

## **Norfolk Community Primary School**

### **Policy for Religious Education**

Norfolk Community Primary School takes great pride in and places tremendous importance upon the multi-cultural, multi-faith nature of our city. We recognise and respect the unique contribution of R.E. in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. We strive to enable our pupils to learn about Christianity and to develop an understanding of other faiths and of people who do not subscribe to a faith or belief. We endeavour to do this in an environment where they are given the opportunity to use their knowledge to reflect on what they have learnt.

#### **Statutory Requirements**

Under the Education Act (1996), all schools must provide religious education as part of the broad and balanced curriculum for all registered pupils, although parents may choose to withdraw their children.

Religious education should be taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education. Each Local education Authority (LEA) is required to convene a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) who must produce an agreed syllabus for Religious Education.

The Education Act states that this agreed syllabus should reflect the *“fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, while taking into account the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.”*

Religious Education should make a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum by developing pupil's knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practices, language and traditions and their effects on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. It should enable children to consider and respond to a range of questions related to their own spiritual development, the acquisition of values and attitudes and fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.

#### **Policy Statement**

Religious Education at Norfolk Community Primary School impacts upon the development of pupil's values and attitudes and is a major contributor to the school's spiritual, moral and social framework, encouraging children to distinguish between what is right and wrong.

Through the RE. curriculum, Norfolk Community Primary School provides pupils with planned, progressed opportunities to further their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and two other principal religions (currently Judaism and Islam) that are represented in Great Britain. Pupils will develop an increasing awareness of what it means to be committed to a faith and an acceptance of other peoples beliefs and values. The approach, content, learning experiences and tasks reflect a good balance between “Learning about” and “Learning from” religion.

## **Policy Aims**

The school seeks to:

- Develop pupils' knowledge, understanding of and capacity to evaluate Christianity and two other principal religions represented in Great Britain (Judaism and Islam.)
- Encourage a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and to be aware of living in a society of diverse religions.
- Develop children's understanding that religion and its' expression are central to the lives of many people in this country and throughout the world.
- Enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by promoting an awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences and of how religious teachings can relate to them.
- Encourage children to respond by reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences.
- Provide all these opportunities in a way that is non-denominational and allows pupils to accept or reflect on the information to which they have been introduced.

## **Spiritual and Moral Learning in the Nursery**

It is not a statutory requirement to teach Religious Education in the Nursery. However, Spiritual and Moral learning in the Nursery, taught through the Early Learning Goals, develops an understanding of the significance and quality of human life, the formation of social and personal values and an appreciation and respect for events, ceremonies and festivals of different cultures.

Children need to understand right and wrong and develop a sense of fairness, justice, honesty, care and respect for themselves, each other, their environment and other living things. They show a range of emotions such as wonder, joy and sorrow in response to their experiences of the world.

The children are encouraged to take turns and to share fairly the outdoor toys and the equipment in the Nursery. Singing songs, action rhymes and the use of stories to highlight specific behaviour and feelings are also incorporated into the daily routine.

The Foundation staff, through example, encourage the children to be aware of the needs and feelings of others and help them to be part of a happy, caring environment.

## **Curriculum Organisation**

In accordance with the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus (1996), Religious Education at Norfolk Community Primary School includes the study of Christianity, Judaism and Islam though aspects of other religions are also studied at times, for example Divali.

Christianity is the major religion taught, reflecting the requirements of the 1996 Education Act.

Religious Education is an ongoing subject and is taught throughout the school year in each year group. Class teachers are responsible for teaching R.E. to their own class and it has an allocation of up to one hour a week on the timetable.

Norfolk Community Primary School has a Scheme of Work which is based on the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus. Various aspects of Christianity, Judaism and Islam are taught in half termly units. Each unit's content is directly related to the aims and objectives stated in the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus, which ensures that progression is made and continuity established throughout school.

In order to offer children maximum opportunity for breadth of study as the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus allows, other elements of Religious Education have been added to the Norfolk Community Primary School Framework. These include, for example, aspects relating to Divali, Christmas, Easter and Rites of Passage. Reference is sometimes made, when appropriate, to the QCA Exemplar Scheme of Work. We have also recently purchased the KCP K52 Scheme of Work for Religious Education which teachers can refer to as an aid to planning. This scheme also relates to the aims and objectives stated in the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus.

Religious Education and Collective Worship are separate, though links can be made, particularly during festivals at specific times during the year. Links have also been made in the past when as a school community we have been concerned by world events. Within the Religious Education Scheme of Work links are also made to Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) and other National Curriculum subjects and topics.

### **Time Allocation**

Religious Education is allocated for one hour per week of the school timetable. This is in addition to the assemblies that take place during the week.

