

Bicton C.E. Primary School and Nursery

Learning for a Lifetime



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

To be read in conjunction with the National Society's 'A Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools'

Introduction

At Bicton C. E. Primary School, Religious Education plays a significant role in the personal development of the children in our school and defines our school's distinctive Christian character. As a school, we recognise that spiritual development lies at the heart of the curriculum. It is a means of helping children explore the spiritual dimensions of life and lays the foundations for understanding of the Christian faith. All members of the school community should experience Christianity through the life of the school, as well as through the taught curriculum.

We maintain strong links with Holy Trinity Church, Bicton and the local community. We welcome the contribution that visitors to lead collective worship make towards enriching Religious Education in our school. Likewise, it is important that the children and stakeholders of Bicton C. E. Primary School make an active contribution to the lives of homeless people in our community as well as the wider community. The challenges that children will meet, growing up in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society, are addressed through planned units of work. Our provision is organised using the Understanding Christianity Resource and the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus and we also make use of materials from the Surrey syllabus when teaching other faiths. Furthermore, the teaching of Religious Education in Bicton C. E. Primary School takes into account the age and understanding of the child and, wherever possible, is closely related to their own experiences and starting points.

The teaching of Religious Education and opportunities for collective worship are closely related to the following main strands:

- Teaching directly related to Christianity: The Life of Jesus, Bible study, the Church and other places of worship, Christian celebrations, etc.
- Acceptable codes of behaviour in school/with the Church and in the community: caring and helping others, relationships, caring and responsibility for the environment, community projects, etc.
- Cross-curricular approaches, to develop an understanding that R.E. is not an isolated subject but is related to most other areas of the curriculum.
- Awareness and respect for the different ways in which others worship, pray and celebrate festivals, etc.
- Development particularly through whole-school and class worship: sharing in a sense of wonder, thankfulness and praise for the world and everything in it, participating in prayer, children composing their own prayers, etc.

Christianity is a key element in both Key Stages and other world religions are included as follows:

Key Stage 1: at least one other religion

Key Stage 2: at least two other religions

The minimum recommended teaching time necessary to fulfil the requirement is:

Key Stage 1: 25-30 hours in each year

Key Stage 2: 35 hours in each year

The aims of Religious Education in Bicton C. E. Primary School are:

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and intellectual development of pupils in our school and prepare them for the experiences and responsibilities of adult life.
- To develop an understanding and knowledge of the Bible and Christian beliefs in a way that relates directly to their lives.
- To introduce pupils to an experience of God's Spirit and be able to reflect upon, listen and pray to God.
- To develop a respect and understanding of other religions, cultures and traditions.
- To develop an understanding and experience of God through praise and worship.
- To encourage children to reflect about their own beliefs and values, with a positive interest in others with different beliefs, and a confidence to challenge and be challenged through informed discussion.
- To develop caring attitudes to members of the school community and to the wider community and act upon those attitudes, through involvement in community projects that make a positive difference to others.
- To develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment.
- To become familiar with a sense of rights and responsibilities and develop a "critical faculty".

The outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion – symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make, including believers, and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

In addition the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part in the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual - widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.

Moral - helping each pupil develop their own informed values.

Social - helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values in our society.

Cultural - aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage and in developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with Citizenship and PSHE. Religious Education can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

Special Educational Needs

Learning objectives, materials, resources and organisation enable all children to participate fully in Religious Education taking into account their specific needs.

Equal Opportunities

All children are encouraged to take an active and equal part in all aspects of Religious Education. Through effective planning, children are provided with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education in contexts appropriate to their needs, experience and starting points.

Assessment

Children's progress, knowledge and understanding in Religious Education is reported annually to parents and indicates both children's strengths and areas for development but always in a positive manner.

Right to Withdraw

At Bicton C. E. Primary School, we strive to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without giving a reason. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the Head teacher who may then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the Religious Education and worship provided by the school and set out the options open to the parents as set out in education law. 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. Where a pupil is withdrawn from Religious Education, and does not take part in alternative religious education, they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Religious Education is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in Religious Education should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in Religious Education. All of our teaching staff are involved in delivering Religious Education and the sharing of good practice is embedded and celebrated within the ethos of our school.

The Religious Education Subject Leader (in conjunction with the Head teacher) is responsible for:

- Producing a scheme of work for the school, taking into account the views of all stakeholders;
- Supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of Religious Education provision;
- Ensuring Religious Education has status within the school;
- Keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate;
- Auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff;
- Undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff professional development;
- Monitoring Religious Education provision, practice and outcomes; e.g. book scrutiny, lesson observation, discussions with children, etc.
- Ensuring assessment strategies are in line with the Agreed Syllabus;
- Accountability for Religious Education standards in the school;
- Meet regularly with a member of the Diocesan Religious Education advisory team.

This policy was updated in June 2017.

This policy is due for review in June 2019.

Signed Head teacher

Signed Chair of Governing Body