West Pennard C of E Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Oct 2022

Tony Wheat
Headteacher

Sylvia Smith
Chair of Governors

Review date: Oct 2025

School Vision

Since God so loved us, so we must love one another' (1 John 4 v11)

Valuing our Christian foundation, we care for each other and our world.
We develop resilience, confidence and independence through our innovative and diverse curriculum; inspiring and motivating everyone to thrive.
Our motto, 'To Try is to Triumph' and growing Christian Values, are central to all that we do.

Introduction

This policy statement has been adopted by the governing body, in consultation with the Headteacher. It is consistent with the overall aims of the school as expressed in the Prospectus, reflects the Statement of Entitlement (Church of England 2016) and with the school's Christian Foundation as expressed in the Trust Deed.

At West Pennard Church of England School Religious Education is provided for all children, except for those withdrawn at the request of their parents, in accordance with the Education Act of 1996 (updated 2002).
It is taught through the Somerset Agreed Syllabus, 'Awareness, Mystery and Value', with an adjustment in the balance of learning opportunities toward Christianity, in order to fulfil our Trust Deed. We believe that Religious Education plays a central role in the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils. Our teaching reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the other principle religions represented in our country. It is also underpinned by the school's vision statement (see above).

Aims and objectives

At West Pennard we will

- Adopt an enquiry-based approach, beginning with the children's own knowledge and experience before moving into learning about and from religion.

- Provoke challenging questions that will develop pupil's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions in Great Britain, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.

- Encourage children to explore their own beliefs (religious and non-religious) in the light of what they learn, as they examine how faith impacts individuals and society.

- Teach a respect for others, including those with different faiths or none, challenging prejudice and encourage empathy, generosity and compassion.

- Encourage inclusive, informed and positive attitudes enabling pupils to live as responsible citizens in a diverse society.

- ❖ Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within our Christian community.

Time allocation

At Key Stage 1 Religious Education is taught for 36 hours per year.
At Key Stage 2 Religious Education is taught for 45 hours per year, in accordance with the 2016 Statement of Entitlement and MV guidance.

Teaching and Learning
Planning

Religious Education is planned across the school in termly blocks, using units from 'Awareness, Mystery and Value', with time allocated for Christmas and Easter celebrations. Units are planned to ensure a balance throughout each year group, and from one year group to the next, and to ensure progression.
A long term plan is available from the RE co-ordinator.
Medium term planning is shown on teacher's own planning documents.

Learning

As in all curriculum areas, RE is taught creatively, and with a balance of individual, group and whole class work. Although Religious Education is mainly taught discreetly, it at times forms a part of work in other curriculum areas. Additional Religious Education will sometimes be taught by our local clergy, and where appropriate, St Nicholas Church building is used for RE lessons. Visits to other places of worship, e.g. the Cathedral and Synagogue are encouraged.
The use of 'showcase' books to gather and celebrate RE in each year group, support teachers in delivering creative and dynamic RE.
Visitors from faith communities, charities and organisations are welcomed and form part of the children's Religious Education experience. Their role is always to educate and not evangelise.
The RE coordinator and other staff attend courses provided by the Diocese or County to continually enhance the children's learning opportunities. In addition, training in teaching of RE forms part of the ongoing staff meeting and INSET programs.

Skills and Attitudes

The following skills, as listed in 'Awareness, Mystery and Value', are central to Religious Education and arise from the wealth of learning experiences provided in RE: investigation, interpretation, reflection, empathy, evaluation, analysis, synthesis, application, expression and self-understanding. Whilst attitudes such as respect, care and compassion are promoted in all areas of school life, the attitudes of curiosity, fairness and respect are fundamental to the study of religions and their impact upon people's lives.

Resources

All teachers use 'Understanding Christianity' as a resource to enrich their teaching of Christianity. The RE resources, including artefact boxes to support the teaching of the major faiths, are located in the cupboard in the Library. Other books and artefacts are borrowed as necessary from the Diocese and from Resources for Learning.
The RE corodinaotor is a member of NATRE, increasing the availability of high quality up-to-date resources which are used to inspire.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented

We aim to deliver Religious Education that provides all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work. Teachers predominantly use open ended questioning and tasks in RE. However, as in all curriculum areas differentiated tasks aere used in RE where appropriate, taking into account the guidance in 'Awareness, Mystery and Value'.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment and Reporting

We acknowledge the difficulty of assessing development in an area of an individual's spirituality and depth of understanding. Development in these areas is rarely linear. The RE coordinator monitors the teaching of RE throughout the school, gathering samples of work for each unit to ensure coverage and progression. Teaching staff complete assessments that are designed to be built upon as units of study are revisited in later years. In addition, the teaching of Christmas and Easter are assessed using an open ended question addressed to the whole school. This enables there to be an effective evaluation of the development and depth of understanding across the school. Lessons are observed in order to maintain a high quality of teaching and learning. There is a dedicated section for RE on the annual reports to parents.

Equal Opportunities

Whatever their religious or cultural background, children have a right to have their views and traditions respected. Religious Education provides opportunities to recognise and value all children's beliefs and to support their identity and self-esteem. RE provides valuable opportunities to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their actions and lifestyle.

DRR October 2021