

# HINTON ST GEORGE CHURCH of ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

*'Let Your Light Shine'*



## Religious Education Policy

Reviewed: December 2021

Frequency of Review: Every two years

Next Review Date: December 2023

Signed:- \_\_\_\_\_  
on behalf of Governing Body

## **Hinton St George CE Primary School**

This Policy should be taken and used as part of Hinton St George Church of England School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, Instrument of Government aims and values as a Church of England School.

This Policy statement has been formally adopted by the governing body, in consultation with the headteacher, and will be reviewed at the date given on the cover page.

# HINTON ST GEORGE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Religious Education Policy

### School Vision

'Let your Light Shine' (Matthew 5:16)

We are a family school at the heart of the community, providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian values, belief and practice. We aim to ensure that children flourish and leave the school fully equipped to go out and shine as lights in the world!

### Ethos Statement

The Christian foundation of the school ensures that the spiritual development of the children and Christian values have a particular emphasis within the whole life of the school. In accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level, we aim to develop within our children not only an awareness of self and sensitivity to others, but also the acquisition of a set of moral values and the confidence to make moral judgements and develop habits of self-discipline and acceptable behaviour. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

### Spirituality

Our spirituality statement encourages everyone to be reflective about their own beliefs on life and interests. The respect for other's faiths, feelings and values are of utmost importance. Spirituality differs from person to person and often changes within people during the own lifetime, therefore, putting a definition of 'spirituality' into words is difficult, as it is an experience that will be different to everyone. Spirituality does not necessarily mean having a religion or a faith, as a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith. Perhaps the most important aspect we feel, is creating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about ourselves, others, and the world around us.

### **In school we have defined spirituality as:**

'It is not something that you can see, but something that you feel in yourself and share with others; it is the enjoyment of the journey and not just the destination; it is the awareness of something bigger.'

### **THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (R.E)**

Hinton St George Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Religious Education occupies a special place in our school.

R.E is fundamentally concerned with an exploration of the important aspects of life and what it's like to be human. It provides opportunities for pupils to ask questions seek answers and develop ideas in a quest to discover more about their own identity and that of others. R.E can provide a context for the exploration of moral and ethical opinions and dilemmas by learning about lifestyles and behaviour in real, historical and fictional situations. It can help our pupils to understand the power and meaning of belief and religion for individuals and communities in the United Kingdom and across the world.

Within their learning in R.E, pupils develop specific attitudes that are open, reflective, and critical and a skill base which allows them to be curious, play with ideas, empathise, listen, imagine, question, make links and reason.

For us at Hinton St George Primary School, it is important that all our enquiries within RE relate to clearly defined concepts in order to develop purposeful and relevant learning. We constantly ask ourselves the questions; 'Why are we learning/teaching this? Where is this learning taking me?'

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

In R.E at our school we aim to enable pupils to:

- learn about religion by:
  - developing a knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and teachings
  - developing a knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles
  - explaining meanings within religious language, story and symbolism.
- learn from religion by:
  - reflecting on aspects of human nature, identity, personality and experience especially in the light of one's own beliefs and experiences
  - identifying and responding to questions about the nature, meaning and purpose of life
  - giving informed and considered responses to religious and moral issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' capacity to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religion.

R.E is carefully planned to ensure balance between these two areas of the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM PLANNING**

R.E at our school follows the Somerset locally agreed syllabus (Awareness, Mystery and Value) and the Bath and Wells Understanding Christianity. This ensures that across the year the children will receive two thirds Christianity teaching as well as learning about other religions from across the world.

Planning for R.E occurs in three phases: long-term, medium-term and short-term. 'Awareness, Mystery and Value' and Understanding Christianity gives a detailed outline of what we teach.

Long-term planning in R.E provides an overview of when the syllabus units of study are to be covered throughout the school. It also determines the general theme for each unit of study and the focus religion(s). At Hinton St George this planning is detailed in the school long term plan which takes into account our mixed-age classes.

Our medium-term R.E plans give broad details of the main teaching objectives for each term. They ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term and are used and applied in line with our general principles of learning and teaching. This approach links learning in R.E to the class themes but some aspects are taught discretely as appropriate.

