

Greengate Lane Academy Religious Education Policy 2016



1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Greengate Lane Academy we begin to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the five major world faiths (Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism). Children start to reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

1.2 The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to begin to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- Ø develop investigative and research skills
- Ø have respect for other people's views, and celebrate the diversity in society.

2 The legal position of religious education

2.1 Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 2014 Sheffield Agreed Syllabus (SACRE). The SACRE stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The SACRE allows 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. The SACRE 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.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 We base our teaching and learning style 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 enables children to begin to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development.

3.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable 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, Diwali, Passover, etc. 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.

3.3 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 rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.

3.4 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:

- Ø setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- Ø setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- Ø grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- Ø providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- Ø using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

4 Curriculum planning in religious education

4.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with Sheffield's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.2 We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects as part of a themed approach.

4.3 Lessons are planned in a thematic cross curricular way so children are able to make links with other learning. Clear outcomes are planned for each lesson so children's learning can be assessed.

5 The Foundation Stage

5.1 We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

5.2 In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

6 Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1 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 our English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is RE'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.

6.2 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 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.

6.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through religious education in our school we provide opportunities for spiritual development. 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 doing so, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7 RE and Computing

7.1 Computing enhances religious education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet and CD-ROMs. Children can take photographs of the class visiting a place of worship and can also find the various artefacts in churches by doing virtual tours on church websites.

8 RE and inclusion

8.1 At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious education forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make 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.

8.2 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, and 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. We will give children opportunities to show their learning in different ways. Outcomes could be in the form of not only writing, but also pictures, illustrations, performances etc.

8.3 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple, for example, 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.

9 Assessment for learning

9.1 Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible or tell others about a visit to a place of worship. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons.

9.2 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.

10 Resources

10.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store 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 RE topic books to support the children's individual research.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he 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 subject leader produces an annual action plan which indicates areas for further improvement.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.