

Sheringham Community School and Nursery

Religious Education Policy

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 Religious Education offers pupils an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

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 Norfolk Agreed Syllabus -2012.

We recognise that our pupils come from a variety of religious and secular backgrounds and welcome this diversity. The Religious Education programme seeks to be sensitive to the home background of each child; it is not the function of Religious Education to promote or disparage particular religious views.

The Aims of Religious Education at Sheringham Community Primary School and Nursery are:

The Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 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.

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 Norfolk 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 syllabus promotes an **enquiry** based approach to learning.

Time Allocation

Curriculum 2000 recognised Religious Education as a 'core' subject for all pupils. The Dearing Curriculum Review (1996) recommended a minimum of 36 hours per year for Religious Education at Key Stage 1, and 45 hours at Key Stage 2; this was re-iterated in 'Developing and Managing the Primary Curriculum' (QCA, 2003) and is endorsed by the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus, 2012. Religious Education curriculum time does not include collective worship, even where an assembly complements or provides a starting point for curricular work.

The time allocated at Sheringham 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 Reception pupils, who must receive Religious Education according to the Agreed Syllabus but for whom there is no time recommendation in the documents above. Religious Education curriculum time does not include collective worship.

The Requirements of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus

At Sheringham our Religious Education is based on the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus sets out Programmes of Study for the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, beginning each 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 belief' and 'Learning from religion and belief' 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 Religious Education and gives Level Descriptions by which pupils' progress may be assessed. (Although levels no longer exist these give guidance for assessment of progress)

Scheme of Work

A detailed Scheme of Work for Religious Education at Sheringham has been written in light of the requirements described above. Both the Scheme of Work and the Agreed Syllabus are available for inspection in school.

To summarise, Religious Education is based around themes in Reception 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 the other main religions through various topics. 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 Sheringham we are using 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 belief' and 'Learning from religion and belief') 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 being given increasing opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability where appropriate in Religious Education. Use of the internet for virtual visits to places of worship, digital cameras and interactive whiteboards have all helped pupils develop their learning in and enjoyment of Religious Education .

At Sheringham, teachers are encouraged to use Religious Education sites: www.reonline.org.uk and www.request.org.uk as a basic resources for their own and pupils' needs. There are other websites available to support with information on religions, pictures of ceremonies and artefacts, and also sites run by different religious communities.

Resources

Good resources are essential to fulfil the teaching requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and for Sheringham there are resources to support the learning of all the six major religions Resources are stored in separate picture boxes.

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 following the Norfolk Educational Visits and Journeys - procedures and guidance'.

We visit the local churches in the vicinity of the school. Clergy and other members of the community meet with children. Activities and discussions are focused on specific areas of the curriculum as we aim to revisit the church with the children during both Key stages.

Special Educational Needs

It is unlikely that difficulties should arise in a child's understanding of RE. However, if such a need should be identified it would be addressed in line with the school's Special Needs Policy and Procedures.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

It is important to note that pupils' work in Religious Education can be assessed; we are not assessing degrees of spirituality but their knowledge skills and understanding. It is important that their progress is acknowledged, just as in any other subject. We are also 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.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice and, in particular, monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. This may include meetings with staff at the beginning and end of topics to enable the subject leader to gauge and address the feelings and concerns of staff. Lesson observations, pupil interviews and visits to classrooms to see children's work are used to monitor and evaluate RE.

Provision for Withdrawal from Religious Education

Two provisions of law need to be noted:

i) 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 Headteachers 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.

ii) Teachers may withdraw from Religious Education. Their classes, however, are legally entitled to Religious Education. The Headteachers are 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 Sheringham stories from the bible, Christian and other traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned and we enjoy assemblies led by members of our religious community.

June 2017

To be reviewed annually.

