

## Hanging Heaton CE (VC) Junior and Infant School

### Religious Education Policy

#### Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.

Hanging Heaton School is a controlled school therefore we deliver RE in line with the revised 2014 curriculum and Kirklees Locally Agreed Syllabus in Kirklees and Calderdale 2014-2019.

This policy is written to reflect the chosen aims and Christian values of our school for this year:

- Trust.
- Compassion.
- Forgiveness.
- Thankfulness.
- Creativity.
- Wisdom.

#### Aims of the Curriculum

We believe at Hanging Heaton 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. We place great emphasis on the importance of Christian values: perseverance, responsibility, reverence/respect, friendship, generosity, wisdom, thankfulness, humility, service, compassion, trust, peace, forgiveness, justice, hope, courage, creativity and truthfulness and these underpin our Religious Education curriculum. Each year the school family choose the core 6 values which are pertinent to our school to focus on for the year.

The syllabus extensively uses and reflects the Curriculum Framework for RE in England published by the RE Council in 2013. It adapts this non-statutory guidance to respond to local needs and experience, gained through wide formal and informal consultation with schools over two years. From this consultation a number of priorities are considered:

- Our syllabus uses rigorous study of religious and other world views to focus around investigations of key questions. It is based on enquiry.
- The questions for enquiry should be contemporary, relevant and engaging. RE is not simply an academic pursuit. At its best rigorous study of religious and non-religious approaches to life can help to equip young people to explore personal questions of meaning and to engage with profound issues and contemporary questions that face our communities now and in the future.
- It is critical that RE responds to topical concerns or current issues, arising in school or from a national or global context. Our curriculum must be flexible enough to allow the inclusion of such response.
- RE teaching has depth and substance when it offers the opportunity to engage with people and places of faith within or outside school.
- To enable effective progression the syllabus we teach RE through a developing understanding of world faiths, reflecting the local demography. Lessons may include reference to all faiths at any stage. However, a school's curriculum should include systematic teaching of Christianity, Islam and a non-religious approach throughout all key stages, extending to Judaism and Sikhism in KS2.
- Teaching will explicitly include study of both religious and other world views at every key stage. Diversity within these faiths and world views will also be recognised.
- Although the two former attainment targets (AT1 Learning about religion and AT2 Learning from religion) have been discontinued in non-statutory guidance, it remains important for RE to encourage both the development of knowledge and the ability to reflect. The enquiry model adopted by the syllabus builds in study of beliefs and personal reflection.
- To enable pupils to develop increasing understanding of wide areas of RE subject knowledge, and also to nurture religious literacy, the syllabus adapts the three-fold structure of the curriculum framework to form three broad aims, through which pupils gain and deploy skills. RE should ensure that all pupils:
  - Develop knowledge and understanding of religions and world views

- Express ideas and insights about questions of belief and meaning
- Investigate and respond to important questions for individuals and the wider community

Our RE curriculum includes a balance of these three aims:

- A. Knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views;
- B. Expression of ideas and insights around questions of beliefs and meaning;
- C. Investigation and response to important questions for individuals and the wider community.

As well as the four major religions studied we also include other world views throughout the study of RE. This recognises that one of RE's most important contributions to education is enabling all learners to explore questions of meaning, purpose and value. This is important from a perspective of faith or non-religious understanding and recognises that most people do not adhere to formal religious structures.

Other world views is taken to mean beliefs, arguments or philosophies that approach questions of meaning and purpose without reference to belief in a deity. This may include a structured, named philosophy such as Humanism, or a more general argument or approach relevant to the questions studied.

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 the UK. These include Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in Kirklees.
2. Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
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, cultural and social 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 line 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 and respect the right of people to hold different beliefs within a religiously diverse society.

### Teaching and learning

In RE at Hanging Heaton School, we foster a reflective approach to learning by encouraging an open and honest enquiry, an awareness of prejudice, a growing self-understanding and respecting the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own by: Learning about Religions and Learning from Religion. These two attainment targets with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum.

### Learning

Assessment will form the basis of these three aims which reflect three academic strands of study: phenomenology of religion; philosophy; ethics and identity.

