



Religious Education Policy

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The Acorn Federation Religious Education Policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at The Acorn Federation. It was developed with reference to the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020 – 2025) and the Church of England's Understanding Christianity approach. It is taught as part of the Primary Curriculum 2014.

Aims of Religious Education

RE supports the aims for education, outlined in the National Curriculum 2014, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

RE should enable pupils to participate in an on-going search for wisdom, through exploring questions raised by human experience and answers offered by the religions and beliefs of the people of Derbyshire and the wider community, so as to promote their personal development.

Principles of the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education

The broad aims of RE in Derbyshire schools are to learn about religions and beliefs and to learn from religion and belief.

In line with the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus, our aims in teaching Religious Education at The Acorn Federation are to:

- Ask **challenging questions** about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- Develop pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, other principal religions and traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions.
- Offer **opportunities for personal reflection** and spiritual development.
- Enhance pupils' **awareness and understanding** of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- Encourage pupils to **learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions** while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.
- Challenge pupils to **reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate** issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.
- Encourage pupils to **develop their sense of identity and belonging**.
- Enable children to **develop individually within their communities** and as citizens in a diverse society and global community.
- Enable pupils to **develop respect for and sensitivity to others**, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- **Promote discernment** and enable pupils to combat prejudice.

Religious Education Curriculum Planning

The Acorn Federation plans use the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020-2025), supported by resources from the Church of England's Understanding Christianity scheme. The Garden Class follows a 3 year Long Term Plan and the Meadow Class a 4 year Long Term Plan, so that each theme is covered at least once in each key stage. Themes are presented as a question e.g. at KS1, "How and why do we celebrate special times?" and at KS2, "What makes a leader worth following?" Progression and differentiation is planned, to ensure that children are supported or challenged appropriately.

RE teaching ranges from 36 hours a year in the Foundation Stage and KS1 to 45 hours a year at KS2. This amounts to approximately 5% of Curriculum time following government guidelines. (Part of this allocation is time spent preparing for important festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter services.)

Teachers create a Medium Term Plan each half-term, which breaks down the Long Term Plan above into themes and questions. Short-term plans detail resources for individual lessons. Where possible, cross curricular links are identified.

In the Foundation Stage, RE is taught as an integral part of topic work covered during the year and is related to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which underpin curriculum planning for children aged three to five, for example as part of Personal, Social and Emotional Development or Understanding the World.

Teaching Methods

Teaching approaches are decided by individual teachers to reflect what a particular class or group of pupils need. Pupils will work within a class group, in small groups or individually. Activities may include:

- Teaching of subject knowledge.
- Question and answer sessions.
- Creative activities e.g. poetry, drawing, drama activities or artwork.
- Individual and group discussion and debate.
- Reading and exploring using topic books and the internet.
- ICT opportunities, e.g. use of Powerpoint presentations, Word documents, internet based research, digital cameras.
- Visits, e.g. to places of worship.
- Welcoming visitors to the classroom.

Special Educational Needs

Pupils with special needs have the same RE entitlement as any other pupils. As part of the planning process above, teachers ensure that the RE curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, through differentiation of teaching methods and strategies, e.g. adapting tasks, changing outcomes, adapting resources or providing adult support.

Equal Opportunities

It is a legal requirement that Religious Education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in the sixth form, except to those withdrawn by their parents. All children will be given equal access to all learning in school. Mutual respect and tolerance for all cultures will be promoted through the study of RE.

Assessment and Recording

Learning Outcomes are specified in the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for each unit of work. These are designed to ensure continuity and progression. Teachers will use their professional judgement, using evidence from a variety of sources, to assess children against these outcomes and will then determine whether they have met the expected standard for that unit. Teachers may also use this information to inform future planning and to inform parents of children's progress. Examples of sources of assessment might include written work, discussions, questioning, ICT evidence, photographs and observations of pupils.

Resources

Resources are kept in general resource areas at both schools and also in the class rooms. These resources include religious artefacts, DVDs/CDs, photographs, topic books and Bibles.

Subject Coordinators role

The role of the Subject Leader is to:

- Lead policy development and ensure the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus, ensuring progression and continuity across the school.
- Support colleagues, where necessary, e.g. in planning or assessment.
- Monitor RE progress and activities and advise the Head Teacher of any action needed.
- Purchase and organise RE resources
- Keep up to date with developments in Religious Education and communicate information to colleagues as appropriate.

The Coordinator will review this policy on a three yearly basis. (NB The Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus was revised in 2020.)