



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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Religious Education Policy

Mission statement

Learning Together and Living Our Christian Values

The Methodist Ethos is at the root of everything we do and is the foundation for our teaching and learning. We aim to work with parents and carers to provide an environment which prepares our pupils to be successful, confident, happy and caring people. We are committed to our Christian values and teaching the children how to apply them in their lives.

Definition

Religious Education (RE) makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Knowledge and skills developed by RE contribute to pupils' readiness to participate in life in modern, diverse Britain. Good RE, is not about making pupils into believers, but tries to help them to become literate and articulate about religions and beliefs and to be thoughtful members of society. By learning from different faiths, they are able to make informed choices about how they want to live their lives whilst also understanding more about the faith of other people they meet. Religious Education contributes dynamically to children's education, provoking challenging questions about human life, beliefs, communities and ideas.

In RE, pupils learn from religions and world-views about different ways of life in local, national and global contexts. They discover, explore and consider many different questions about human identity, meaning and value. They learn to weigh up for themselves the value of wisdom from different communities, to disagree respectfully, to be reasonable in their responses to religions and world-views and to respond by expressing insights into their own and others' lives. They think rigorously, imaginatively and respectfully about their ideas in relation to religions and world-views.

Legal Requirements

RE, must be provided for all pupils in state-funded schools in England and is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'. We follow the locally agreed syllabus (2016-2021) for Tameside. As such, it is multi-faith and a curriculum drawn up by the SACRE to reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Equal Opportunities and Right of Withdrawal

It is academy policy that all children regardless of gender, cultural background, first language, or disability have the right to access R.E. Parents have the right, however, to withdraw pupils wholly or partly from attending any Religious Education at school. Grounds for withdrawal can be that parents wish to provide their own religious education in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3). However, we will always talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of RE before honouring the right.

Methodist Ethos

The academy seeks to develop an ethos, which creates a respectful, compassionate and caring atmosphere in which to work, learn and grow together and to see each child as unique and special. It is our aim that this ethos should permeate all aspects of school life. However, there is a special place in the teaching of R.E to help children develop a spiritual awareness and understanding of the world around them.

Taking a creative and innovative approach to RE the academy highlights the history and distinctiveness of Methodism, including the story of John Wesley and the importance of his teachings today, the importance of belonging, commitment, and holiness & justice lived out through global, local and personal action. Key emphasis is on John's Wesley's rule of life:

'Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.'

Attention is given to the Methodist Quadrilateral (fourfold approach) of learning about the Christian faith and applying it to contemporary issues and Christian practice by reflecting upon (1) the Bible, (2) Tradition, (3) Reason and (4) Experience.

Principal Aim

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldwide views address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

The threefold aim of RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and world views, so that they can:

- Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.
- Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
- Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expressions influence individuals and communities.
- Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.
- Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.
- Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
- Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Skills and Processes

Key questions are posed and built upon over time in RE –

- Discovering questions (Foundation Stage)
- Exploring questions (Key Stage One)
- Connecting questions (Lower & Upper Key Stage 2)

These are covered through three strands where there is a balance across all year groups and key stages –

Strand 1 Believing – Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth.

Strand 2 Expressing – Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.

Strand 3 Living – Religious practises and ways of living; questions about values and commitments.

Attitudes

Religious Education encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. As well as through the teaching of RE, as a Methodist academy, we aim to achieve this through embedding and fostering respect throughout all of our curriculum and practices within school.

This is supported through the following –

- Philosophy for Children
- Thinking skills
- Our Core Christian Values
- Collective Worship
- Godly Play
- Experience Journeys
- British Values
- Mindfulness
- Independent and group enquiry
- Multi-cultural days and RE / Multi-Faith Days
- Multi-faith visits and visitors

'We are called to love God with our minds as well as with our hearts.

To the best of our ability we need to think things through in the light of reason.

This means becoming aware of different points of view, and using our own critical thinking to make sense of God's world'

Description of 'Reason' from <http://www.methodist.org.uk/who-we-are/what-isdistinctive-about-methodism/the-methodist-quadrilateral>

Assessment, Achievement and Attainment

In RE, by the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant Programme of Study, as in all subjects of the curriculum. The expectation is that pupils' achievements will be evaluated by teachers, using criteria arising from the programmes of study. The three aims of the Tameside Agreed Syllabus (2016 – 2021) form the basis of assessment and are integrated into learning.

Delivery

A clear overview of how our Religious Education is being delivered can be found in a long-term curriculum plan, detailed guidelines in the agreed scheme of work, a timetable for each class within which Religious Education is identifiable, clear evidence of teachers' short-term planning with learning objectives stemming from the Agreed Syllabus and evidence of pupil work in Religious Education within class and individual RE books. RE is mostly taught on a weekly basis in foundation and KS1 but is mainly taught in block ins KS2.

Resources and I.C.T

All children will have equal access to a wide range of resources to complement and enhance their learning in Religious Education. These resources include artefacts, videos, DVDs, music, posters and books. The use of I.C.T is also fundamental in the child's learning and is vital for research purposes. Every child in our academy has regular access to the computers and IPADs.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The vision of the agreed syllabus is of RE for all. Every pupil can achieve and benefit from their RE, including all pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. RE provision for SEND pupils will vary but all pupils will be included in RE.