



*Policy for Religious Education
and Collective Worship*

September 2020

Policy Statement - R.E.

1. General Statement

At Holly Primary School, we recognise that Religious Education contributes to the cultural, moral and spiritual development of our pupils and should be firmly rooted in pupils' own experience. The school follows the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for R.E. and therefore makes full use of the attainment targets outlined in 'Attainment in R.E.' a handbook for teachers, which accompanies the series.

A scheme of work supports teachers in order to deliver a clear coherent structured curriculum, "enabling pupils to have a good understanding of the six principle religions by the end of K.S.2" (Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus)

2. Aims

In view of the schools use of the agreed syllabus, we share the aims for R.E. as described in the document. These being that the children must be given the opportunity to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Britain
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain
- enhance their spiritual, moral and cultural and social development by
- developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience
- reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study
- developing a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions.

3. Objectives

By the end of **Key Stage 1** children should be able to:

Learn about Religions

- recognise and describe people, objects, symbols, places and events encountered and identify the religion to which they belong
- Remember some story outlines.
- Show an awareness that festivals are characteristic of more than one religion.
- Suggest meanings for religious symbols, stories and language.
- Link key people, objects, places and events.

Learn from Religion

- Realise that some questions in life are difficult to answer.
- Relate moral issues in their lives to religious teachings.
- Recognise good and bad examples set in stories and by those around them.

By the end of **Key Stage 2** pupils should be able to:

Learn about Religions

- Name and describe the functions of key objects, places, people and events and make accurate connections.
- Recognise that different religions share similar features and make simple comparisons.
- Explain some of the interpretations of symbols, stories and language given by believers.
- Explain what it means to belong to a faith community in terms of belief practices and values.

- Identify the key points in the life stories of important religious people.
- Give examples of how religion is important to some people and affects peoples' daily lives.

Learn from Religion

- Make comparisons between significant experiences of key people in faith communities and their own feelings and experiences.
- When meeting puzzling questions, suggest answers by referring to religious teachings where relevant.
- Respond thoughtfully to others views on religious and moral issues.
- Understand why certain things are right and wrong and how moral values are embedded in religions.

4. Time Allocation

Follow the guidelines of K.S.1 36 hours per year - 1 hour per week

K.S.2 45 hours per year - 1¼ hours per week

5. Teaching Styles

In the delivery of the R.E. Scheme of work it is essential that teachers adopt a style of working which encourages questioning and exploration of personal thoughts.

- It is essential that teaching style is sensitive to the thoughts of individual children and is strongly linked to our P.S.H.E. policy encouraging co-operation and respect for one another's thoughts and beliefs.
- It is important that the words used are meaningful to children and rooted as much as possible within the interests and experiences of children.
- In presenting information to children teachers must make a clear distinction between 'fact' and 'belief' statements and pupils need to understand the difference between them.
- Where possible teachers should draw on children's personal experiences which have stimulated their thoughts.

- Teachers should make full use of resources available in school to enable children to visualise and handle artefacts related to the various religions.
- Full use should be made of the religious practices in the community as a major resource showing children that religion can be present in everyday life.

6. Learning Styles

- In order to avoid a purely content-based approach it is important for teachers to strike a balance between content and method. “Over emphasis on content often means pupils are not fully involved in the process which leads to a great understand, whilst over emphasis on method often results in the religious significance of the content losing its integrity and impact” (Notts. Agreed Syllabus).
- It is hoped that children will be involved in
 - storytelling
 - cookery
 - discussion
 - resources
 - role play/drama/dance
 - artefacts
 - creative writing/poetry/art/music
 - visits/visitors
 - I.C.T.
- It is important that children become aware of the distinctive beliefs within faiths but should more importantly, develop understanding and respect for others who do not share their beliefs and traditions. Emphasis in learning is about living together in a peaceful harmonious society.

7. Resources and their Management

- Where possible teachers should be encouraged to use materials from primary sources e.g. things found in the locality, artefacts.
- Full use should be made of the churches and religions in the community.

8. Special Needs Provision

Work in RE should be planned in a differentiated and flexible way so that children with a range of capabilities will have access to the RE curriculum.

Pupils with special needs have the same entitlement as other pupils to RE. All children can experience a spiritual dimension to life, a sense of awe and wonder. They can appreciate and respect other people's beliefs and develop a sense of their own worth and of others in the community.

