



GLENCRAIG IPS

POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In *Glencraig Integrated Primary School* we aspire to maximise the skills and talents of our pupils and staff in a happy, caring and respectful environment, enabling them to become fulfilled and responsible citizens.

Introduction

As an inclusive school, Glencraig IPS welcomes children from all faiths and none. Essentially, Glencraig IPS is Christian in character yet endeavours to maintain a religious balance throughout the school, within the governing body, teaching, administrative, support and ancillary staff, as well as pupil enrolment.

The teaching of Religious Education (RE) at Glencraig IPS is a partnership involving teachers, parents, governors, clergy and representatives of world faiths/beliefs.

Glencraig IPS aims to give all the children in our care wide and enriching experiences appropriate to their age and ability. We endeavour to develop in our pupils a pride in their own self-worth and recognition of the value and beliefs of people from other religious, social or cultural backgrounds.

General School Aims

We endeavour to:

- Provide and encourage an atmosphere of acceptance and mutual respect for the children from all religious, non-religious, social and cultural backgrounds.
- Create a happy, secure, stimulating environment in which all pupils can learn effectively and become clear, confident communicators.
- Present children with a variety of challenging, activity based learning experiences incorporating all areas of study required by the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- Encourage children to recognise the value of developing a healthy mind and body and to foster, within each child, a positive self-image.
- Encourage parents to have a constructive and positive role in the school.
- Place the school at the heart of the local community.

Rationale

At Glencraig IPS, we believe RE provides opportunity to develop personal understanding and enhance spiritual and ethical awareness. RE provides young people with the opportunities to learn about, discuss, evaluate and learn from religious beliefs, practices and values.

RE, as a subject, has a role to play in the delivery of the curriculum and in the spiritual, personal, social and emotional development of each child. It studies various aspects of the Christian faith whilst encouraging children to respect themselves and others.

We base our shared non-denominational programme on the core syllabus as set out by the Department of Education and agreed by the four main churches in Northern Ireland. The core syllabus is based on three main strands:

1. The Revelation of God
2. The Christian Church
3. Morality

In addition to this, Roman Catholic children have the opportunity to take part in classes to prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. At Glencraig IPS we see these preparations as a partnership between school, home and parish all supporting the children in their sacramental instruction.

It is our aim to support children to grow in their own faith and to learn about the faith of others. Provision is made across the curriculum for children to share with their class festivals and key religious events that are important to them.

Aims

- We aim to educate children in accordance with the statutory requirements for RE as laid out in the Northern Ireland RE Curriculum, with provision for Roman Catholic pupils to receive instruction in and preparation for the sacraments.
- We aim to educate children in a caring environment where they are made to feel secure and valued as individuals regardless of ability, faith or belief.
- We aim to foster and nurture understanding of the individual faith of each child.
- We aim to help the children to appreciate that life has religious, spiritual and moral dimensions.
- We aim to help the children develop an ability to make moral decisions.
- We aim to give children opportunity to reflect on their own attitudes, values and beliefs.
- We aim to help children develop a deeper awareness and more sensitive understanding of other world religions.

Resources

We have a range of resources to support the teaching of RE. Resources are stored centrally for staff to utilise as required. This includes class schemes of work, class bibles, reference books, Alive-O resources, support materials from the EA and artefacts related to world faiths.

Assessment

Teachers will informally monitor the progress of pupils and this will provide a basis for future planning and differentiation.

RE Across the Curriculum

RE is taught where appropriate, through topic work and is closely linked to several other areas of the curriculum namely music, literacy, world around us and PDMU. The morality strand of the RE curriculum is also closely linked to our Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour policies.

School Assembly

P1-P4 and P5-P7 have assembly separately on alternate Wednesday mornings at 9.15 a.m. which is taken by a local clergy or faith representative. The whole school comes together for Thursday assembly and different classes, members of staff or visitors take it in turn to lead these assemblies. Speakers from other organisations and charities are also invited throughout the year to speak at assembly.

We also have special assemblies throughout the year related to different festivals from Christian and other faiths or cultures, for example, Harvest, Christmas, St Patrick's Day, Chinese New Year and Divali.

The Role of Parents

As an integrated school we encourage parents to allow their children to take the opportunity to learn about Christianity and other religions and to develop an understanding why people have certain beliefs. In doing so, we hope that the children will develop attitudes of respect and tolerance as well as a deeper knowledge and understanding of their own and other religions. However, parents have the right to have their child excused, in whole or in part, from attending RE classes or assembly or both (1986 Education Order Article 21/5). This should be addressed within a meeting with the Principal or class teacher or by signing the Religious Education and Assemblies form stating your preference for the teaching of RE and attendance at assemblies. Alternative activities for the child will be provided within the limitations of the resources available in the school.

This policy was reviewed September 2017 and minor changes made (Clare Calwell, RE Coordinator).

This policy is to be reviewed by parents in November 2017.

