

Worlingham CEVC Primary School

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

*Like a tree firmly planted by streams of living water we will grow
in knowledge, love, faith and wisdom. Based on Psalm 1:3*



Religious Education is an entitlement for all pupils and its place in the school curriculum is an acknowledgement of the important role which beliefs and values play in people's lives, regardless of particular religious commitments. It is also an acknowledgement that religious beliefs and practices play a key part in the lives of many people worldwide today as they have done throughout history. As a curriculum area R.E offers pupils an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

Worlingham is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, and Religious Education is provided in line with the requirements of the relevant Education Acts.

These are that:

- The basic curriculum must include religious education provision for all pupils on the school roll
- The content of religious education must reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain
- Religious Education must be provided according to the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus 2012;

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. This revised agreed syllabus develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, and other principal religions, together with other religious traditions and world views all of which can provide questions and stimulate discussion to consider answers to such questions.

The aims of religious education at Worlingham CEVC Primary School

Within the framework of the Education Acts and Agreed Syllabus, our aims in Religious Education are:

- To enable each child to explore the human experiences people share and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from those experiences.
- To enable pupils to know about and understand the beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Suffolk and the UK. Among these, Christianity has a particular place, and is taught in each year of the primary phase.
- To promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region and the country.
- To affirm each child in his/her own family tradition, religious or secular.
- To provide opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus (www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum) gives more details of the importance of religious education in the curriculum and selects two main aims for its programmes of study and attainment targets: 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion'.

Time allocation

The time allocated at Worlingham is 36 hours per year at Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year at Key Stage 2 in line with recommendations. Approximately 30 minutes a week of teacher-directed time is provided for Early Years Foundation Stage pupils in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.

The requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus

At Worlingham CEVC Primary School our R.E is based on the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus sets out programmes of study for the foundation stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, each beginning with a focus statement summarising what Religious Education will look like at that key stage.

The programmes of study develop continuity and progression in Religious Education. They detail requirements for 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion' for each key stage. The breadth of study section explains which religions and areas of study should be covered and outlines a wide range of experiences and opportunities which should characterise teaching and learning.

The Agreed Syllabus also sets out attainment targets for R.E and gives level descriptions by which pupils' progress may be assessed.

Scheme of work

At Worlingham CEVC Primary School all teachers follow detailed schemes of work provided by the Emmanuel project units which were written by the Diocesan Schools Adviser. The schemes of work and the Agreed Syllabus are available for inspection in school.

Detailed schemes of work for R.E at Worlingham CEVC Primary School are written in the light of the requirements described above and with the help of the Emmanuel project units provided by the Diocesan Schools Adviser. The schemes of work and the Agreed Syllabus are available for inspection in school.

To summarise, R.E is based around half-termly themes in Early Years and Key Stage 1 where Christianity and Judaism are the principal religions studied. Other religions are touched on as appropriate. Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Christianity throughout the key stage, and study Islam and Hinduism as principal religions. They also touch on the other principal religions by the end of Key Stage 2. Topics may focus on a single religion or be based around a life experience theme, drawing on children's own thoughts and ideas as well as those of several faiths.

Teaching and learning styles

At Worlingham CEVC Primary School we use increasingly varied and active ways of working which include art and drama, debating, visits, posters, photos, videos and interactive displays. In particular, we recognise the importance of teaching the two attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus (learning about religion and learning from religion) in a balanced way, and our schemes of work have been written to encourage this. We also encourage cross-curricular work.

Use of ICT

Pupils are given opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability where appropriate in Religious Education. Use of the internet for virtual visits to places of worship and research, as well as digital cameras and interactive whiteboards help pupils develop their learning in and enjoyment of Religious Education.

Resources

We have a wide range of resources to support R.E. teaching, including Godly Play materials.

Professional development for staff

The school acknowledges that no teacher can be an instant expert in six religions. The Subject Leader has developed strategies for supporting staff who need to develop subject knowledge, skills and personal confidence in teaching religious education.

Visits and visitors

Visits and visitors can provide powerful learning experiences for both teacher and pupils. All visits and visitors are organised through the Subject Leader. We visit our local Christian church many times during the year and involve all classes in this. Clergy and other members of the community meet with children. Activities and discussions are always focused on specific areas of the curriculum.

Matching work to pupils' needs

The school policy with regard to special needs and differentiation applies to Religious Education and the SENCO gives advice on adapting work. However, teachers are aware that some children have additional experience of a religion through family practice and may show greater ability and understanding than they do generally.

Assessment, recording and reporting

We assess pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and believe that it is important that progress is acknowledged, just as in any other subject. We are required by law to report on pupils' progress and attainment in Religious Education to parents. The Agreed Syllabus provides descriptions of levels of attainment to use as a basis for reporting. Teachers are encouraged to refer to the assessment section of their schemes of work after completing each unit. At the end of the school year we make accurate comments on a child's progress, based on the monitoring of work in relation to the Religious Education attainment targets. We transfer this information to the receiving school when pupils leave.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Subject Leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy and monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. Lesson observations and pupil perception are utilised.

Contribution to spiritual, moral, social, cultural development

These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute. At Worlingham CEVC Primary School, Religious Education plays a part in:

- Developing an awareness of a ‘spiritual’ dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way (spiritual).
- Providing a forum for pupils to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by (moral).
- Encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and a sense of ‘community’ (social).
- Evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, art, music, drama and literature and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers (cultural).

Provision for withdrawal from religious education

Two provisions of law need to be noted:

- Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from Religious Education in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25(4) and 30, which was re-enacted in 1988. Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given and the school must enable parents to exercise this legal entitlement. The school brochure advises parents of the current provision for Religious Education. They are asked to contact the Headteacher if they wish to withdraw their child. It is hoped that, in discussing their requirements, an understanding can be reached and arrangements for alternative Religious Education or supervision made.
- Teachers may withdraw from Religious Education. Their classes, however, are legally entitled to Religious Education. The Headteacher is responsible for alternative provision for pupils. Staff are not required to give reasons for withdrawal. Currently no member of staff exercises this right. Were this to happen, the subject leader would probably cover the affected class. The other member of staff would teach an appropriate area of the national curriculum for the Subject Leader.

Religious education and its relationship to collective worship

In law, Religious Education and Collective Worship are distinct. Religious Education is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during Collective Worship. However, during Collective Worship at Worlingham CEVC Primary School, stories from the Bible as well as other stories from Christian and other traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned, and we enjoy assemblies led by members of religious communities. These complement and bring depth to our Religious Education programme. A separate policy is available for Collective Worship.

V4– November 2019