

St Gabriel's CE Primary School



Religious Education Policy

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St Gabriel's School Mission Statement

St Gabriel's Church of England School provides the opportunities for each pupil to receive an excellent broad and balanced education. The School aspires for each child to acquire high standards in English, Mathematics, Science and technological skills, giving a sound foundation for their future education, independence and economic and spiritual well-being.

The school is proud of its structured, disciplined, secure and creative environment where children are encouraged and equipped to flourish and experience the sense of enjoyment of learning.

As an inclusive Church of England School, St Gabriel's teaches the principles of Christianity, respect for other faiths and beliefs. The School works closely with parents to be a positive influence to ensure that each child grows into a responsible, healthy citizen who will make a contribution to the wider community.

Aims and objectives for Religious Education.

To teach children about Christianity and to provide children with a faith by which to live developing:

- An understanding of what it means to hold a religious view of life and developing the ability to think about questions of beliefs and values.
- A knowledge of Christianity: its stories, traditions, festivals, worship and teachings.
- An understanding of Christian life and worship which may, if the pupil chooses, form the basis of an adult faith.
- An awareness of life's spiritual dimension.
- A sense of Christian morality.
- A knowledge and respect for other major world faiths.

Through the above, we aim to help the children to:

- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences.

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the range of religions and value systems found in Britain.
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition.
- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today.
- Develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues.
- Have respect for others views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

Our approach to Religious Education at St Gabriel's School

Each teacher in the school has a particular responsibility for liaison in some area or areas. This means that they are expected to keep abreast of relevant reading matter, attend courses and represent the school in group meetings.

Accumulated knowledge and experience are then discussed at staff meetings and on INSET days, to the benefit and strengthening of the whole team. The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for Religious Education at St Gabriel's.

Our aim is that all children should be educated to reach their full potential in a truly Christian community, which is centred upon the life and teachings of Christ.

We seek to establish a calm and stable environment:

- Which is conducive to learning
- Where quality teaching can take place
- Which provides opportunities for the development and extension of each child's spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical capabilities.

We aim to create a happy and caring atmosphere

- In which each child feels secure
- Where each child is considered unique and valued for his/her contribution to school life

- Where problems and difficulties are talked through and prayed through and where success is celebrated

We value celebrating and praying together and drawing from and supporting our Parish.

We discuss our attitudes and behaviour and how these affect the wellbeing of other members of the school community.

We aim to teach the children and each other, by example, in the daily life of the school.

We gather together for worship and to celebrate Mass.

We currently use the LDDBS scheme of work.

We encourage home, school and parish links.

Teachers should be aware of the different religions and faith groups represented in their class. This is a key strength of the school and can be an invaluable resource for teaching. In all discussions about faith and religion we always speak respectfully, whilst recognising that there are differences in what different children (and staff) believe.

Our Christian values have been agreed through discussion with the whole school community, and are designed to include the whole school community, whilst also remaining distinctively Christian. This is shown in the way they are underpinned by Biblical texts, which are reinforced through Worship, displays and celebrations of children's behaviour. It is expected that teachers will make reference to these when teaching Religious Education as appropriate and also make reference to these in regards to our behaviour management policy. We study each value in depth half-termly through Collective Worship.

Friendship

Peace

Service

Endurance

Justice

Wisdom

Planning, Continuity and Progression

Planning for the Teaching and Learning in Religious Education is a process in which all teachers are involved at all levels:

The foundation for Religious Education Curriculum is established through a process of collaboration between staff and Governors. RE is timetabled at KS1 and KS2 for two hours of curriculum time and is discrete from Collective Worship.

The school uses the LDBS Scheme of Work.

Weekly plans are written by individual teachers and monitored by the Deputy Head.

These plans show the way in which the teacher will introduce the lesson and provide activities for the pupils. It also provides an opportunity for the teachers to evaluate the learning that has taken place.

In all lessons teachers should aim to cover both attainment targets. AT1 (learning about religion) and AT2 (learning from religion).

Classes 1 -6 use a yellow exercise book for Religious Education.

Large books are also used to capture comments from children during discussions. These books will include the 'Big Question' and are called 'Thoughts and Contributions to Discussions' TCD book.

As with all subject areas, teachers will have clear objectives for their lessons. The pupils need to be made aware of these objectives. The teachers need to have a secure command of their subject which means the lesson will contain suitable content. Activities will need to be well planned, so that activities are chosen to promote learning of that content.

The teaching methods should engage, motivate and challenge all pupils, enabling them to progress at a suitable pace and to be aware of their achievements and progress.

