

# **Smith's Wood Primary Academy**

**'Challenge, Support, Progress'**

## **R.E Policy**

**Updated September 2014**

## Aims:

- To help our children develop **respect** and **sensitivity** for all people.
- To celebrate **cultural diversity** in Britain.
- To help our children understand **faith** and **moral codes** to guide them and develop informed opinions.
- To help our children develop an understanding of **modern multi-cultural Britain** and how this is reflected in their lives and local community
- To help our children understand more about the importance of religion in today's world.

## The importance of religious education in the curriculum

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about faith, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

At Smith's Wood Primary Academy the RE curriculum aims to amalgamate core cultural perspectives of cosmopolitan Britain as well as give the children in our care knowledge and understanding of the principal religions, these are Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. RE is taught within a local, national and global context.

Our school RE curriculum offers children opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It considers the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

The school follows the Solihull Agree Syllabus which stipulates the agreed legal requirements:

- The Education Act 1996 requires that the curriculum for every maintained school includes provision for Religious Education for all pupils (of whatever age) at the school. The requirement to teach Religious Education does not apply to nursery schools and classes but it does apply to children in reception classes. Every area of the curriculum, including RE, must promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepare them for life.
- In Community, Foundation and Voluntary Controlled Schools, RE must be provided in accordance with a locally Agreed Syllabus. Every Agreed Syllabus must *'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'* (The Education Reform Act 1988).
- An Agreed Syllabus must not require RE to be provided by means of any catechism or formula which is distinctive of any particular denomination.
- It is the responsibility of each Local Authority (LA) to adopt an Agreed Syllabus. Each LA must set up a Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE) to advise it on matters connected with the RE to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.
- The Education Act 1993 states that regulations shall provide that, so far as practicable, every pupil should receive Religious Education. The LA expects all its special schools to provide RE in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus, as far as it is possible.

## Key Objectives in R.E

The structure of the Agreed Syllabus is organised around the five objectives:

- ♦ the development of **Concepts**
- ♦ the acquisition of **Knowledge**
- ♦ the development of **Attitudes**
- ♦ the development of **Skills**
- ♦ the exploration of **Human Experience**

## Key Skills in RE

We strongly believe that RE is more than just developing children's knowledge and understanding. We seek to develop children's skills in investigation, enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis, reflection and evaluation. These are important life skills for children to develop and use in their daily lives.

These include:

- Investigation/enquiry (finding out what people believe, how their beliefs affect the way they live and the different ways people express their beliefs).
- Communication (sharing their ideas and those within religions and beliefs in a lively, informed way including different styles of writing, oral contributions and the use of ICT).
- Reflect (ensuring the children have planned time to consider and reflect on their understanding and opinions)
- Interpretation (recognising and talking about religious symbols, stories and sacred texts).
- Analysis and evaluation (developing their own views and ideas, recognising the views of others).

### **Key Attitudes in RE**

As with skills RE has a number of key attitudes it seeks to promote.

These include:

- Self-esteem (so that every child feels valued and significant),
- Respect (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others),
- Tolerance (being willing to learn and gain new understanding)
- Appreciation and wonder (developing children's imagination and curiosity).

### **Expectation in RE**

RE must be taught in every year group. This syllabus requires a minimum allocation of 5% of curriculum time, as recommended by the Secretary of State and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). This is the equivalent of 1 hour per week in all key stages.

### **Approaches to teaching and learning in RE**

RE is an exciting curriculum subject and we employ a wide range of learning methods in our teaching.

These include

- Visiting local places of worship and receiving visitors from faith communities.
- Using art, music, dance, ICT and drama.
- Using story, pictures and photographs.
- Using artefacts to help children develop their understanding of religious beliefs and forms of expression.
- Discussing religious and philosophical questions giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others.
- Developing the use of ICT (particularly DVDs and the internet) in helping children's awareness of religions and beliefs.
- Discussing cultural experiences through Community of Enquiry.

### **Rights of withdrawal**

We firmly believe that RE is an important subject in children's learning. We fully recognise the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of RE on the grounds of conscience. The school asks parents/carers to contact the Head teacher or the R.E co-ordinator if they have any concerns about RE provision and practice at the school.

### **Learning resources**

We encourage the use of a wide range of resources to enrich children's learning. These include books, DVDs, music, artefacts, ICT, visitors and visits. We strive to ensure RE is a lively, stimulating subject which evokes interest and engages all children. Learning is planned to meet the individual needs of the children. We have also some specific resources to support children with special educational needs and those with specific talent in RE.

### **RE and the use of ICT**

- Helping them make effective use of the internet and IT programmes to investigate and learn from different religions beliefs, teachings and ideas.
- Use e-mail and video conferencing to link with other schools and communities in different local, national and global locations.
- Use multimedia and presentation software to communicate their own ideas and those within religions and beliefs.

### **The contribution of RE to the wider curriculum**

Some aspects of the RE curriculum has its own distinctive subject matter and is therefore taught as a separate subject. Learning at Smith's Wood Primary Academy is taught through cross curricular themed topics, the RE provision makes good use of the important contribution to other aspects of children's learning.

The key ones are:

#### **RE contributes to children's spiritual development by:-**

- Discussing and reflecting on questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, good and evil, life after death, beliefs about God and humanity and values such as justice, honesty and truth.
- Learning about and reflecting on important concepts and experiences such as love, trust, forgiveness, obedience and sacrifice.
- Valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.
- Considering how religions and beliefs regard the value and purpose of human beings, the importance of the environment and the significance of emotions such as love, anger, joy, jealousy, happiness and pain.

#### **RE contributes to children's moral development by:-**

- Enabling children to value themselves and others.
- Exploring the influence of family, friends and other sources on moral choices.
- Considering what is of ultimate value both to children and within religious traditions.
- Developing an understanding in key beliefs and teachings in religion and values and moral choices.
- Considering ethical issues especially justice which promotes racial and religious respect.
- Reflecting on the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

#### **RE contributes to children's social development by:-**

- Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns.
- Reflecting on the importance of friendship and positive relationships.

#### **RE contributes to children's cultural development by:-**

- Encountering British people of different faiths
- Encountering people, stories, artefacts and resources from differing cultures.
- Promoting respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination.
- Challenging stereotypes of religion and beliefs.

### **RE and the use of language**

RE can also make an important contribution to children's use of language by enabling them to:-

- Acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary.
- Use this vocabulary to help communicate and explain their thoughts / feelings with clarity.
- Listen and respond to the views and ideas of others.
- Be inspired to want to ask and respond to questions.
- Write in different styles / forms - such as poetry, diaries, reports and extended writing.