



RE Policy

Last reviewed April 2013

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Religious Education (RE) Policy

Introduction

At Longhill Primary School we follow the East Riding Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

1. Aims and objectives

1.1.1 RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, to challenge stereotypes and to build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

1.2 The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- 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 and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

1.3 The agreed syllabus is not content-focused but rather based on the exploration of concepts (fields of enquiry), the development of skills and a consideration of attitudes and dispositions.

There are two attainment targets:

Attainment Target 1: Learning *about* religion

Learning about religion is like looking out through a window at life, seeing people of other cultures and beliefs, their values, their practices and their responses to the challenges of contemporary life. AT1 is concerned with human experience; it involves the study of key beliefs, teachings, sources, practices and forms of expression in religion.

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Attainment Target 2: Learning *from* religion

Learning from religion is like looking into a mirror and being given the opportunity to explore and develop personal views on religious and moral issues. This journey starts with me and my experiences. AT2 is much more than just a personal response; it requires an increasing depth of religious knowledge and understanding as pupils develop their learning.

2. Breadth

Key stage 1 children will study Christianity and Judaism

Key stage 2 children will study Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism

Christianity represents at least 60% - the remaining proportion is equally divided between the other chosen faiths. These are not exclusive and various world faiths may occasionally be touched upon. RE teaching is distinct from collective worship, which is not counted as curriculum time.

3. The legal position of religious education

- 2.1 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. 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 LEA's 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.

3 Teaching and learning style

- 3.1 We base our teaching and learning style in RE as an enquiry model based on the LEA's agreed syllabus. 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 extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own

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views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

- 3.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and 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 organize 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 discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies.
- 3.4 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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:
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
 - grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
 - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
 - 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 the LEA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.
- 4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps are based on the LEA's Agreed Syllabus, allowing for continuity and progression and building on prior learning. The RE subject leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. We teach

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religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. Some of our medium-term (termly) topics have a particular historical focus. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of religious themes and topics.

- 4.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.
- 4.4 The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader. Pupils receive an average of 45-60 mins/week of RE, representing at least 5% of curriculum time; when appropriate some of this may be blocked to provide a concentrated focus.

5 Foundation Stage

- 5.1 The EYFS sets the standard for learning, development and care for children from birth to 5 years. While the statutory requirement for RE does not extend to children under compulsory school age, it can form a valuable part of the educational experience of children in the EYFS. The principles and practice of EYFS offer good opportunities for RE.
- 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 religious education to the teaching of other subjects

- 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 the Literacy Hour have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our 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 Information and communication technology (ICT)

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We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Through teaching 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.

7 Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

7.1 At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school 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 progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

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, 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.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special

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educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to religious education.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a Sikh temple, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8 Assessment and recording

- 8.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the national curriculum levels of attainment. We record the attainment grades in our mark books, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.
- 8.2 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

9 Resources

- 9.1 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. There is a set of bibles for both key stages and 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 and computer software to support the children's individual research. Other East Riding of Yorkshire Council resources can be borrowed, by arrangement, from County Hall, tel: 01482 392435.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 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 the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject leader presents the headteacher with an annual report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. S/he has specially-allocated time

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for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

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Model Every Child Matters School Policy Statement

Every pupil with additional needs in this inclusive school has an entitlement to fulfil his/her optimum potential. This is achieved by ensuring the well-being of all pupils in relation to: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving social and economic well-being.

These well-being outcomes are embraced in every aspect of school life: personalised teaching and learning approaches; access to ICT across the curriculum; flexible learning pathways and out-of-hours learning activities; support for emotional well-being; flexible timetables; assessment for learning which engages pupils in having a say about their progress and additional provision; and partnership with parents/carers, other schools, the local community and with practitioners from health, education and social services providing 'wrap around' care and personalised services.

Reviewed by: Miss J Langdale, May 2012

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