Skills and attitudes to foster

- Willingness to see and listen without wishing to judge

- Readiness to share the experience and ideas of others
- Guided imagination
- Expression of thought and feelings
- Curiosity and investigation skills
- Use of religious language
- Evaluation evidence
- Awareness of one's own prejudice
- Respect for oneself and others
- Promotion of positive attitudes towards understanding beliefs and values

Concepts to impart in R.E

- Faith/Belief
- Worship
- Prayer
- Meditation
- Meaning
- Ritual
- Ethics/Morality
- Commitment
- What it means to belong to a faith community

Spiritual awareness is to do with relationships with other people and with God. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live. There are many aspects of spiritual development.

- Belief: appreciation of, development of, understanding of
- Sense of awe, wonder and mystery
- Belief in existence of divine
- Search for meaning and purpose
- Self – knowledge: feelings, emotions, thoughts
- Relationships: recognising and valuing the worth of each individual
- Creativity: expressing innermost thought, imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight
- Feelings and emotions: using feelings as a source of growth

Without curiosity, without the inclination to question and without the exercise of imagination, children lack the motivation to learn, and their intellectual development would be impaired. Deprived of self-understanding and potentially, of the ability to understand others, children's development can be stunted. If children are not moved by feelings of awe and wonder at the beauty of the world in which we live, or the power of artists, musicians and writers to manipulate space, sound and language, children would live in an inner spiritual and cultural desert.

We would not promote a linear progression, but these steps may help children to develop spiritually.

- Aware of the numinous
- Recognising the existence of others as independent of oneself
- Becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- Questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- Understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- Developing personal views and insights
- Applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life

Special Educational Needs

Religious Education is a subject which is especially important for children with Special Educational Needs, as it directly addresses issues such as equal opportunities and self-esteem, and invites personal responses. In this subject, success should be genuinely independent from attainment in formal curriculum skills.

English as an Additional Language

Children for whom English is an additional language will have full access to the Religious Education Curriculum. Visual and hands-on activities as well as art, music and drama can be helpful to support EAL children with their spiritual development and understanding of faith. Therefore creativity is central to much of the work done in this subject.

Resources

The subject leader is responsible for developing and updating the resources for Religious Education. Staff are requested to make known

any resources they require in addition to what is already in school. The resources are held in the Resource room and in the basement of the main block.

Assessment

In Reception Class the Early Years Profile used as a means of recording significant achievement in relation to the EYFS Curriculum. Assessment is through the areas of UTW and PSED in the EYFS profile.

The school uses the Assessment template that has been designed by the LDBS to directly support the LDBS scheme of work. Children are assessed half-termly based on the topic that they have been learning and are given an overall assessment at the end of the school year. Teachers follow the school marking policy in Religious Education.

It is important to note that RE is unlike any other subject; what we are assessing is not just content, knowledge or skills, but the children's ability to apply what they have learnt to their own lives and their ongoing spiritual development. Assessment systems are a tool to underpin this, but examples of children's work, displays and conversations with pupils are just as valid. Teachers are encouraged to use post-it notes to capture pupils responses to RE, as these are often 'in the moment' and not at convenient assessment times!

Monitoring

The implementation of Religious Education is monitored in the following ways:

The Vicar, LDBS Advisor, Headteacher, Deputy Head observe classroom practice.

The quality of teaching is also monitored by learning walks by SLT and Governors.

The Assistant Headteacher evaluates a sample of children's books on a termly basis. Notes are made and feedback is given to the teachers.

Teachers follow the LDBS half termly plans and weekly planning is monitored by the Deputy Head.

Once a term books are monitored with another local school, standards in the books are compared with Literacy books.

Expectations for Religious Education Books

- The Learning Objective should be derived from planning and include an ABOUT and a FROM.
- At the start of a unit children should carry out a self-assessment.
KWL
What I know about the topic. What I want to know. What did I learn?
- At the beginning of each unit/topic of work Success Criteria should be used as appropriate for the age group and the unit/topic taught.
- Marking comments should always include a reference to the Learning Objective.
- Comments relating to English are allowed and encouraged but they are to be in addition to the RE feedback.
- Key words and vocabulary should be on display on the RE Board in each classroom. The display should also include a 'Big Question' to promote discussion. The big question is a pivotal part of the lesson and planning process. Keywords and vocabulary are to be picked up on in feedback and noted as spelling mistakes to be redone if necessary.
- There should be evidence of differentiated work in books.
- Quality and quantity of work should be consistent with other core subjects.
- Presentation in books should be consistent with other core subjects.
- There should be a weekly RE lesson. If a child is absent the LO should be written into their book and the word 'absent'.
- If the RE lesson is a whole class activity e.g. a play, or piece of art work, a photographic image should be recorded of the event, or a brief description of what took place.

As a Church of England School, we see Religious Education as a crucial element of promoting the community cohesion we value so highly, and it is our aim that all children in our care will participate in the RE lessons we provide. However, we do appreciate that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious Education, including trips, and we respect that right. We would always ask parents with a concern in this area to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

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