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Date.....March 2021

Review .....March 2022

## Woodford Valley C of E Primary Academy RE Policy

**This school is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, learning and love.**

*'And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.'*

*John 34-35*

We acknowledge our **Trust Deed** and believe that our Religious Education should have a high priority and status, not only in its own right, but also throughout the curriculum. The Foundation Governors, as part of their overview, ensure that the school upholds its Trust Deed and promotes strong links between the Church, the school and the local community, reflecting the distinctive Christian character of the school. Therefore, the Governors, in consultation with the Head Teacher, have decided to adopt the Local Agreed Syllabus and supplement it with material from the Diocese and elsewhere.

### **Intent**

RE enables children to investigate and reflect upon some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. In a church school, our RE should nourish those of the faith, encourage those of other faiths and challenge those who have no faith.

At Woodford Valley Primary Academy, children consider what it means to have a faith and develop their own spiritual knowledge. We aim to develop an understanding of and belief in the following areas:

- God and the beginning of the world
- the development of a sense of awe, wonder and mystery of the natural world and the richness of each season
- knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus, his death and his resurrection, starting with what each child knows and building on that knowledge
- God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the gifts that the Spirit brings to our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility
- the Bible: key themes and events in both Old and New Testaments
- the church as a place of worship: the rites and rituals incorporated within different services; the meaning of sacraments and symbols
- the celebration of major Christian festivals

- the Christian community, both locally and in a wider context
- significant events and people from the past and recent history that have helped to develop the Christian faith
- awareness of and respect for places of worship, rituals and rites of other faiths and tolerance of those who worship in a different way to us
- the nurturing of children's own spiritual development
- provoking and challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human: these develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions and religious traditions that examine questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- encouraging pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious faith and belief and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics, and to express their responses; this also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- enabling pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- educating pupils to respect others, including those with different beliefs and faiths, and support them to challenge prejudice
- representation and celebration of diversity and difference
- encouraging pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and explore how they can contribute to communities and to the wider society; this will inspire pupils to have empathy, generosity and compassion, and will develop cultural capital.

### **Legal Status**

As an academy, our curriculum for RE meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act, which stipulates that RE is compulsory for all children including those in the Reception class who are less than five years old.

### **The Right of Withdrawal from RE**

At Woodford Valley CE Primary Academy, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the Head Teacher and school governors.

### **Curriculum**

The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus (2011) as endorsed by Salisbury Diocese and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The RE syllabus reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and takes account of the teachings and practices of other major religions, including Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. We encourage learners to contribute readily to discussions, listen to the views of others and speak confidently about their own faith.



## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

## **Community cohesion**

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance:

- **The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- **The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
- **The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.
- **The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance, recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

## **Implementation**

As with all subjects, we use a variety of teaching styles in order to be fully inclusive. We hold the principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. We feel that RE has good links with Philosophy for Children and so teachers may make these links in the planning and teaching of RE. 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.

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 Christmas and Easter to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship, including our parish church and Salisbury Cathedral, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics and record their work in different ways. Including through ICT. They study Major World Religions and make comparisons on topics such as special teachings, places of worship, rites of passage and festivals, working individually or through group discussion.

Teachers use a range of teaching methods which include art, music, discussion, P4C, and drama, use of artefacts, pictures and stories which help engage all pupils. They tailor the learning of RE so all the needs of the children in their class are met. Work is planned that is often creative and allows all children to meet their full potential.

### **Planning**

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

Curriculum planning in RE has a three-tier approach – long-term, medium-term and short-term:

- the long-term plan shows which units of work from the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus (2011) are covered in each class over a one-year rolling programme, along with the key concepts from the Understanding Christianity Project
- medium-term plans outline the content, key questions, learning objectives and assessment opportunities for each unit of work, with suggestions for activities
- short-term plans list the specific learning objectives for a particular lesson and the activities which will enable each child to achieve these.

Time allocation follows DfES recommendations: 36 hours per year for Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year for Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage, RE is delivered through meeting the Early Learning Goals.

### **Inclusion**

We teach RE as a discrete subject to all children in the school. In the Foundation Stage, RE links into Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World, Communication, Language and Literacy and Creative Development.

### **Measuring Impact**



Teachers are keen for all children to make progress in RE. Assessments are carried out by making informal judgements during the course of lessons. We mark children's work on the basis of shared learning objectives and make comments as necessary. Teachers use a tracking to sheet to record the attainment of the pupils in their class within a concept. We record and report the progress of each child to parents and transfer information to the next class teacher.

### **Resources**

We have sufficient resources in our school to enable us to teach all the RE units of work. These are kept in a central store and include books, posters, DVDs and artefacts for each world faith and a set of bibles for both key stages. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and computer software to support children's individual research. Online resources and materials sourced from websites are also used.

### **Monitoring and review**

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in RE. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE by being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the church school self-evaluation process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Policy and Collective Worship policy.