



Everyone

Smiles

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Esh Church of England Primary School.

Policy for Religious Education

September 2019



These Guidelines are adopted subject to the over-riding requirements of relevant legislation, of the school Trust Deed and to the legal responsibilities and powers of the Governing Body as employer, admissions authority and owner of the school.

Esh C.E. (Aided) Primary School

Religious Education Policy

The Legal Position

Esh C.E. (Aided) Primary School, in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act, provides Religious Education for all pupils registered at the school. Religious Education (R.E.) is part of the basic curriculum but not part of the National Curriculum because it is taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus. Esh C.E. (Aided) Primary School follow Understanding Christianity (2016) and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed RE syllabus (2018).

We must stress that Religious Education (R.E.) has the same status and importance as any other subject and the same high standards are applied to Religious Education as to all other subjects. We teach Religious Education according to the aims of the syllabus and it is clearly stated that Religious Education should not attempt to alter a child's own beliefs but to provide a knowledge of their own and other's beliefs.

Intent

The key purpose of the Understanding Christianity is to support pupils in developing their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it.

It does this by integrating pupils' developing understanding of significant theological concepts in Christianity with their own self-understanding and understanding of the world, as part of their wider religious literacy.

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts
- To enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

The aims and purposes of Religious Education in a Church School are drawn from the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed RE syllabus (2018).

- To ensure excellence in Religious Education
- To enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief
- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and non-religious worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.

- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.'

Understanding Christianity and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed RE syllabus (2018). are designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE. They set out an approach to teaching and learning, support teachers to help pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, develop their understanding and their ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs. They are underpinned by three core elements, which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, thus supporting the aims of Religious Education.

Core Learning Values

At Esh CE Primary we enable children to fulfil their role as responsible global citizens now and in the future by developing skills of independence, creativity and teamwork. As part of thinking independently we seek to develop each child's ability to make informed choices, recognising that their actions contribute towards ensuring that the rights of all are respected. Our curriculum is founded upon the explicit development of these skills.

Implementation

Teaching and learning in the classroom will encompass all three of the elements below, allowing for overlap between elements as suits the religion, concept and question being explored.

- Making Sense of the Text/Belief
- Making Connections
- Understanding the Impact

A copy of the Long Term Plan for RE for each of the classes in school is available on the school website.

The core concepts

The following core concepts are explored in the Understanding Christianity approach, as part of the 'big story' of salvation, as understood within Christianity.

God - Fundamental to Christian belief is the existence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Creation - Christians believe the universe and human life are God's good creation. Humans are made in the image of God.

Fall - Humans have a tendency to go their own way rather than keep their place in relation to their creator. This attitude is called sin, and Genesis 3 gives an account of this rebellion, popularly called 'the Fall'. This describes a catastrophic separation between God and humans, between humans and each other, and between humans and the environment. This idea that humans are 'fallen' and in need of rescue (or salvation) sets out the root cause of many problems for humanity.

People of God - The Old Testament tells the story of God's plan to reverse the impact of the Fall, to save humanity. It involves choosing a people who will model a restored relationship with God, who will attract all other people back to God. The Bible narrative includes the ups and downs of this plan, including the message of the prophets who tried to persuade people to stick with God. The plan appears to end in failure with the people of God exiled, and then returning, awaiting a 'messiah' - a rescuer.

Incarnation - The New Testament presents Jesus as the answer: the Messiah and Saviour, who will repair the effects of sin and the Fall and offer a way for humans to be at one with God again. Incarnation means that Jesus is God in the flesh, and that, in Jesus, God came to live amongst humans.

Gospel - Christians believe Jesus' incarnation is 'good news' for all people. ('Gospel' means 'good news'.) His life, teaching and ministry embody what it is like to be one of the People of God, what it means to live in relationship with God. Jesus' example and teaching emphasise loving one's neighbour - particularly the weak and vulnerable - as part of loving God.

Salvation - Jesus' death and resurrection effect the rescue or salvation of humans. He opens the way back to God. Christians believe that through Jesus, sin is dealt with, forgiveness offered, and the relationship between God and humans is restored.

Kingdom of God - This does not mean that no one sins anymore! The Bible talks in terms of God's 'Kingdom' having begun in human hearts through Jesus. The idea of the 'Kingdom of God' reflects God's ideal for human life in the world - a vision of life lived in the way God intended for human beings. Christians look forward to a time when God's rule is fulfilled at some future point, in a restored, transformed heaven and earth. Meanwhile, they seek to live this attractive life as in God's Kingdom, following Jesus' example, inspired and empowered by God's Spirit.

Christian Values, Skills and Attitudes

The core Christian Values are taken from Galatians 5 vs22-23, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. These will be introduced and focussed upon on a two yearly cycle in Collective Worship (see Collective Worship Policy) and elements of each will be introduced when focussing on the impact of Christianity as a living faith.

- Generosity
- Compassion
- Justice
- Forgiveness
- Trust
- Courage
- Friendship
- Thankfulness
- Truthfulness
- Service

- Respect
- Perseverance

Skills:

Investigation, Enquiry, Empathy, Interpretation, Evaluation, Application, Reflection, Analysis, Expression.

Attitudes:

Commitment, Fairness, Respect, Self-understanding, Tolerance, Perseverance, Resilience, Enquiring.

