



Religious Education Policy



Stour Federation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2009 the updated Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for Education was introduced into both schools in the Stour Federation. The syllabus provides guidance and exemplar units of work.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 'Religious Education (RE) actively promotes the values of truth, justice, respect for all and care of the environment. It places specific emphasis on pupils valuing themselves and others, the role of family and the community in religious belief and activity, the celebration of diversity in society through understanding similarities and differences, and human stewardship of the earth. Religious Education also recognises the changing nature of society, including changes in religious practice and expression and the influence of religion, in the local, national and global community.'

(Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2005)

3. AIMS

- 3.1 Learning and undertaking activities in Religious Education acknowledges the 'Every Child Matters' agenda which contributes to achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society

(Warwickshire Agreed RE Syllabus 2009)

4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request, this includes pupils in Reception classes.
- 4.2 Religious Education must be taught in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.
- 4.3 A locally Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that 'the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'
- 4.4 In schools where an Agreed Syllabus applies, Religious Education must be non-denominational. Teaching about denominational differences is permitted.
- 4.5 Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education if they so wish. They are not obliged to state their reasons. In such an

event the school must be responsible for the supervision of any children withdrawn by their parents or guardians, unless the children are lawfully receiving education from elsewhere.

- 4.6 Teachers have the right to withdraw from teaching Religious Education.
- 4.7 Religious Education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and global community. Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to have confidence in their own viewpoint whilst engaging in open and honest enquiry; developing respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice. Religious Education enables pupils to develop understanding of what it might mean to be committed to a religious tradition, or none.
- 4.8 The principal religious traditions to be taught are the Buddhist tradition, the Christian tradition, the Hindu tradition, the Jewish tradition, the Muslim tradition and the Sikh tradition as reflected in the Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education, 2004.

5. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN WARWICKSHIRE

- 5.1 Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions, and other world views that offer answers to these challenging questions. It offers opportunities for personal reflection, empathy and spiritual development. It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religious traditions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- 5.2 Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions, while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Foundation Stage

- 5.3 Schools are required to:
- To provide R.E. to all Reception pupils in the Foundation Year. There is no requirement to follow a programme of study for R.E. in Reception.
 - Teach RE within the context of all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, with particular reference to Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW).
 - Select explicit religious material from the Christian tradition and two others. This should not exceed two traditions in any one unit.

Key Stage 1

- 5.4 Schools are required to:
- Ensure a time allocation of 32 hours for the teaching of RE per year.
 - Ensure that the key processes; learning about religion (AT1) and Learning from religion (AT2) and their elements are addressed and linked.
 - Draw religious content from the Christian, Muslim and one other of the school's choice for more in depth study.
 - 'Encounter' the three remaining traditions on one occasion.
 - Report on pupils' attainment.

Key Stage 2

- 5.5 Schools are required to:
- Ensure a time allocation of 38 hours for the teaching of RE per year.
 - Ensure that the key processes; learning about religion (AT1) and learning from religion (AT2) and their elements are addressed and linked.
 - Draw religious content from the Christian, Hindu and Sikh traditions and one other of the school's choice.
 - Encounter the two remaining traditions on at least one occasion.
 - Use the level descriptors to make judgement on pupils' attainment.
 - Report on pupils' attainment.

6. OUR R.E. CURRICULUM IN THE STOUR FEDERATION

- 6.1 Please see the grids below for coverage at Shipston Primary School and Acorns Primary School at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Shipston	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2	
	Statutory	Our Choice	Statutory	Our Choice
In Depth	Christian Muslim	Sikhism	Christian Hindu Sikhism	Muslim
Encounter		Hindu Judaism Buddhism		Buddhism Judaism

Acorns	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2	
	Statutory	Our Choice	Statutory	Our Choice
In Depth	Christian Muslim	Judaism	Christian Hindu Sikhism	Muslim
Encounter		Hinduism Sikhism Buddhism		Buddhism Judaism

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 7.1 At Shipston on Stour Primary School and Acorns Primary School Religious Education is encountered in the skills based curriculum (where appropriate), by integration into topics. Where this is not possible it is covered on specified RE Days.
- 7.2 The religious education taught across the Stour Federation aims to encourage pupils to explore a number of key concepts and processes, in accordance with Warwickshire L.A.'s Agreed Syllabus.

8. KEY CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES

Concepts

- 8.1 These underpin the teaching of Religious Education. Pupils need to understand these concepts in order to deepen and broaden their knowledge, understanding and skills. The following concepts are addressed through the programmes of study for each key stage:
- Beliefs, teachings and sources
 - Practices and ways of life
 - Expressing meaning
 - Identity and belonging
 - Meaning, purpose and truth
 - Values and commitments

Processes

- 8.2 The skills and processes required in the teaching of Religious Education can be categorised under two attainment targets:
- 8.2.1 Learning about religion**
This includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues. Learning about religion covers pupils' knowledge and understanding of individual traditions and how they relate to one another as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion.
- 8.2.2 Learning from religion**
This is concerned with developing pupils' reflection and response to their own and others' experiences in the light of their learning about religious traditions. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religious traditions. Pupils learn to develop and communicate their own ideas, particularly in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments.
- 8.3 This will encourage the development of knowledge and understanding of belief and practice in religious traditions and other value systems and give pupils the opportunity to consider the concepts of devotion and meditation, celebration, lifestyle, authority and the expression of belief.

