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Religious Education Policy

1. Aims and objectives

Religious education supports children in developing their own coherent patterns of values and principles, and to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Medstead Church of England Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths. We support the children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society

2. The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors.



The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

3. Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Through using the Key Concepts in RE it enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study the Key Concepts through particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

4. Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the LEA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

5. Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.



6. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7. Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. We make a summary judgement about the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher and parents at the end of the year.

9. Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store and make good use of the County Resource Centre.

10. Monitoring and review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The R.E. subject leader presents the headteacher with an annual action plan that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and identifies further development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Policy for Teaching and Learning.

Date for Review March 2013