

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT OUR SCHOOL - LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND REQUIREMENTS

1.1 At Ardeley St Lawrence Primary School the Governing Board has the responsibility to decide on the policy for Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship in accordance with the 1996 Education Act for a designated Aided School. This states that, in accordance with our Trust Deeds, Religious Education shall be given in accordance with the doctrines, rites and practices of the Church of England. Hence, the Governors and Priest in Charge encourage a deep commitment to the teaching of a broad yet distinctive Religious Education programme at Ardeley School as an essential factor in creating and supporting our mission and ethos as a Christian School. Religious Education makes a strong contribution to our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

RE is not a National Curriculum subject but must be taught to all pupils as part of the basic curriculum. The Hertfordshire Education Authority provides an Agreed Syllabus and this has been adopted at Ardeley as the framework for long term planning. The Education Act of 1996 advises that the teaching of RE, "shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain". We therefore ensure that our planning supports the study of distinctive Anglican Christian beliefs and practices whilst acknowledging that the study of a variety of faiths supports pupils' understanding of the importance of shared values, beliefs and life styles. In order to meet the statutory requirements of the Agreed Syllabus, the school must ensure that pupils have learned about and from:

- Christianity at each Key Stage
- The six principal religions through the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

As an Anglican School, we give Christianity the central role and teach the children of its existence as a living worldwide faith which is alive in multi-cultural contexts.

1.2 The Education Act 1996 requires that the curriculum for every maintained school includes provision for Religious Education for all pupils (of whatever age) at the school. Every area of the curriculum, including RE, must promote the spiritual, moral, social, mental and physical development of pupils and prepare them for life.

1.3 Families who send their children to Ardeley School are, in the main 'nominally' Christian but we do have some children from practicing Christian families. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. The faith background of both the staff and each child's family is respected at all times. RE at Ardeley School also reflects and promotes the school's Christian Values which encourage respect for all cultures and faiths, and those of no faith.

1.4 All parents have the right to withdraw their children from receiving Religious Education and such children will work individually on other aspects of the curriculum. Any parent who wishes this may consult the Head Teacher and is required to notify the school of their decision in writing. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE.

INCLUSION

Ardeley St. Lawrence School is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all pupils. Religious Education is an entitlement for all pupils regardless of their own particular belief or lack of belief. All children are taught RE whatever their ability. It is not competitive and can foster self-worth in those children who may not be academically able but who have a deeply spiritual side to their personality. All children make progress in RE but we may need to make additional or different action to help individuals learn more effectively.

VALUES AND AIMS

At Ardeley we believe that RE should enhance the school's distinctive Christian Character which both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. RE will give pupils a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition and the school's Christian heritage and values. It will also contribute to the development of our pupils as individuals enabling them to grow in understanding of the religious practices of others, the major world faiths and beliefs. Our caring ethos and the value we place on the development of the whole child - spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually - is reflected in the RE curriculum and SMSC policy.

We teach Religious Education to:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the origins, content and development of the Christian religion and to develop an understanding of its uniqueness among other religions, traditions and beliefs
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions
- Enhance their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
 - developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experience and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them
 - responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their own experiences with reference to religious beliefs and practices
 - reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their learning and understanding
 - express their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way
- Recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.
- Develop each pupil's ability to ask questions, to reflect and develop reasoned attitudes
- Maintain the ethos of a Church School, promoting happy and challenging school life in a Christian environment and enjoying the links with St. Lawrence, Ardeley
- Make Ardeley School a place that respects the individuality and uniqueness of every pupil

Through Religious Education we can also:

- Promote Ardeley values
- Improve pupils' skills in literacy, IT and the creative arts
- Develop pupils' thinking and learning skills
- Promote pupils' awareness and understanding of gender and equality
- Develop pupils as active citizens and help them understand what are British Values
- Promote our understanding of our own selves understanding any differences with others
- Enable pupils to grow, live and work in a multi-faith, global society.

In learning Religious Education pupils will:

- Learn the importance of the Bible and other sacred books, how they came to be written and what they contain
- Be provided with experiences and teachings which promote an understanding of how Christian beliefs are lived through the ideals of love, peace, unselfishness, patience, sacrificial giving and joy.
- Understand the celebration of feasts, festivals, rites, practices and teachings of the Church of England and comparing the practices of other religions.
- Enquire into concepts as identified in the agreed syllabus and Christian learning resources such as: Key Christian concepts (i.e. Incarnation, Epiphany etc), concepts shared by many religions (i.e. God, worship, symbolism etc), concepts that are common to human experiences (i.e remembering, celebration etc)
- Foster understanding and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs
- Be challenged to reflect, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth and beliefs
- Develop the idea of the school as a community of believers by encouraging positive relationships with pupils of all ages and with staff and volunteers.
- Seek ways to share some of the plenty with others less fortunate e.g. Compassion child sponsorship, link community in Kenya, Bishop's Appeal
- Use a range of sources such as the local environment, places of worship, pictures, artefacts, IT based materials
- Have the opportunity to work with members of the local church and community, including Father Mike
- Meet members of other faiths and learn about other principal world religions

When teaching Religious Education we:

- Use key questions to direct pupils' thinking about important concepts
- Use a range of teaching resources and activities
- Strive to develop empathy, reflection, questioning, evaluation skills, sensitivity and respect

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired and individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT (see Appendix), works of art, artefacts, visits and visitors.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The Agreed Syllabus sets out an assessment structure with broad areas of development for each key stage. We have used these and other resources to create an assessment framework based on 'I can' statements and recording pupils' achievements as meeting, exceeding or not yet achieving the statements.

Through activities (for example, discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, asking and answering questions) teachers are confident in assessing their pupils against this assessment framework.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

In our curriculum Religious Education is:

- Delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements within the EYFS

- Organised to spend 30 hours per year at Key Stage 1 and 39 hours per year at Key Stage 2 on the teaching of RE
- Collective Worship, which is held daily, is in addition to this
- As a Church School we aim to follow the recommendations of the National Society of the Church of England that 66% of Religious Education time should be spent in studying Christianity

CROSS CURRICULAR ISSUES

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many cross-curricular themes and dimensions.

There are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and a consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural understanding through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

The co-ordination of RE is undertaken by the Head Teacher. The responsibilities include:

- Supporting teachers via observations and feedback
- Planning, organising and managing resources
- Monitoring standards of teaching and the achievement of pupils through agreed assessment procedures.
- Keeping governors informed about the implementation of this policy

All staff are given opportunities to attend training in Religious Education. The subject co-ordinator is active in keeping up with developments in the subject, review of the policy and schemes of work.

This policy has been written and reviewed with regard to the school's Equality Scheme (2018)

There were no concerns noted

Appendix – On line resources for Religious Education

Church of England sites

www.natsoc.org.uk

www.cofe.anglican.org

www.anglicancommunion.org

www.culham.ac.uk

www.assemblies.org.uk

www.dfes.gov.uk

Sources of artefacts and posters

www.articlesoffaith.co.uk

www.tts-shopping.com

Gateway sites

www.reonline.org.uk

www.theredirectory.org.uk

Aid agencies

www.christian-aid.org.uk

www.tearfund.org

www.cafod.org.uk

<https://www.compassionuk.org>

Professional association sites

www.retoday.org.uk

www.areiac.org.uk

Christian sites

www.biblesociety.org.uk

www.barnabasinschools.org.uk

National sites

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/