8.4 R.E. in the Stour Federation is taught in an objective, fair and balanced way. Teaching and learning styles will be varied; at times, the whole class may participate in a discussion; at other times children may work in small groups or individually. A 'first-hand' experience will be given where possible and will include guest speakers, visits to various places of worship and opportunities to explore religious artefacts. At other times, secondary sources will be used such as information books, pictures, the Internet etc.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Assessing children's learning in R.E. is an ongoing process that takes place as a result of carefully planned learning outcomes. In the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus learning outcomes in each unit show how children can demonstrate what they have learnt in each unit. The work the children do serves as a record. It is not necessary to make detailed records in relation to these outcomes. However, strengths and areas for development may be noted by the teacher. This will help the teacher to be aware of who needs more help or who is ready for extension work, who is making better or worse progress than expected and whether all pupils, including those with I.E.P.s, are meeting their learning target.
- 9.2 Effective marking of R.E. against specific objectives and a common standard provides both a record and a basis for feedback to the teacher and pupil (See Marking Policy). Class lists, too, can be used to show the extent to which pupils or groups have met, exceeded or failed to meet the learning objectives for assessment activities.
- 9.3 For the assessment of RE, schools are required:
- to use the level descriptions to make judgements on pupils' attainment
 - to report on pupils' attainment.
- 9.4 In R.E., teachers and teaching assistants routinely observe features of the pupils' learning but much of this is not recorded.
- 9.5 Reports are sent home termly, but it is the report at the end of the Summer term that will contain a comment/grade/effort mark on pupil's progress in R.E.

10. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION

- 10.1 At Shipston on Stour Primary School and Acorns Primary School the long-term plans for the delivery of R.E. are based on the 2009 Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus. Each school will use assigned units of work for each year group/phase where possible, integrating them into the skills based planning format.
- 10.2 The units of work from the Warwickshire Agreed syllabus for R.E. are used as each school's medium term planning unless the teaching of R.E. is integrated into topics and then the school's medium term planning grid is used.
- 10.3 Individual teachers use the Federation's recognised planning format to carry out short term planning. The teaching of R.E. is matched to the assessed needs of the children and clear learning objectives are set.

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 11.1 In the Stour Federation, we strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.
- 11.2 When delivering the R.E. curriculum the class teacher ensures that:
- The diversity of religious belief and unbelief in society and amongst pupils is recognised and that no assumptions of belief are made.
 - There is avoidance of stereotyping in the portrayal of religious traditions. The diversity within traditions is shown.
 - Similarities between individuals and traditions are emphasized, but without compromising the integrity and distinctiveness of each.
 - There is recognition that all traditions value tolerance and justice, and hope for the reconciliation of conflict.
 - There is acceptance that individuals do not always live up to the ideals of the traditions they follow.
 - The Christian tradition is followed as a World religion which is not limited to Britain or Europe. Its followers are recognised as coming from a wide variety of ethnic, cultural and national backgrounds.
 - The major religious traditions represented in Great Britain are World religions, not limited to a particular country or culture. They are studied through the example of varied believing individuals.
 - Diversity is reflected in the visitors from religious traditions who are invited into the school.
 - Visits are made to a variety of places of worship. Care is taken to avoid negativity of response in either pupils or parents.
 - The descriptions of religious traditions are based on members' own definitions and not those of outsiders.
 - Representation of religious traditions in books, pictures and other materials are considered critically, ensuring that they give positive images.
 - Words or behaviour, which shows disrespect or lack of sensitivity towards peoples, ideas or valued items are challenged.
 - Freedom of thought and expression are encouraged as integral to learning in religious education.

12. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- 12.1 In the Stour Federation, we believe that all children should be given opportunities to participate in and have their achievements and experiences in R.E. recognised and celebrated. Such participation requires a variety of teaching and learning styles, open ended assignments and differentiated learning experiences. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to provide appropriate access for any children with special educational needs.

13. REVIEW, EVALUATION AND MONITORING

- 13.1 A subject leader is responsible for R.E. in the Federation. It is the job of the subject leader to ensure that the policy is implemented and reviewed and that planning is in line with the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for R.E.
- 13.2 Work trawls and classroom observation will form part of the evaluation process in terms of improving pupils' learning and standards of achievement in R.E.
- 13.3 Evidence to show coverage and progression will be collected by the subject leader. This can act as a reference document for standards of R.E. within the school.

14. RESOURCES

- 14.1 Provision will be made in each school for appropriate resources to be purchased in order that the scheme of work for R.E. can be effectively delivered to our pupils (this will consist of pictorial aids, religious artefacts and video footage).

15. CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS

- 15.1 Across the school, R.E. in the Stour Federation is most often taught as a cross curricular subject, enabling children to draw upon and reinforce skills and knowledge acquired in other curriculum areas. Where this is not possible, one RE immersion day per term is timetabled.

16. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- 16.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of Federation and R.E. subject leader to be aware of the training needs of individual members of staff where R.E. is concerned and where priorities and finances permit, suitable courses will be offered. It may be appropriate, at times, to use staff meetings or INSET days to develop teaching and learning in R.E.

17. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

17/1 At Shipston on Stour Primary School, we feel that it is important for parents to work in partnership with staff in order to enhance the children's learning. Parents are encouraged to come into the school and help in the classroom whenever possible. Parents are also welcome to take part in visits made as part of the R.E. curriculum. Class teachers also approach parents to help on visits. Their role is clearly stated with support and planning made clear.