



Edleston Primary School

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Religious Education Policy

Intent

Edleston Primary School recognises the value of Religious Education (R.E). We believe that RE should help pupils to:

- develop a tolerance and respect for themselves and other people including their beliefs and cultures
- actively share information about their own faiths
- explore the beliefs, ethics, philosophy and lifestyles that Religious Education encompasses
- engage with challenging spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) questions that arise in their lives and in their community whilst promoting a sense of world citizenship
- formulate their own sense of purpose and priorities in life
- develop their own beliefs, ideals and values and to relate these to their relationship with others
- allow them to reflect upon themselves as individuals capable of experiencing life through the body, mind and spirit

- acquire knowledge of the religious beliefs, practices [including some festivals] and values in Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain, particularly Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.
- provide a safe and secure environment for pupils to challenge prejudices and misconceptions
- encourage pupils to recognise and celebrate diversity in society
- enhance pupils' understanding of history, art, music, literature and the media.

Religious education is centrally concerned with questions of fundamental importance to human beings. Pupils should be provided with a range of opportunities to:

- enquire;
- question;
- develop their own responses;
- formulate their own views to these fundamental questions as they encounter and respond to religion.

At Edleston Primary School, Christianity is the major religion our pupils follow in school [44.2%]; 9% of our pupils are Muslims and the final 3% identify as 'other'. As a result of the high percentage of pupils of no religion [43.8%], we believe it is even more important that we educate our pupils about different faiths: beliefs, values and traditions. We have chosen 'Islam' as one of principal religions to study to reflect our local community and when possible, we make links to significant events in the religions calendar at the appropriate times.

Implementation

At Edleston Primary School, RE is as an area of learning in its own right as well as integrated where appropriate with other curriculum areas. It is taught mainly in discrete, regularly lessons however some units may be taught in 'blocks' over a few days.

Our Religious Education curriculum is enhanced further with trips to places of worship in our local area

RE Syllabus

The Cheshire East SACRE introduced a new RE syllabus in July 2016. The focus of this Agreed Syllabus is to set a framework to support teachers in the quality of Religious Education in maintained schools in Cheshire East. It aims to be fully inclusive, exploring the beliefs, ethics and lifestyles that Religious Education encompasses. It seeks to promote high levels of consistency in teaching and learning, while giving teachers freedom to find the best ways to help pupils engage with challenging spiritual, moral, social and cultural questions that arise in their lives and in their community.

The syllabus requires:

- Foundation Stage - Christianity.
- Key Stage 1 - Christianity and one other principal religion
- Key Stage 2 - Christianity and two other principal religions.

From EYFS to Y6, RE can be taught as discrete lessons or can be blocked.

Teaching and learning

An important development in RE in recent years is the move towards using key concepts and questions in order to organise the curriculum. This process is an attempt to raise the level of challenge in RE and to deal with the concerns about over-emphasis on content. This will therefore encourage a higher level of analytical focus within the lessons taught.

As stated earlier, the school has based its syllabus on that agreed by Cheshire East [SACRE]. This is the main starting point for developing RE at Edleston Primary School, but other resources may be used in conjunction with this, providing those schemes/resources are adapted to fit the statutory content. To make learning meaningful, it is important that RE is linked, where possible, with the chosen themes and 'real time' festivals and celebrations within our school and community.

For EYFS, RE links to Development Matters:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development ['Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness', 'Managing Feelings and Behaviour' and 'Making Relationships']
- Understanding the World ['People and Communities' and 'The World']

The syllabus will provide opportunities for children to develop the following skills and attitudes:

- Skills: Investigation, Empathy, Synthesis, Interpretation, Evaluation, Application, Reflection, Analysis, Expression.
- Attitudes: Commitment, Fairness, Respect, Self-understanding, Enquiry, Tolerance.

This approach to teaching involves the use of key questions which pupils examine. They should be encouraged to devise their own questions and decide how best to go about answering them. Pupils should use a wide range of skills, for example: investigation, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and reflection. These should also be linked to level descriptors to ensure continuity.

The suggested task of the teacher should be to:

- Guide research and extend pupils' understanding by asking more challenging questions
- Ask open-ended questions that provoke further discussion and stimulate deeper exploration
- Motivate pupils to become more engaged in the task, valuing their ideas and contributions
- Encourage pupils to reflect on their own learning and experiences
- Monitor progress, ensuring pupils are aware where they are in the process
- Challenge pupils' thinking, encouraging them to extend their boundaries, finding new ways to work with problems and situations
- Develop an atmosphere of trust in which pupils are willing to share and exchange their own ideas and experiences
- Use or create materials which develop pupils' abilities to recognise problems, think independently and critically, and develop their observational, analytical and communication skills.

Right to Withdraw from RE lessons

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school. The school should, however, ensure 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, they should be supervised by another teacher or teaching assistant.

Shared and Collective worship

The school does not promote an individual religion but does follow the guidance of the SMSC aspect of the 1944 Education Act. Therefore people of faith are invited into school to lead assemblies or class sessions in order to teach the children about how they lead their lives or share stories/experiences which help to form their faith.

Impact

The children at Edleston Primary School enjoying learning lots about other religions and why people choose, or choose not to follow a religion. Through their R.E. learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. Our children develop an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life, which they are then able to communicate to the wider community through our R.E. lessons. R.E. offers our children the means by which to understand how other people choose to live and to understand why they choose to live in that way. As such, R.E. is invaluable in an ever changing and shrinking world.

Monitoring

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- School visits,
- meetings with the school parliament,
- sharing children's work
- feedback from staff.

Learning is monitored by the Leadership team and subject leaders across a variety of methods including:

- work scrutinies,

- learning walks,
- pupil interviews,
- analysing data.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects; deepening and broadening their knowledge and understanding of concepts.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

Inclusion

Religious Education can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all.

The 'Non-Statutory Guidance for Religious Education', (DCSF 2004) and 'RE in English Schools' (2010) reports contained many references to the role of Religious Education in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating, positively, differences in others. Religious Education enables all pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle and can develop pupils' self-esteem.

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating Religious Education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to Religious Education.
- meets all pupils' learning needs including those with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

To overcome any potential barriers to learning in Religious Education, some pupils may require:

- support to access text, such as through prepared recordings, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed.
- help to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing, where this is a requirement. For example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT.

- a non-visual way of accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of Religious Education, for example using audio materials.