

# Eastchurch Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Date: May 2015

Review Date: May 2018

### Rationale

Religious education seeks to make a major contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils by helping them to acquire a knowledge and understanding of major religions, an appreciation of ultimate questions and responses to them, and to develop their own beliefs and values.

### Aims

- to gain a knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and other major world religions
- to enable pupils to develop the ability to make their own reasoned and informed judgements about the religious and moral issues which arise from reflection on human experience and a study of religious belief and practice
- to enable pupils to consider ways in which beliefs, values and traditions might have significance for their own lives

### School Christian Values

- Our chosen Christian Values that we actively promote through everyday activities and school life are: love, tolerance, respect, forgiveness and kindness.

### Legal Requirement

The legal requirements for religious education state that religious education must be provided for all registered pupils in school including those in reception classes. As a controlled school, Eastchurch School must follow the curriculum from the Kent Agreed Syllabus 2012.

### Objectives

**To gain a knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and other major world religions.**

- to identify and describe the key features of Christianity and other world religions , such as key figures, teachings, ceremonies, festivals and sacred writings.
- to identify elements common to a number of religions, such as public worship and marriage ceremonies
- to identify features which are distinctive of particular religious traditions, such as the use of a mezuzah in Judaism.

**To enable pupils to develop the ability to make their own reasoned and informed judgements about the religious and moral issues which arise from reflection on human experience and a study of religious belief and practice.**

- To become aware of the ultimate questions which life raises such as: Why do people believe there is a God? How was the universe created? What happens in life after death? To appreciate the different answers offered by Christianity and other traditions.

- To engage with issues which arise from a study of religions such as the value of special times, rituals, days of worship, festivals, mourning rituals and funerals.

**To enable pupils to consider ways in which beliefs, values and traditions might have significance for their own lives.**

- To appreciate that much of personal value can be gained from a study of the teachings of living religions inspirations to Gods work such as ideas about the way we might treat those less fortunate than ourselves from looking at stories like the Good Samaritan in the Bible.
- To appreciate the value of religious ritual and practice such as silence, stillness and reflection.

### **Time allocation**

RE is taught discretely in the Early Years for 20 minutes and reinforced through story time and Child Initiated activities. Key Stage One teach RE for 45minutes a week and Key Stage Two teach RE for 1hour and 10 minutes a week. The time allocation does not include time spent in acts of worship or assemblies but does include time spent in preparation for them.

### **Curriculum Planning**

The Kent Agreed Syllabus 2012 is the basis for our curriculum. “Responding to religion, engaging with living faiths”

- devotes most attention to Christianity at each key stage.
- includes a study of all the religions recognised as principal in Great Britain over Key Stages 1- 4, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism are the prescribed religions covered in Key Stage 1 and 2.
- includes a study of the moral dimension of religions at each key stage.

At Eastchurch School we use the Canterbury Diocese medium term plans which have been devised in order to fully cover the requirements of the Programme of Study in the Kent Agreed Syllabus.

In all year groups Christianity is studied naturally allowing for the inclusion of work based upon Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost

The children in the Foundation Stage will study Religious Education through planned activities identified in the Early Learning Goals and will also study some aspects of different world religions. The focus will still be primarily on elements within Christianity and will be structured around stories. The main topics will still be focused upon Special Times, Special Places and Special People.

In Key Stage One pupils will study three Core Units on Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. This has been arranged so that Year One will study Judaism and Year Two will study Hinduism.

In Key Stage Two pupils will engage in higher level study of Christianity and Judaism and will also study Islam and Sikhism.

This has been arranged so that Year Three, Year Four and Year Five will study Judaism and Islam and Year Six will study Judaism and Sikhism..

Progression and continuity can be seen through the different expectations that are clearly stated in each Key Stage’s Schemes of Work. It is also shown through acquiring wider and more detailed knowledge of religious beliefs. A deeper understanding of the meaning of stories, symbols and

events. A more fluent and competent use of religious language and terminology and increased levels in skills when responding to questions of identity.