<p><b>A. Know about and understand a range of religions and other world views, so that they can:</b></p>	<p>A1 Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals (<b>worship, ritual and ways of life</b>);</p> <p>A2 Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and other world views (<b>sources of wisdom</b>);</p> <p>A3 Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of expressing meaning (<b>symbols and actions</b>);</p>
<p><b>B. Express ideas and insights about questions of beliefs and meaning, so</b></p>	<p>B1 Explain and give reasons for their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities (<b>impact of beliefs on choices</b>);</p> <p>B2 Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively (<b>questions of meaning, purpose and truth</b>);</p> <p>B3 Appreciate and appraise varied approaches of religions and world views to ultimate questions (<b>different responses to ultimate questions</b>);</p>

they can:	
<b>C.</b> <b>Investigate and respond to important questions for individuals and the wider community, so that they can:</b>	C1 Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues ( <b>identity and belonging</b> ); C2 Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all ( <b>cooperation and cohesion</b> ); C3 Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why these may be important in their own and other people's lives ( <b>evaluating moral dilemmas</b> ).

Children will learn through:

1. investigation; the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories.
2. questioning; developing curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world
3. empathy; developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, joy and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
4. reflection; the ability to consider thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs of oneself and others.
5. relating; linking significant features of religions, making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar
6. expression; the ability to identify and explain feelings and aspects of religions

## Teaching

Our Religious Education curriculum is taught through:

- Belief and Teachings - e.g. stories, prophets, founders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death
- Religious Practices and Lifestyles - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, effects on individuals

- Ways of Expressing Meaning - e.g. art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, silence/stillness
- Human Identity, Personality and Experience - e.g. preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people
- Questions of Meaning and Purpose - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences
- Values and Commitments - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, moral dilemmas

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.

It 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, role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT, works of art, artefacts, visits and visitors.

The Religious education curriculum is taught through direct subject teaching, collective worship and where appropriate through cross curricular activities. It is closely linked to our PSHCE curriculum. RE also provides opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in Literacy and ICT.

**Time allocation:** one hour a week is specifically allocated to the teaching of RE within the school timetable. Collective Worship is additional to this.

### Planning

The religious education curriculum follows the Kirklees and Calderdale 2014-2019 agreed units of work and supplemented by additional Christianity plans to ensure that we fulfil the recommendation to teach 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of Christianity within RE as our status as Church School demands. The units from EYFS units through to Year 6 units are delivered through a two year cycle to ensure continuity and progression. (see appendix).

Class teachers use the unit plans accordingly to plan weekly lessons which are identified on short term plans.

### Assessment and recording

In line with the Kirklees agreed syllabus, at the end of each termly unit of work, pupils are assessed against both attainment targets. This is done through, discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, asking and answering questions. At the end of each academic year children are given an overall level of

achievement in RE. Pupils' progress, effort and attainment in Religious Education are reported to parents through annual reports and are also passed on to new schools where children transfer.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

### **Community Cohesion**

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at

Each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

**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.

**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.

### **Inclusion and Equality**

Hanging Heaton School is committed to recognising the uniqueness of an individual and to acknowledge and develop the positive qualities that all have regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, special educational need or socio-economic background to achieve their full potential. We aim to develop a culture

of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

We are a school committed to the inclusion of all in everything we do and strive to ensure equal opportunities for all to achieve their best.

### **The right of Withdrawal from RE**

At Hanging Heaton School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds of conscience. Parents' right to withdrawal is referred to in the school's prospectus.

However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, 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.

(Please see the Collective Worship policy for information regarding parents' right of withdrawal from collective Worship.)

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 at Hanging Heaton School.

**Any formal request to withdraw a child from Religious Education lessons must be made in writing to the Headteacher.**

### **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 (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), 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 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.

**This policy has been reviewed and agreed by all teaching staff - September 2016.**

**Review Date: September 2017**

**Senior Member of Staff responsible: Mrs J Thompson**

**Designated member of staff: Mrs S Brooke-Mawson RE subject leader.**

**Governors with responsibility: Mrs A Walshaw and Mrs W Lister**