

Our vision: ‘Let your light shine’ based on Matthew 5.16

Egglescliffe C.E. Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Reviewed: November 2021
Review Date: November 2023

Policy for Religious Education

Our Vision

For each individual to ‘shine’, by instilling a legacy of life-long learning, inspiring and empowering each individual to a world of possibilities.

Our Motto

‘Let your light shine’ based on Matthew 5.16

Be empowered, be inspired...‘shine’

This underpins all we undertake at our school. We have high expectations (academic, personal, social, moral and spiritual) and we aspire for all our pupils to aim high and succeed in all they do.

Mission Statement

Egglescliffe CE Primary enables everyone to be:

- Successful learners, who enjoy learning, make excellent progress and achieve to the best of their ability.
- Confident individuals who feel safe, are happy, healthy, enjoy a challenge and are resilient when facing difficulty.
- Responsible citizens who care for one another and their environment and make positive contributions to the community and the wider world.
- To be the change you want to see.

Aim: Each child is recognised as a unique individual who is inspired to grow as a responsible citizen and realise their potential within an enriched Christian family underpinned by our core beliefs of: Love, Hope, Trust and Friendship.

Our Intent

“Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together” (Statement of Entitlement)

At Egglescliffe CE Primary School, our aim is to enable every child to flourish through a programme of Religious Education and Collective Worship that enables them to grow in

wisdom and understanding, developing a profound respect for other people and their beliefs.

Through ...

- the analysis of religious texts, stories, symbols and artefacts,
- an understanding of how texts, stories, symbols and artefacts are interpreted and how they influence the way that people live their daily lives
- reflection of their own beliefs,

... we aim to help our children to develop their religious literacy, enabling them to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.

Purpose of study

Excellence in Religious Education

The principal aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.¹

Aims and purposes of Religious Education in the Church school

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church schools:

- 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.'

Rationale

At Egglecliffe CE Primary School, RE is regarded as a core subject, and pupils and their families can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views.

We teach according to the Stockton Agreed Syllabus supported by the Understanding Christianity and Durham Diocesan teaching resources. Our enquiry-based approach engages with theological concepts alongside the children's own understanding of the world to develop their religious literacy. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum.

Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Aims and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for our senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy*

**Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balance curriculum in RE.)*

- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

Personal Development and Well-Being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community Cohesion

RE provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion through:

- **the school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- **the community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
- **the UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and beliefs in the UK and how this influences national life.

- **the global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and beliefs and their impact on world issues. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, to challenge stereotypes and to build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. These contribute to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

In summary, religious education for children and young people:

- **provokes challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- **enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teaches pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompts pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

Provision of RE in the Curriculum

The legal requirements for the provision of RE in maintained schools do not specify any particular time allocation or how the curriculum should be organised. Using the Stockton RE Syllabus we teach RE on a weekly basis from Year 1 to Year 6 which amounts to:

Key Stage 1: - 36 hours per year (minimum)

Key Stage 2: - 45 hours per year (minimum)

We enhance and support the curriculum with the use of the Understanding Christianity and Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus resources.

While the statutory requirement for RE does not extend to children under compulsory school age, it forms a valuable part of the educational experience of children in the Early Years. The staff ensure RE contributes to:

- personal, social and emotional development,
- communication, language and literacy,
- knowledge and understanding of the world,

- creative development.

Teaching and Learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing ‘big’ and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts, stories and symbols.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits, visitors and events.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world-views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity.

Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables 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 links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Inclusion

R.E. is provided for all children at Egglecliff and makes a valuable contribution to their education. Teachers plan work which takes into account the differences in the abilities of their pupils in order to maximise their potential and extend their abilities and to allow all children access to the R.E. curriculum. R.E. has a large part to play in helping to remove prejudice and misunderstanding and in combating stereotyping, discrimination, sexism and racism. All pupils, irrespective of ability, age, gender or race are entitled to equal opportunity in the development of their religious education knowledge.

Assessment

The school has developed ‘learning ladders’ denoting the success criteria for all the RE units taught from Year 1 to Year 6. Teachers use these to inform their planning and end of unit assessments. Knowledge and skills are assessed in a variety of ways, and the children given appropriate feedback in order to make progress. Records are collated by the RE subject leader on an end of unit basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, the subject leader will monitor and evaluate the impact of this policy in practice.

Continued Professional Development

The RE subject leader has attended training for the new Stockton SACRE syllabus as well as training in the use of the Understanding Christianity and Durham Diocesan resources. The training was then cascaded to others in school at staff meetings and joint planning events. Members of the Durham and Newcastle Joint Education Team (JET) have also advised on the enhancements to the school curriculum.

Teachers are actively given the opportunity to share good practice.

The Legal Basis of RE

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum, RE, sex education and the National Curriculum. This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school, except for those withdrawn by their parents in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the Local Authority (LA) concerned. LAs must ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

RE provision in Foundation and Voluntary-Controlled schools with a religious character is to be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Egglestone CE Primary School therefore follows the Stockton Borough Council's locally agreed syllabus, published in September 2019.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from R.E. as in any school but it is hoped that the majority of parents choosing a Church Controlled School would adhere to the R.E. curriculum too.

Teachers and other staff in Church Controlled Schools have the safeguard of the 1944 Act Section 30 to withdraw from teaching R.E.

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from one aspect of RE, or the whole curriculum must request this by writing to the Headteacher on an annual basis, outlining their wishes.