

Ombersley Endowed First School
Policy on Religious Education



Ombersley Endowed First School

Religious Education Policy

Named co-ordinator: Mrs. Lynne Stanley

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Religious Education teaches children about the nature of religious beliefs and practices and the importance and influence of these in the lives of believers. Religious Education is part of the basic school curriculum and makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils. We aim to promote a caring and stimulating environment in which the children are encouraged to develop a respect for themselves and others, co-operating with adults and children alike.

1 Aims and objectives

At Ombersley Endowed First School we want children to understand what is meant by 'religion' and engage with the range of beliefs, practices and values they will thereby encounter.

This primary aim can be broken down into other important aims as follows:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.
- Gain an understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence individuals, societies, communities and cultures in a global community.
- Acquire a capacity to engage in a search for meaning and purpose in order to enhance their own spiritual and moral growth.
- Discover opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Reflect upon their pursuit of a set of moral values which will be a guide to their behaviour.
- Develop a positive attitude towards people who hold beliefs different from theirs.
- Consider how their own experiences can contribute to reflection on the fundamental questions of human existence.
- Acquire investigative and research skills in order for them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues.
- Develop and apply their cross-curricular skills to the study of religious beliefs and practices.
- Promote a willingness to challenge religious, racial and cultural stereotyping and prejudice.
- Encourage, support and promote good relationships within and between families, communities and religions.

2 The legal position of religious education

2.1 Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is

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based on the Worcestershire LA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document.

The scheme of work for Religious Education covers all the requirements of the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus. RE is taught in half-termly units.

Foundation Stage:

- We begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects, and visiting places of worship.
- Children listen to and talk about stories.
- They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression.
- They reflect on their own feelings and experiences.
- They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

Key Stage 1: Religions and beliefs taught

Year 1: Christianity; belonging, festivals, special places, special people.

Year 2: Judaism; special books, festivals, special people and places, rites of passage

Key Stage 2: Religions and beliefs

Year 3: Christianity; Expression and Celebration, Hinduism, Beliefs, Special books.

Year 4: Christianity, Special people in the Bible, Judaism; special places. The Search for meaning and purpose.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

3.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

3.3 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.

3.4 RE can be taught through:

Role play and drama, Story telling, Discussion and debate, Topic work, Reflection, Use of visitors, Use of local community, Films and DVDs.

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3.5 Links with the local community – Although not a Church school, Ombersley Endowed First school enjoys a good relationship with St. Andrews Church in Ombersley. During the year we hold assemblies and concerts in the church. The vicar and The 'Open the Book' team carry out regular assemblies at school.

4 Curriculum planning in religious education

4.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Worcestershire Syllabus.

We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.2 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader will keep and review these plans on a regular basis. We carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.

4.3 The class teacher or cover teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson.

5 Foundation Stage

5.1 We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

5.2 In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Foundation Stage Curriculum which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

6 Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

6.1 English - Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

6.2 Information and communication technology (ICT) - We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

6.3 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship - Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes

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required for citizenship by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

6.4 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.-Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, therefore they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7 Teaching religious education to children with special needs

7.1 In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

8 Assessment and recording

8.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. Class teachers report to parents during the year to inform them of their children's understanding and progress in RE.

9 Resources

9.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Signed:

Date