Teaching and learning strategies:

To ensure all children have access to the curriculum, the Religious Education syllabus is creative yet challenging. Many different resourceful strategies are used both to introduce themes and also as a way for children to explore ideas and respond to the impact this may have on their lives and on the lives of others.

These include:-

- Using passages of text from Bibles that are age appropriate.
- Poetry and stories
- Godly Play
- Resource boxes and artefacts
- Art work (including the Methodist Church Collection of Modern Art 2012)
- Visits to e.g. religious buildings or places of significance including places of worship from other faiths.
- Visitors e.g. local clergy or members of the community
- Music
- Drama and roleplay.
- Computing
- Design and food technology
- Discussion
- Display
- The natural and outdoor environment.
- Multi-sensory /audio, visual and kinaesthetic.

Allocation of time

Christianity will be studied in depth and will form the major basis of all Religious Education. At least 80% of all Religious Education teaching time will be devoted to Christianity.

Islam and Hinduism will also be taught according to the appropriate Key Stage. Islam in KS1 and Islam and Hinduism in KS2. There will be no specific allocation for each religion as factors such as topic focus will influence the choice of illustrative examples. Additional time may be spent, for example, with the youngest pupils in school looking at celebrations such as Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light. In line with Understanding Christianity and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed Syllabus the teaching of religions will reflect the fact that the religious practices in Great Britain are in the main Christian.

Resources and choice of materials.

A variety of resources will be used when appropriate, namely:-

- Bibles
- Core Concept cards.
- The Big Frieze
- books,
- artefacts
- clothes
- posters and prints
- music
- videos
- Godly Play resource boxes
- PowerPoints
- visitors from local faiths

The school is constantly building up a collection of artefacts and resources which are stored in a labelled box, as well as displayed around school. These also reflect that we are a Church of England Primary School. Other items may be borrowed from Cuthbert House, the Durham Diocese Resource library.

Monitoring, evaluation and reviews

It is the role of the Head Teacher and R.E. Leader in school to monitor the policy and practise of Religious Education. In addition, there is a specialist governor responsible for R.E. who liaises with the Head Teacher and R.E. leader before reporting to the governors on Religious Education in school. We work closely with the Diocese and we are also part of a Church of England Primary Schools network who share ideas, evaluations, practices and procedures in our schools.

The R.E. leader will ensure that any local or national updates will be passed on to all staff and that the resources will be well maintained. They will also provide support for all staff in the implementation of the Religious Education curriculum and assessment whilst continuing their own professional development within this subject area.

The Role of the R.E. Leader

The R.E. Leader is responsible for:-

- Producing and updating or revising the RE policy in line with any changes.
- The organisation and purchase of RE resources.
- Keeping up to date with developments in R.E. particularly in relation to Understanding Christianity and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed Syllabus.
- Advising and assisting with planning, progression, assessment, record-keeping and reporting.
- Encouraging good classroom practise and high standards throughout the school.
- Leading in-service training and staff discussions.
- Encourage participation in competitions where available.
- Keeping parents and governors informed.
- Providing advice and support for new staff and students.
- Ensuring that the needs of R.E. are reflected in the School Improvement Plan.
- Monitoring the curriculum.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Esh C.E.(Aided) Primary School use Age Related Expectations (ARE) in their assessments. They are based upon the assessment opportunities given in the Understanding Christianity and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed Syllabus. Teachers have also been given extra guidance from the RE Leader which shows what children should know at the end of Y2, Y4 and Y6. This is used as a guide in the setting of tasks. It is also for teachers to ensure that children are working at a level appropriate for their age and ability and using the correct vocabulary. The levels listed are only possible levels of achievement and we should not underestimate children's abilities. It is also important to stress that pupils are not assessed on personal faith but on their knowledge, skills, and understanding of this particular subject area.

At the end of each unit teachers fill in a record sheet detailing which children are working at Age Related Expectations (secure), those who are working above (greater depth) and those who are working below (beginning or developing).

As with other core subjects we place the utmost importance on achievement in RE and expect children to achieve good or outstanding progress over the year. RE assessment should seek to raise standards of achievements in R.E. through:-

- providing teachers with information of individual strengths and weaknesses
- informing the planning of future work
- recognising and rewarding achievement
- involving pupils in the assessment of their own work and setting of targets
- showing pupils what they are capable of

It should, however, be stressed that some aspects of R.E. are very important but impossible to assess such as a child's spiritual development. We are looking to draw broad general conclusions from a range of evidence, over a period of time, rather than trying to measure a pupil's progress at every step.

Display of Work and Record Keeping

Each child in school will have their own Religious Education Evidence book which will show the work they have completed in each unit from Understanding Christianity and the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Agreed Syllabus.

In addition to this each class will keep an evidence portfolio which will show additional evidence e.g. displays, church services, assemblies etc. which cannot be displayed in the individual books. Children from each class will contribute to Religious Education displays around school.

Withdrawal

Parents have every right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. However, parents are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher before a final decision on withdrawal is made. Parents should be left in no doubt that RE, in a Church school, as in any school, is concerned with the development of the whole person with proper respect for individual freedom.

Date of Policy.....

Signed..... Headteacher

Signed..... Governor in charge of Religious Education

Signed..... R.E. Leader