



Religious Education Policy

This policy should be read alongside our SMSC Policy and Collective Worship policy

Introduction

Religious Education makes a vital contribution to the education of our children at Jarrow Cross CofE Primary School. It enables teachers to foster children's' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and engages children in learning about and learning from religion. Through the study of beliefs and practices, children are given the opportunity to think about ultimate questions that concern all of humanity. Children are able to develop empathy, respect, evaluation and critical thinking, knowledge and self-reflection.

RE lessons play a key role in enhancing the school ethos by fostering attitudes such as friendship, trust, honesty and forgiveness. RE also contributes to our school vision 'Encourage one another and build each other up'. The children use opportunities provided in their RE lessons to fulfill this vision, which then filters through their rest of their school life.

The Legal Position of RE

The 1988 Education Reform Act provides a legal framework for the provision of Religious Education and states that Religious Education must be taught to all pupils aged 5-18.

At Jarrow Cross, we follow the South Tyneside legally adopted Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which is a statutory order. In accordance with the 1988 Act, the Agreed Syllabus reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of teachings and practices of other principal world religions represented in Great Britain. At Jarrow Cross, children at Key Stage 1 focus on Christianity and Judaism and Key Stage 2 children focus on Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. Dimensions from other faiths may be included. Some aspects of world religions are included in the topics delivered at the Foundation stage using the key statement, 'Let's find out about'.

Legally, the Agreed Syllabus must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge particular religion or religious belief on pupils. We at Jarrow Cross treat all belief systems with respect and encourage children to do the same.

Importance of RE

The main aims of Religious Education at Jarrow Cross are to:

- *develop* pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, or other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions
- provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human?
- offer opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others - individually, communally and cross -culturally

- promote mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society and therefore contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion.

Withdrawal

Under the terms of 1988 Education Reform Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Religious Education.

It is the responsibility of the school to make adequate alternative provision for children withdrawn from Religious Education.

Whilst we respect the rights of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, the Headteacher would be very happy to meet with parents who have concerns, discuss the nature of religious education in the school and consider arrangements.

Organisation and Management of RE

In Key Stage One, RE lessons take place for 1 hour per week.

In Key Stage Two, RE lesson take place for 1 hour and 15 minutes per week.

There is a Religious Education coordinator in the school who prepares the Action Plan and reviews, monitors and evaluates provision and practice of Religious Education. The RE coordinator works closely alongside the RE link governor who hold regular meetings and updates. The school will ensure that governors are informed of any developments and changes to provision in Religious Education and amendments to school policy are made available for discussion and approval.

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education is open to all children at Jarrow Cross School regardless of religion, race, culture, gender and ability. Through the teaching of Religious Education, children learn to:

- become aware that Britain is multi-religious and multi-cultural
- challenge inequalities and discrimination based on race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic groups
- respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others

Planning and Delivery

A Long Term Plan for Religious Education has been produced by the Co-ordinator. This meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

As part of RE learning, we give opportunities for children / students to meet people from faith communities, including, where appropriate, those who do not hold a religious faith. We invite visitors to school to talk about aspects of their beliefs and also take students to visit a range of places of worship. We are also developing opportunities for students to talk to and ask questions through the use of technology, e.g. skype, email, video conferencing etc.

We have planned Religious Education to ensure children can build up a picture of Christianity and some of the other principal faiths (and worldviews) represented in Great Britain today. Every topic is based on an enquiry question to facilitate an enquiry based approach to learning. Children in the Early Years will be introduced to aspects of religions through topics about belonging, times of celebration and special objects, people and books. These topics use examples from Christianity and other religions as appropriate.

In Key Stage One, the children will build up an increasingly clear and detailed picture of Christianity. They will also study Judaism. The Christianity objectives follow on from each other allowing children to build upon their prior knowledge within the religion (Christianity is taught for the Spring term to link between the Christian festival of Christmas and Easter). The final objective in Year 1 introduces the religion of Judaism which is subsequently build upon as the first objective in Year 2. The summer term in Year 2, is ended with a diversity unit to provide children the opportunity to draw on all prior learning and pull their learning together.

In Key Stage Two, the children will build up an increasingly clear and detailed picture of Christianity. They will also study Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. There are also diversity and thematic units to ensure children can apply their learning across a range of religions and worldviews. The Christianity objectives follow on from each other allowing children to build upon their prior knowledge within the religion (Christianity is taught for the Spring term to link between the Christian festival of Christmas and Easter). Children in each year group have the opportunity to build up their knowledge and understanding of Christmas and Easter in the Christian tradition by

studying different aspects of these festivals each year. These topics allow for clear progression within understanding.

Judaism is taught twice across the school. Judaism is the least represented religion within South Tyneside and our RE curriculum is designed to educate our children on less familiar religions to ensure all stereotypes can be challenged.

Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism are taught across the school. This is to give our children an introduction to the religion which can be subsequently built upon during KS3. It is important to educate our children on all religions represented within our area to ensure our children are prepared to live in our diverse society.

Our curriculum also reflects our local area. We have incorporated the study of the Venerable Bede within Year 2 and Durham Cathedral in Year 4 to link with our Curriculum Intent by raising the aspirations of our children.

The school will also keep parents informed of any developments in relation to Religious Education and make the school policy for RE available on our school website.