

Ainderby Steeple CE Primary School

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT OUR SCHOOL

Ainderby Steeple CE Primary School teaches the Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education and Understanding Christianity

Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' Christian. RE is concerned with "learning about religions and beliefs" and "learning from religions and beliefs" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

Parental rights to withdraw children from RE

Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE programme. Where parents have concerns about their children taking part in RE, they are asked to discuss their concerns first with the Headteacher. S/he will be able to discuss the RE programme and teaching methods in greater detail and give parents access to the RE unit materials and resources used. Agreement on alternative provision for the children would need to be reached should they be withdrawn from the RE programme.

Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE.

A. VALUES AND AIMS

We believe at this school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in North Yorkshire;
2. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;

3. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
 - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
 - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
 - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

B. OBJECTIVES

Learning

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Teaching

Teaching of RE should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

- Beliefs, teachings and sources - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;

- Practices and lifestyles - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- Expressing meaning - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
- Identity, diversity and belonging- e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- Meaning, purpose and truth - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- Values and commitments - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between the two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of RE at this school.

At Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Christianity and Islam.

At Key Stage 2 pupils build on their understanding of Christianity and also study Islam and Hinduism.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith
2. role play and drama; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters
3. artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge
4. music and the arts; enabling children to experience elements of religions in a sensory way
5. parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and faith visitors, to ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING (see school Assessment policy)

The Agreed Syllabus sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements.

Through activities, for example discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements.

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.

PLANNING

As a school we have developed a 2 year long term plan to ensure that we cover everything in the diocesan syllabus. To do this we are using the Understanding Christianity resources. In addition we have added other units of learning from the RE today company. We have used a combination of teaching RE through the creative curriculum, RE days and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE Subject Leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

Short term planning of individual lessons is a matter for the class teacher. The RE Subject Leader is available to help with this and keeps a range of teacher's resources as a guide. (When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts are to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The work planned must be relevant to the needs of the pupils).

CROSS CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

Children's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Provision for RE is in accordance with the schools equal opportunities policy.

In accordance with the aims of the school the pupils will develop an appreciation of and respect for the beliefs and philosophies of others. Pupils will be encouraged to value the rich variety of cultural traditions and lifestyles represented in Great Britain. It is acknowledged and respected that deep beliefs are held in the area of Religious Education. It is therefore our aim to deal with any matters arising as sensitively as possible.

Provision for children with special educational needs, including more able children will follow the school's policies in these areas. Children's needs are carefully monitored and supported through teacher planning and assessment. This enables objectives, tasks, teaching methods, resources and teacher/adult input to be matched to pupil needs. It includes the use of more challenging objectives or extension materials and tasks for the more able

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The RE subject leader manages this area of the curriculum in line with our job description for subject leaders.