## **Principles of Teaching and Learning**

### **Differentiation and Special Needs.**

When studying Religious Education teachers will ensure that they encompass the full range of age and ability including the most able within their class. For the children resources will be accessible and appealing. They will focus on religious practice and the use of religious artefacts where possible. The full range of strategies to achieve differentiated learning will be employed including task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping. There will also be particular emphasis upon ensuring that all tasks are challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage more able pupils.

### **Breadth and Balance**

Although work on Christianity will predominate at both key stages, there will be work in depth on other world religions. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes and respect for diversity.

### **Variety of teaching styles**

Pupils will experience a wide range of teaching and learning experiences appropriate to the matter to be learned understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through a whole range of teaching and learning experiences for example:

- listening to the teacher
- reading texts
- seeking information for themselves in libraries and via the internet
- discussion with the teacher and other pupils
- pair and group work
- using a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music, role play and drama
- visits and visitors

Regular opportunities will be provided for pupils to raise their own questions and to explore answers to them and to discuss and reflect on fundamental issues addressed in religious education.

### **Relevance**

Religious education will be made relevant in at least two ways. Firstly, teachers should establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of children's own lives, for example when teaching about the dietary laws in Judaism. Learning could start by asking questions about foods pupils like and dislike and where some families are vegetarian.

Secondly, teaching will seek to enable pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

### **Cross-curricular skills and links**

Religious education can make a contribution to the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, seeing the world through other people's eyes and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. Religious education also makes a contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects such as English and History as well as personal and social education. As it is concerned with values

and behaviour, religious education can make a significant contribution to education in citizenship. The use of I.C.T can enhance children's motivation in religious education; they can find out information about religious beliefs, use the internet and E-mail for exchanging information and use word processing skills to retell stories and present information in a more colourful way.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Religious education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. It will seek to present religions and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards that diversity.

## **Health and Safety**

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions; Particular care should be taken if the objective is to;

- handle artefacts, e.g. A splinter from a piece of wood
- consume food, e.g. If tasting some of the food eaten by Jews during the Seder meal
- visit places of worship

Teachers at Eastchurch School should conform to guidelines within the school health and safety policy in these circumstances. Any visits must follow the guidelines for "Offsite" working.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment in Religious Education will:

- directly relate to the attainment targets, AT1 Learning about religion, AT2 Learning from religion
- involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work
- be directly related to the attainment targets in the Kent Agreed Syllabus 2012, as well as the local and national expectations of achievement in religious education
- seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge
- recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop
- employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort
- include pupil assessment

During each term children will be assessed for each scheme of work taught and studied. These assessments will support a final assessment for each child at AT1 and AT2 at the end of each academic year. These will form the basis of feedback to pupils and reports to parents.

## **Establishing standards**

The level descriptors shown in the Kent Agreed Syllabus should be referred to when assessing children's progress. In Key Stage One the pupils should be between level 1-3 and in Key Stage Two within the range of 2 -5. There are two Attainment Targets that the children will be assessed against. AT1: Learning about religion- knowledge and understanding and AT2 : learning from religion, evaluation and application.

## **Management and administration**

Religious education will be managed by the subject co-ordinator who will produce a subject policy, related to whole school policies, a detailed scheme of work and manage the resources. Planning documents will be regularly reviewed.

## **Role of the subject co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator will:

- seek to ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement of religious education and that sufficient time is available to deliver the Kent Agreed Syllabus
- ensure that all teachers are aware of what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each key stage
- support colleagues and develop their subject expertise
- develop strategies to monitor and review the implementation of policy and schemes of work, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of the subject, pupils' progress and standards of achievement
- seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff
- order resources.

## **Resourcing**

Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library, pictures, music, CD.s, DVD's and artefacts. Funding should also allow for visits to different places of worship and INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored safely, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions studied.

## **Teachers right not to teach Religious Education**

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, teachers in county schools have had the legal right not to teach religious education and any refusal to do so must not be used to discriminate against them.

## **Parents right to withdraw pupils from Religious Education**

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. The school must comply with any requests from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so.

## **Review**

The religious education co-ordinator will monitor classroom teaching on a yearly basis. The effectiveness of the co-ordinator will be evaluated in discussions with the Executive Headteacher. Resources, teaching methods and needs will be identified and priorities for INSET will be established. This evaluation will form the basis for an action plan that will inform the school improvement plan.

