

Dishforth C.E. Primary School Religious Education Policy

1. Statement regarding the legal position of RE at Dishforth C.E Primary School.

Dishforth CE Primary school is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school and therefore treats RE as a core subject. Delivery of RE is in line with the North Yorkshire LEA's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. Our school curriculum for religious education also 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.

2. The Statement of Entitlement (Appendix 1)

RE is central to the church's understanding of education and mission. 'The National Society Statement of Entitlement' outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England school.

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their

own faith and beliefs

3. Our Vision, Aims and Purposes of RE

3.1 Our Vision

At Dishforth CE Primary School our vision for Religious Education is that it provides opportunity for our pupils to develop open, sensitive, reflective and critical approaches to their understanding of humankind's varied religions and beliefs, enabling them to explore practices, values, beliefs and lifestyles, and relating these to their own experiences and to questions of everyday life.

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 the views of others and to celebrate the diversity in society.

At Dishforth CE Primary School we believe that Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. Through RE we are able to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major

world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions with a particular focus on Judaism and Islam. 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.

4. RE curriculum

At Dishforth CE Primary School we follow the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. We recognise that through the teaching of RE's aims and attainment targets high standards in RE can be established. Pupils' experience of the subject is the focus for their exploration of human experience and beliefs. We recognise the importance that pupils are taught in depth and detail about particular religions and beliefs through each of the key stages. The Agreed Syllabus requires us to contribute to enabling pupils in North Yorkshire to develop an overall understanding of the 6 principal religions in the UK. The balance between depth of understanding and the coverage of material in these religions is important, so the syllabus lays down the recommended religions to be taught to each age group. This is in line with the law, which states that Religious Education shall have regard to "the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."

5. The contribution RE makes to

5.1 SMSC

SMSC prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE 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.

5.2 The school's Christian Values

RE should contribute to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values. Making connections between the values and learning in RE will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

5.3 Respect for all and Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination and extremism.

5.4 The school community

RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

5.5 The local community

RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches.

5.6 The UK community

A major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

5.7 The global community

RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

5.8 The promotion of 'British Values'

RE provides opportunities to promote the 'British Values' of democracy,

the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect.

6. Approaches to teaching and learning in RE -

The Understanding Christianity programme states that the purpose of RE is to enable pupils to become religiously literate or to develop their existing religious literacy. At Dishforth CE Primary School we endeavor to develop Religious Literacy in order to provide children with "The ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs." This is achieved through an RE curriculum that ensures a balance of Theology, Philosophy and Social and Human sciences.

6.1 We base our teaching of 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 texts, 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 RE curriculum.

6.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. As a rural village we feel there is a great need to educate children about a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.

6.3 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 consider and discuss religious and moral issues, working individually, in groups or in whole class situations.

6.4 We recognise the fact that classes in our school have children of 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.

7. Organisation of RE

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the North Yorkshire LEA's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. 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.

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

At Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and Islam

At Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Islam and Judaism

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. As we have 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.

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.

Foundation Stage

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

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. Additional RE topics covered throughout the year are outlined in the long term plan and taught weekly within the reception classes.

As a school we strongly believe that all subjects should be taught along side each other. Within our R.E. teaching we will endeavour to find links to other subjects within the curriculum.

8. Assessment, Recording and Reporting of RE

We assess children's work in religious education in line with our whole school Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. Teachers make informal judgements as we observe children during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary (following the School's Marking Policy). On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the expectations of the unit.

9. Monitoring of standards in RE

The RE subject co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious

education. She 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. An action plan is drawn up yearly. The co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the Church School self evaluation process by developing targets and monitoring and assessing progress made on these. This is done in conjunction with the RE link governor. Regular updates are provided to the RE link Governor and the wider governing body.

10. Responsibilities for RE within the school (Headteacher and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher ensure that:

- all pupils make expected or exceeding progress in RE
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards in RE are high
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupil's understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided to parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfill its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress.

11. The right to withdrawal from RE

At Dishforth CE Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents 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 the other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, 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 concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Dishforth CE Primary School.

Last reviewed May 17

Next Review date May 19