

Greens Norton C. of E. Primary School



Religious Education Policy

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Definition

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Greens Norton Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths, and we address some of the fundamental questions in life. 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 (exploring and responding to human experience) as well as *about* religions (developing knowledge and understanding of religion).

Introduction

The teaching of Religious Education 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 RE curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship.

Children are encouraged to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. Strong links with St. Bartholomew's Church in the village enriches their experiences and helps to develop their religious thinking. Direct experience comes from organised visits to local places of worship and visits from representatives of local religious groups who come into school and talk to the children.

At each Key Stage a programme of study sets out what pupils should be taught. Lesson content is based upon the Northamptonshire LEA's Agreed Syllabus and is supported by the QCA schemes of work and the recently purchased Badger Publishing Religious Education books. Lesson content may be adapted to meet the needs of individual classes, or to make links with other subject areas.

Aims and purposes of Religious Education

RE at Greens Norton Primary School provides children with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and other major world religions represented in Great Britain
- explore issues within and between faiths to help them understand and respect different religions beliefs values and traditions
- consider questions of meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end
- learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned judgements on religious and moral issues
- develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society
- reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses.

How Religious Education supports our School Aims.

Religious Education enables children to develop values and attitudes that support our school aims. In particular children work both independently, encouraging them to be independent learners, and with others, listening to others' ideas and treating these with respect. They take pride in, and celebrate their achievements and the achievements of others by reviewing their work, experiences and knowledge, and recognising the progress made in reaching that result.

The subject enables children to develop a respect for each other, to develop their own cultural awareness and understanding, and appreciate the value of differences and similarities. They develop an understanding that all people are equal regardless of age, race, gender or ability.

Legal Requirements

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 teachers to refuse to teach Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. Our school RE curriculum meets all the requirements set out in the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus document. The ERA states that the RE 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

Cross curricular opportunities

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy Hour have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and dramatic presentation.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and CD ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) 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 smoking, 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 pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching Religious Education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them 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.

Progression In Religious Education

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with Northamptonshire LEA's Agreed Syllabus. 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 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 for three to five year olds, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in one of the six Early Learning Goals entitled 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Equal Opportunities

We believe that it is important for all children to experience a rich and varied Religious Education Curriculum. We will use opportunities within Religious Education to challenge stereotypes. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and that the children have different experiences of religion. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child, and by providing a wide range of activities to address all learning styles. We use teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children where relevant and available.

Special Needs

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs

Resource Management

There is a class set of Bibles and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich our teaching. We keep the artefacts and reference books for Religious Education in the staff room. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and some computer software is available to support the children's individual research.

Role of the Co-ordinator

- lead the development of Religious Education in the school
- provide guidance to individual members of staff
- keep up to date with local, diocesan and national developments in Religious Education and disseminate relevant information.
- review the position and use of Religious Education resources and regularly update staff on new resources, ideas, materials etc.
- review and monitor the success and progress of the planned units of work
- be responsible for the organisation and maintenance of R.E resources.

Health and Safety

Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example visits, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment, Evidence and Record Keeping

All assessments are made in line with our school assessment policy.

Teacher assessments are made against the Statements of Attainment for each Key Stage as contained in the agreed syllabus.

End of unit assessments are made based on the work covered and the teacher's own end of unit tests, if appropriate.