

# Holy Trinity Pewley Down School

## Religious Education Policy

### Our School Values

Zest for learning and a love of life

Embracing the future with hope and confidence

Seeing heaven in the moment

Imagining the journey in another's footsteps; nurturing understanding, respecting all

Everyone knowing that they are treasured and loved as a unique child of God

Our school values underpin all our RE teaching and these values are embedded in all the experiences we strive to give the children. Children are spiritual beings who often think deeply and hold serious convictions.

We regard it as a privilege to work with young people to ponder the more profound questions of life and faith. In our school, spirituality is seen in joyful singing and dance, and in silent meditation and prayer. As a Church School we seek to nurture in the heart and minds of our children the knowledge and love of God. We seek to provide them with an experience of Christian Community which will influence and shape the rest of their lives.

### **The provision of Religious Education at HTPD**

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'.

HTPD is a Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School.

As a church school we deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Guidelines for Religious Education, The Church of England, Diocese of Guildford.

Whilst we believe passionately that RE and Collective Worship are central to the life of HTPD and in very many respects are inextricably connected, naturally complimenting and enriching one another, they should however be managed separately.

## **The Aims of Religious Education**

The RE curriculum strives to be rich and creative, providing a whole range of opportunities for pupils to think about religion and belief, investigate and connect ideas and then have the ability to reflect and evaluate all they have shared and learnt.

### **We aim to:**

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses
- **enable pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging**, which will help them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a multicultural and diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, which will help them to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion
- **provide children with opportunities to think theologically**, inspiring in them a sense of awe, wonder and mystery; in essence, 'seeing Heaven in a moment'
- **help children find reasons for hope in a troubled world**, understanding how faith in God can sustain them in all circumstances and in the face of opposition

## **The teaching of Religious Education**

The majority of RE is taught through a cross curricular topic based approach or in line with the religious calendar.

The scheme of work is based on the guidelines from the Guildford Board of Education, the new ASUs (Alternative Study Units) and our internal school planning and provision.

We endeavour to underpin each RE topic by 'big questions' that provide a high level of challenge for children working at level 1 up to level 5, across both attainment targets. The scheme is designed to ensure clear and obvious progression in what is taught and learnt.

RE lessons are generally taught on a weekly basis but there are many times where a topic is based around a whole week's work or may well be a day's worth of activities. For example Yr 3 pupils spend 2 days on a project learning about Christian places of worship, visiting 3 very different churches, identifying some of the similarities and differences and starting to make sense of why people express their faith in different ways.

At Christmas and Easter each year group is involved in projects covering several days, looking at different aspects of the festivals.

Different religions are studied in more depth in Key Stage 2, where Year 4 study what it means to be a Sikh, Year 5 study what it means to be a Jew and Year 6 study what it means to be a Muslim. Obviously visitors, trips and artefacts play a fundamental role in these topics.

All work is planned to ensure very good coverage of attainment targets, AT 1, Learning about religions and AT 2, Learning from religions with careful differentiated planning to challenge all abilities. The scheme of work pays particular attention to clearly defined Learning Outcomes which continue to push and encourage pupils to investigate and evaluate their learning.

All pupils from Year 2-Year 6 have been given their own Bibles which they use regularly in lessons. This initiative has been a great success, with the children continually developing skills to handle the text, gaining a clearer picture of chronology and most importantly really enjoying reading and discussing the stories.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active and creative subject we employ a variety of teaching methods. In any RE lesson you may expect to see a whole variety of 'learning experiences'; group and paired discussion, research, home group/specialist group feedback, art work, drama, poetry, research, outside work, handling artefacts, listening to guests, hot-seating, ICT use, music, comprehension activities and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

## **Resources**

All children have their own Bibles, extensive school library ( particularly on the Junior site) small number of artefacts located at school, artefacts and book loan from the Education Centre at Guildford Cathedral.

## **SEN Provision**

As a highly inclusive church school all RE resources and lessons are suitably differentiated to meet the needs of children with a range of SEN eg resources enlarged for visually impaired pupils, less written work involved for children with fine motor control problems, easily accessed and planned tasks for children with learning difficulties etc. Wherever possible the children remain in their class groups, benefitting from increased teacher input, T A support and beneficial pairings and group work.

## **Assessment, Recording and Monitoring of RE**

RE lessons are observed by the RE coordinator and by members of the SLT. All year groups are observed during the academic year. All recorded written work by the children is effectively marked and then becomes part of their topic work for that term. A sample of all work is collated by each year group, every term and presented in a Year Group RE book. This holds evidence of what has been taught, how the children have responded and includes photographs, lesson plans and a selection of their writing.

Through effective marking, planning and assessment procedures, staff are able to meet the needs of all children and plan future lessons. The school has a clear system in place to track assessment data in order to monitor progress across both attainment targets. As in all areas of the curriculum, staff are marking work in a way that will enable the children to respond to their comments and then reflect and improve on their work.

All staff are very familiar with the QCA level descriptors for RE and use these in the assessment process. Teachers record ongoing assessments in their individual markbooks.

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

At HTPD school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education..However it should be noted that RE is integral to our ethos and curriculum and this would in practice be difficult to achieve. As a result of this, parents who might wish to withdraw their children should think carefully before choosing HTPD as their school.

We would ask any parent considering this option, to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of RE. It may be that after due discussion, there are just 'some' elements that are objected to, and in which case, withdrawal may not need to be continuous.

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