

Bosley St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary
School

Religious Education Policy

Last updated 23.10.15

Why RE is key to fulfilling the spiritual purpose of our church school:

‘... to nourish those of the faith; to encourage those of other faiths; to challenge those who have no faith.’ *(Lord Robert Runcie)*

Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' learning by enabling them to reflect upon themselves as whole people, experiencing life through the body, the mind and the spirit. The purpose of Religious Education is to help pupils understand the significance of religion and its contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

(Cheshire Agreed Syllabus 'Encounter and Response')

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education (RE) at Bosley St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School.

The spiritual and moral development of our children are at the roots of our RE teaching, but also flow through *all* aspects of our school life. RE teaching and learning take place in this context: the living faith of our school community.

Legal Requirements

Bosley St Mary's is a Church of England Aided school and therefore RE reflects the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England.

The Head Teacher and governing body are ultimately responsible for the subject in the school. This is delegated to the RE subject leader on a daily basis.

Following the *Diocese of Chester Guidelines for Religious Education*, the majority of work in RE is based on the Christian faith with the introduction of one other major world religion – Judaism – at Key Stage 1, and the study of aspects of Judaism, Sikhism and Islam at Key Stage 2.

RE occupies 5% of the timetable. In Key Stage 1 this amounts to between 40-50 minutes per week, totalling 36 hours over the year.

In Key Stage 2, children should be taught RE for 1 ¼ hours per week totalling 45 hours over the year. At Bosley St Mary's school, teaching staff ensure coverage by flexibly block- planning units of work for each term.

Withdrawals

Parents have a right by law to withdraw their children from the RE curriculum. If this happens, our school will be responsible for the supervision of withdrawn pupils with regard to health & safety, and providing alternative work.

Our aims

We help our pupils to:

- **explore the great questions of life and death, meaning and purpose**
- **reflect critically on the claims of truth in Christian belief**
- **see how the truth of Christianity and the teaching of Jesus are relevant in today's pluralist society**
- **find reason for hope and security in a troubled world**
- **develop the skills to handle Biblical texts**
- **become active citizens, serving their neighbour**
- **develop a sense of themselves as unique, significant and precious**

What we do

A.T.1 Learning about Religion

....to gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity in particular and world religions in general.

A.T.2 Learning from Religion

.....developing the capacity and skill to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions.

Through our teaching we:

- provide a course of RE within the framework of the *Diocese of Chester Guidelines for Religious Education* appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our school, at their different stages of development and in our whole-key stage class setting.
- contribute to the spiritual, social and moral development of the school as a caring community and our pupils as individuals.
- provide, model and encourage experience of Christian life and worship.
- encourage an understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice both globally and in British society today.

We also model and encourage children in our school:

- to grow in awareness of others through learning activities involving sharing and co-operation and to develop trust and respect for others.
- to think about their own sense of purpose in life and to embark on a personal life-journey of faith.
- to learn something of the religious experiences of others.
- to develop their own beliefs, values and ideals in the light of their experiences.
- to develop respect for other people, their beliefs and their life-styles.
- to develop an enquiring attitude towards religion and to explore activities of prayer and worship.

How do we do it?

- RE is delivered through a two-year rolling whole-school plan which we have written in consultation with the Diocesan Advisor to suit our whole-key stage class setting. It is underpinned by the *Diocese of Chester Religious Guidelines for Religious Education* and tailored to the church calendar. This overview sets out which units or theme, should be studied by each class term by term and ensures progression.
- RE is usually taught as a discrete subject although the approach may vary: for example in Key Stage 1 it is sometimes appropriate to integrate some areas of the RE programme into a general topic with a thematic approach or integrated with other subjects as appropriate, for example, Geography, History and SMSC.
- RE is mainly taught by the class teacher and may be supported from time to time by clergy from local churches and other visiting speakers.
- RE is usually taught in a whole-class setting including discussion, activities, questioning and reflection in small groups and individually.
- Visits to local places of worship, such as our local churches of different Christian denomination and Chester Cathedral; a local Sikh temple; a Manchester mosque and synagogue all take place within the units of our curriculum.
- Our approach to RE is enquiry-based and to help us develop this, we use a variety of multi-sensory teaching and learning styles:
 - ◇ teacher presentations, role-play/drama and story-telling
 - ◇ outside speakers with relevant experience
 - ◇ workshops, including visiting theatre companies
 - ◇ questions & answer sessions, discussions and debates
 - ◇ individual and group research
 - ◇ interrogating photographs, pictures, artefacts and other sources: primary source material wherever possible
 - ◇ ICT: film, CDs and PCs, both to research and communicate ideas
- RE resources are reviewed and updated regularly considering budgetary constraints.
- Classroom support is welcomed under the guidance of the teacher, eg. skilled individuals and parents.
- INSET will be included with the School Development Plan. External INSET will reflect budgetary constraints. Free local Network meetings with the RE advisor are attended by the RE co-ordinator.

Special Educational Needs.

Children with special educational needs are fully included, working alongside the other children in their group as in other curriculum areas, but differentiation in activities, approach, language and expected outcome will be appropriate to the varying needs in the class.

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education as an essential part of the curriculum should be relevant, worthwhile and accessible to all. Our underpinning aim is to express that all pupils are loved and valued by God as part of creation.

We aim to help the children in our school to respect themselves and to be sensitive to the needs of all others.

Health and Safety

Activities and visits are planned in line with the school Health and Safety Policy and the East Cheshire Field Visits Policy. The Educational Visits File holds our risk assessment and guidance notes.

Resources

RE resources are stored in the PPP room. An audit of the resources is kept up to date in the RE subject leader file on the PPP shelves.

Many further resources are downloaded by teachers from diocesan websites and published materials, and can be added to the resource file on the PPP shelves.

Assessment and Record Keeping

- In order to show progress towards the end of Key Stage levels the staff appreciate that assessment of progress in RE should be undertaken with sensitivity, based upon the teacher's observations of the child in class or group discussions, activities or recorded work.
- Children's work is evaluated and assessments for each child are carried out at the end of each unit of work. These statements will inform future planning assessment; reporting to parents; and curriculum monitoring by the subject leader and the Head Teacher.
- Records are kept by the class teacher; samples of work and a yearly photographic album are kept up to date by each class teacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The RE subject leader will assist the Headteacher by monitoring Long Term and Medium Term plans.
- The RE subject leader will keep a yearly photographic album and a file of examples of work to demonstrate continuity and progression.
- The RE subject leader will manage resources.
- The RE subject leader will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in Religious Education and share this with school staff.
- The RE subject leader will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The RE subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice and resources.
- The RE subject leader will be responsible for drawing up an action plan for Religious Education. Generally this will be an annual plan and should be informed by this policy.

*RE Subject Leader, Rachel Mortishire-Smith
October 2015*