



Witchampton CofE First School

Policy for Religious Education

Inspiring life-long learning, enjoyment and achievement within a secure Christian environment

Religious Education (R.E.) is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'R.E. has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that R.E. should be provided for all registered pupils except for those withdrawn at the request of their parents. (s 71 SSFA 1998). This will include school children in Reception classes as well as.

The Education Act (2002 Section 80 (1)(a) ; (2) (a) (b)
DCSF Guidance on religious education in English Schools, 2010

Witchampton First School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of R.E. must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Headteacher following advice from the diocese, have decided to adopt the SACRE Locally Agreed Syllabus for Dorset and supplement this with material from the Diocese and elsewhere.

At Witchampton CofE First School we aim for R.E. to:

- provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, self and issues of right and wrong. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery, and to explore and reflect upon experiences through which questions about awe and wonder, mystery and certainty, doubt and fear may be raised.

Cross-curricular links

R.E. contributes to other curriculum aims in particular to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and community cohesion.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in R.E. within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims.

Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community cohesion

R.E. makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

Effective R.E. will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

- 1. The school community** – R.E. provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- 2. The community within which the school is located** – R.E. provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
- 3. The UK community** – a major focus of R.E. is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.
- 4. The global community** – R.E. involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

R.E. subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others and to build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. It is an important subject in contribution to the schools development as a Rights Respecting School.

R.E. plays an important part in a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in R.E. are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus for Dorset.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

Delivery

R.E. at Witchampton CofE First School is delivered as part of themed or topic work where there is a recognisable link, and as a discrete subject using guidance from within the Dorset agreed syllabus.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that

- At KS 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism with aspects of Hinduism
- At KS2 pupils study Christianity and Judaism with aspects of other religions including, Hinduism, Islam and creationism.

Assessment

Children demonstrate their ability in R.E. 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. We assess children using the Dorset agreed syllabus attainment target 'I can' statements.

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. 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.

Monitoring

The R.E. Leader will monitor the subject within the school through analysis of this assessment data and scrutiny of pupils' work. The subject leader is responsible for contributing to the Church school self evaluation process.

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the R.E. curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in R.E. and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- teachers are aware of R.E.'s contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support R.E. learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the R.E. curriculum and the right to withdraw
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach R.E. unless specifically appointed to do so
- R.E. is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach R.E., the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to R.E. In these circumstances, head teachers might wish to seek advice from their LA or SACRE.

The right of withdrawal from R.E.

At Witchampton CofE First School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on

religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Witchampton CofE First School.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from R.E. are aware of the R.E. syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the R.E. curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where R.E. is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from R.E., schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for R.E. of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This R.E. could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- Outside arrangements for R.E. are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

Signed: _____

Date: _____