hill, the teaching of R.E. will be related to ages and individual abilities of the children, taking account of greater independence and previous learning experiences.
- To ensure the children have a wide range of experiences of other faiths and places of worship within the community, links have been made with local places of worship. A variety of trips and visitors will broaden the children's experiences and understanding.
- To stimulate learning and personal reflection, the outdoor environment and local area around school will be used frequently to embed and increase the subject knowledge.

Key Skills and Understanding

Religious Education develops pupil's knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to Christianity, Islam and the other principle religions presented in Great Britain. By exploring issues within and across faiths, pupils learn to understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stances), and their influence on individuals, societies, communities and cultures. (Lancashire Agreed Syllabus) Through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy, R.E. develops pupil's skills of enquiry and response.

Within this understanding, pupils at Spring Hill will be given the opportunity to:

- Develop an interest in and reflect upon the natural world around them and perceive their place in it.
- Develop an understanding of the nature of ultimate questions and the way in which human beings approach and answer such questions.
- Learn of significant figures and the meaning and place, which they have in particular religious traditions.
- Find out about the importance of sacred writing, places of worship, festivals, customs and ceremonies.
- Develop empathy for the experiences of others.
- Reflect upon insights gained and consider what is important for them.

To do this, the children will:

- Read and discuss a variety of key texts and stories.
- Have access to a range of artefacts.
- Ask and research the answers to questions.
- Visit significant places and respond to visitors.

Planning

As required by law, and in accordance with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus, R.E. in Spring Hill reflects the fact that, 'religious traditions are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'

The framework therefore includes majority teaching time allocated to Christianity. As the majority of the pupil population in Spring Hill are Muslim, our major progressed study is Islam, with each year group studying Islam for a term. Children also learn about Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. As required by law R.E. will be no less than 5 % of available curriculum time.

Teaching Methods

R.E. is planned in year groups. The methods for teaching R.E. are varied and are intended to interest and stimulate the children. At Spring Hill, we aim to move beyond transmitting information to helping the children seek meaning and develop understanding. The children will have as direct an experience as possible of a religion. This will include visits and visitors, handling artefacts and the use of visual resources, DVDs, photos and ICT presentations. The use of story helps children to consider important questions and set the scene for discussion. Active learning is important in R.E. and regularly involves art, role-play, discussion and music.

Equal opportunities

As in all areas at Spring Hill, all children will be taught according to their own ability. Resources provided are suitable for all groups of children and bilingual staff are available for those children who need this support. The methods of teaching R.E. allow the children to interact with the subject at their own level.

Withdrawals

Parents wishing their child to be withdrawn from R.E. must seek permission from the Headteacher who will then inform the Subject Leader and class teacher. Any requests should be made annually, at the beginning of each school year.

When a request to withdraw is received parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to understand the basis for the request. The school will discuss the practical implications of withdrawal and the circumstances in which it may be reasonable to accommodate their wishes. Withdrawn children could be given an alternative task or sent to work alongside another class. Any difficulties should be discussed with the Headteacher.

Links with other subjects

Although R.E. is a distinct subject, it involves links with many areas of the school curriculum. R.E. supports the learning of English through discussion work, researching, asking questions, reading and reflecting upon story (secular and religious) and in explanation of religious vocabulary. R.E. resources reflect global issues in that they represent religions from different cultures e.g. Afro-Caribbean Christians. R.E. supports Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development by looking at life questions, values, right and wrong and the preparing of children as citizens in a plural society.

Continuity and Progression

The scheme of work has been planned to ensure continuity and progression throughout year groups. Each year group approaches a theme with a key question to focus on from a different perspective and the work of one year group is built on by the next. Resources are directed at appropriate year groups and Bibles which are used in every year group progress from a simple story structure in Reception to a more realistic format in Years 5 and 6.

Assessment and Recording

When assessing RE at Spring Hill, teachers use observation and discussions they may have with the children. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work according to the feedback and marking policy. At the end of a unit or work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum and age related expectations.

At the end of key stages, children's levels are reported to SACRE. RE is planned using the Lancashire's Agreed Syllabus as a content guide. This has two main attainment targets;

Learning about religion

This includes enquiry into, and investigation of the nature of religion, the range of beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Through this, the pupils should develop an understanding of ethical issues and an understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other. Pupils should also develop an understanding of the nature and characteristics of religions.

Learning from religion

This focuses on developing pupils' reflection on and in response to their own and other's experiences in the light of their learning about religion. Pupils should develop the skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they have learned about religions. Pupils should learn to communicate their own ideas, particularly in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments.

Monitoring

The Subject Leader for R.E. monitors the subject through lesson plans, displays and the scrutiny of children's work. The result of any monitoring is discussed with the Headteacher/SLT and any actions resulting from this are acted upon within a given time frame. The monitoring of standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in religious education is the responsibility of the RE subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE, being informed about current developments in the subject through INSET, newsletters, network meeting and SACRE therefore providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader has the responsibility to organise a subject development plan and maintain resources.