Discussions with individual children, listening to their conversations or encouraging their self-expression will all provide pointers to children's development.

9. Equal Opportunities

Religious Education provides an excellent vehicle to promote equal opportunities. By educating about religious and everyday life in other cultures, we are able to tackle ignorance enabling children to consider the similarities between cultures whilst respecting the differences

- values all religions, making comparisons between them without passing value judgements
- Parents may withdraw children from RE if they so wish and individual teachers cannot be required to teach RE.
- Religious education must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christianity whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of other principle religions in Great Britain. □ It must be non-denominational.

10. Links with other Agencies

Full use made of local community visiting local places of worship and inviting speakers into school.

Guidance for Collective Worship in Schools

Collective worship is a term which is used only in education. Churches and religions usually think of their worship as being corporate. Assumptions cannot be made about shared beliefs within a school community. Collective worship in the school context must take account of the varied backgrounds of the pupils (and staff) as well as of their ages and aptitudes.

It is the task of collective worship to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised but in which everyone finds something positive for themselves. In collective worship, children and adults will be responding to the worship in different ways and at different levels. Some will be passive observers, learning about worship but not participating in it; some will be "at the threshold", interested in the process and participating in it but not full believers; for others the act of collective worship may be a time of real worship of God.

Distinguishing between Collective Worship and Assembly

Assembly is:

Meeting together for a common purpose.

E.g. a visiting theatre company in school, or the need to give out important notices or deal with matters of common concern.

Collective worship is:

A coming together of the school community for the purpose of engaging in an opportunity to worship. In each act of collective worship some of the elements of worship (i.e. of "giving worth to God") must be present.

An Assembly may include Collective Worship. Not every Assembly is Collective Worship.

Collective worship and the Law

Arrangements for collective worship in a School are the responsibility of the governors in consultation with the Headteacher.

Our school will provide an act of collective worship for all pupils and staff every day. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class unit.

The reason for a pupil's withdrawal from collective worship **can only** be "on religious grounds".

(ii) **Staff:** Staff cannot be compelled to attend collective worship. However, collective worship should be seen as a valuable time for community building. It is hoped that staff and children will worship together in school. This provides a powerful role model for children and makes an important statement about the status of worship in the school. School worship should not create the impression that this occasion is voluntary for adults and compulsory for children. Worship should be an integral part of the school's life and connected to the whole curriculum. Staff should therefore be involved in all aspects of what is offered to the children. The member of staff leading worship should be able to do this without being distracted by behaviour

management issues. The presence of other adults can also facilitate the monitoring and assessment of the worship.

iii) **Others:** It is also good to involve the wider community in the life of the school. It is a positive step to invite and welcome parents, governors, the school's ancillary staff and members of the community to join the school's collective worship on a regular basis.

This strengthens the idea of worship as a unifying and cohesive force. Outstanding collective worship is where children are not passive spectators but *enthusiastic contributors*.

Ways of involving the children can include:

- being a part of the initial planning process
- Engaging them in setting a mood and creating a worshipful atmosphere.
- Talk with the children about the effectiveness of music and allow children to be involved in the selection process.
- when telling stories as part of collective worship do not follow up with information seeking questions but encourage children to empathise with the characters e.g. "How do you feel about what happened in this story?" "Does the story remind you of anything in your own life?" Begin questions with the words 'I wonder'?
- Give the children a few moments to allow them to talk with their neighbours about what they thought about the meaning of the story.
- Provide time for quiet reflection and/or silent prayer on the theme of the story. Allow the children write and share their own prayers. Have an established procedure for allowing children to contribute their personal prayer needs to the time of worship.

Respect for All & Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination & extremism.

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 in particular local churches.

The UK community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief 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 belief and its impact on world issues.

The promotion of 'British Values'

RE provides opportunities to promote the 'British Values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty & mutual respect. (See Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2015 'Religious Education for All' and the supporting document 'Guidance for delivering Religious Education in church schools')

Approaches to teaching RE

- RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled
- High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus and diocesan materials, considering the need to offer breadth of content
- In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection
- Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities

We use as a basis for our planning the Locally Agreed Syllabus

Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD

- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The right of Withdrawal from RE

It is hoped that in School it will not be necessary for any pupils to be withdrawn from RE. However, we recognise that this may sometimes be necessary.

At our school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.