

Marsworth CE Infant School



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MARSWORTH CE INFANT SCHOOL

RE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do

Through our values of Respect, Courage, Compassion and Curiosity, Marsworth CE Infant School provides a unique, nurturing environment to inspire a love of learning in our children.

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.
Proverbs 22:6

We care for each child as an individual to support their education, social, spiritual and moral growth.

The close relationship of religion to culture and morality creates problems in identifying the place of R.E. in the whole curriculum. R.E. involves concepts, skills and attitudes, many of which are common to the Arts, Humanities, Science and social behaviour. R.E. involves consideration of both moral and religious issues. Learning of a religious nature should be closely linked to the child's direct experience of life.

Where possible R.E. may be included in cross-curricular themes and approaches. However, in order to be successful, teachers need to be aware of the distinctive characteristics of R.E. This involves an emphasis on emotions, a sense of wonder, awareness of spiritual communication, an ability to question and a growing awareness of personal commitments.

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Marsworth CE Infant School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life as and when they arise. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children 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.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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 their festivals;
- 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;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

THE LEGAL POSITION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

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 staff 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 R.E. curriculum is based on the Buckinghamshire LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the R.E. 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.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We base our teaching and learning style in R.E. on the key principle that good teaching in R.E. 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 views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the R.E. curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in R.E. 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 regularly visit the local Church and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children, when possible.

As a Church of England School we often use Church Festivals as the centre of our school worship and RE. At times, we join our local congregation to take part in specific services such as the Harvest Festival Service. We use the Church regularly for services such as Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and our End of year Leavers Service. The Vicar assists in the delivery of RE through weekly school worship and talking to classes on relevant topics. The Christian ethos pervades the whole curriculum. A number of the children attending the school attend local churches on a regular basis.

We recognise the fact that all children have 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;
- 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.

CURRICULUM PLANNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Buckinghamshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and Oxford Diocese planning. 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.

FOUNDATION STAGE:

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the EYFS.

In EYFS classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The EYFS children take part in RE and the objectives set out in the ELG are taken into account during the planning stage.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PHSE) 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 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 society.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. We help children 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.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In our school we teach R.E. to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of R.E. is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching R.E. we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their support or Educational Health Care Plans

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING:

We assess children's work in religious education by marking in line with the school 'Marking and Feedback Policy' and 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 Oxford Diocese RE Scheme Levels of Attainment. We use these judgements to inform the children's Formative Records and to assess progress.

A great deal of RE consists of oral discussion, role play and drama for which formal recording is impractical, although photos are taken where possible and recorded in a class book.

RESOURCES:

We have built up our R.E. resources in recent years, and now have enough of these to enable us to teach all our R.E. teaching units. The school library has also increased its supply of R.E. topic books. When studying the alternative religions, we borrow a box of artefacts from the Multi-Cultural Centre in Aylesbury.

2. MONITORING AND REVIEW:

The R.E. co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education.