### **Teaching and Learning Styles**

Religious Education can be taught in groups of various sizes; whole class, group, or individual.

Teaching and learning styles for the subject are diverse and varied. Activities incorporate discussions, drama, reading and listening to stories, written work, art and craft, music, audio-visual, use of CD ROM's, visits, visiting speakers, independent research and the examination and investigation of artifacts.

Pupils are encouraged to explore the meanings of stories and their implications for religious followers and their lives today.

Opportunities for spiritual and moral development are identified across the curriculum, creating opportunities for pupils to think, talk, listen, feel and reflect.

## **Withdrawal**

The school must comply if a parent requests that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending or participating in any Religious Education sessions in the school.

To avoid misunderstandings, a parent wishing their child to be withdrawn from any aspect of Religious Education must discuss this with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will also seek to establish:

- The religious issues about which the parent would object to the child being taught.
- The practical implications of withdrawal and the circumstances in which the school can reasonably be expected to accommodate parental wishes.
- How much advance notice of the Religious Education session/unit of work, if any, does the parent require.

Requests for withdrawal are rare at Norfolk Community Primary School. The school accepts the approach that teachers “*teach, not preach.*”

## **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

All pupils, irrespective of educational achievement have equal access to the Religious Education curriculum.

Opportunities are provided for differentiation by task or outcome and teachers plan to include specific individual children’s needs.

## **Equal Opportunities/Inclusion**

All pupils have access to the Religious Education curriculum. Religious Education offers many opportunities to explore and discuss different races and their religious beliefs. Pupils may share their ideas, opinions and experiences if they feel comfortable doing so. Through an open approach children will learn to understand and appreciate differences between people living in our society in a learning climate where misconceptions can be challenged.

## **Resources**

Religious artifacts, books, magazine s and posters are situated on shelves in the resources room. These include teacher reference material in addition to resources for teaching R.E. in the classroom.

## **Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Through exploring their own values, beliefs and feelings and listening to those of others, pupils will be given opportunities to develop both a collective and individual sense of morality and the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. They will

be encouraged to develop the capacity to evaluate a range of viewpoints, including those which are different from their own. Through the development of the above and the in-depth exploration of the fundamental concepts and meanings of the world's major religions, Religious Education makes a considerable contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils.

### **Contribution to Literacy Development**

Through the emphasis on conceptual development, the understanding of quite complex ideas, beliefs and practices, through the acquisition of complex and new language and through developing the capacity to evaluate, Religious Education makes very significant contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. The Religious Education resource houses a number of Big Books.

### **Monitoring**

The Religious Education co-ordinator will collect examples of different ability levels of children's work from each year group term. This will aid the monitoring of the Sheffield scheme and identify any areas for development. Medium term planning is also collected from each year group every half term.

### **Recording and Reporting**

Although assessment is not statutory for Religious Education, teachers use the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus End of Key Stage descriptors and the learning objectives from the Syllabus to evaluate and assess children's progress. Teachers are also continually assessing pupil progress by:

- Marking and assessing individual pieces of work with reference to the lesson's learning objectives.
- Observing the child in discussion and drama, monitoring their contributions.
- Comparing standards of work to monitor continuity and progression.
- Use of targeted questioning to ensure appropriate progression in knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Setting independent pieces of work which require individual knowledge and understanding of a particular element of work.

An annual progress report for parents includes comments regarding a child's progress in Religious Education and work can be viewed and discussed at parents~ evenings throughout the year or at any other mutually convenient time. Pupil's work in Religious Education is frequently displayed in classrooms and corridors throughout the school.

### **Visits/Contacts**

Norfolk Community Primary School maintains links with St. Aidan's Church on City Road and the Church of The Nazarene. Classes visit the Churches as part of the

curriculum. Reverend John Wright can be approached to visit the school to talk to the children about various aspects of Christianity and he has attended assemblies both as a speaker and a guest. We are looking at ways of forging links with Sheffield Cathedral and also with other faith communities for example by arranging visits to a mosque. A further link may be made another Sheffield school in a different catchments area. The Internet is also a valuable resource and staff have used Virtual Churches, Mosques and Temples.

### **Staff Development**

The Co-ordinator for Religious Education will continue to monitor and evaluate the training needs for staff.

The Co-ordinator will attend the RE Co-ordinator briefings and attend training appropriate to school's needs.

### **Resources**

We are currently auditing the R.E. resources in school. A list of which will be circulated to all staff.

Religious Education is an ongoing subject and is taught throughout the school year in each year group. Class teachers are responsible for teaching R.E. to their own class and it has an allocation of one hour per week on the timetable.