Teachers make their own short-term plans for each lesson in R.E that identify objectives, activities and classroom management.

Throughout religious education, the development of skills and attitudes is planned for as well as progression in knowledge and understanding. Pupils engage in a variety of activities that are structured to allow opportunity for reflection, exploration of beliefs and values, questioning and enquiry, investigation and personal response.

## **THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Unlike other curriculum subjects, religious education is statutory for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Our long-term planning for the subject acknowledges this fact and includes our reception class in the

coverage of units of study from 'Awareness, Mystery and Value' and Understanding Christianity. These units of study are planned to integrate with the EYFS curriculum. R.E makes a significant contribution to children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their personal and social and spiritual development. R.E in the EYFS provides opportunities for children to investigate their feelings and relationships and to explore and wonder at the world around them. There are opportunities for them to think about how the choices they make and the things they do affect themselves and others. Stories, pictures, videos and artefacts help to provide insights into the beliefs, practices and lifestyles of different people.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

We base our teaching and learning style in R.E on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about and from religious traditions.

The experiences of pupils at Hinton St George are enriched through:

- Educational visits
- Visiting specialists such as religious leaders and worshippers
- Adults from within the local community such as the local clergy

They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.

R.E contributes to the teaching in other curriculum areas:

- **English**  
Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**  
Through our religious education lessons we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of a wider multicultural society.
- **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**  
Through religious education in our school we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.
- **R.E and Computing**  
Computing skills can enhance R.E. The children may select and analyse information, using the Internet and other online content. They may use technology to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Digital cameras are used to record visits to a place of worship and other work within R.E.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers are familiar with relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender, sexual orientation and disability. Wherever possible, teaching activities are open ended and provide a continuum of provision to meet pupils' diverse needs. The school will ensure that the children with SEND have full access to the R.E curriculum with any necessary adjustments made. Classes are mixed ability and the use of flexible teaching groups enables teachers and pupils to group themselves according to a range of criteria.

Through this approach we ensure that children:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Are taught in groups that allow them all to experience success
- Experience learning activities that provide appropriate challenge
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disability or medical need
- Are helped to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment
- Have access to a wide range of resources, including electronic materials to support their learning
- Are offered a range of extra-curricular activities to further enhance their learning journey.

## **ASSESSMENT**

At the beginning of each Awareness Mystery and Values or Understanding Christianity unit, initial assessment questions are used. The aim of this is to ascertain the level of children's understanding of the Unit to be taught before teaching begins. The same questions are then asked at the end of teaching the unit to ascertain the progress of understanding. This is achieved through children's answers and comments given to the questions asked. Teachers will also carry out 'Assessment for Learning' as part of their observations and marking in order to be able to adjust their planning to meet the RE learning needs of the children within their class. At the end of each unit from either Awareness Mystery and Values or Understanding Christianity, assessment tasks which form part of the unit are carried out. Class teachers then collate data to give to the Headteacher at the end of each term for analysis in the same way as English and Maths.

Children's work or comments/observations are recorded in their R.E books or in floor books. These are used by the class teachers to demonstrate progress and understanding and support any assessment tasks completed.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure the adequate resources are available for the successful implantation of the schemes of work for R.E in the school.

We have a good range of resources to support the teaching of R.E across the school. This includes collections of artefacts for many of the major world religions, collections of teacher and pupils' books on these religions, posters and videos. We are also able to borrow further materials from the Local Authority and Diocese Education Resources collections.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Headteacher or appointed member of staff has the responsibility to keep up to date with subject development and share expertise with colleagues as well as arrange any necessary training for staff and Governors.

## **OBSERVED OUTCOMES**

Through the implementation of this policy, we will observe that children:

- display knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its impact on our local community, and on our society today
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the other principal world religious traditions represented in Great Britain today
- demonstrate a sense of respect for religious traditions, beliefs and practice
- show confidence in talking about spirituality

- think about their own beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the Christian values of the school community
- are unafraid to ask and consider responses to 'big' questions

### **THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM R.E**

At Hinton St George CE Primary School, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Hinton St George CE Primary School.

### **CURRICULUM MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW**

The Headteacher will work in conjunction with the clergy team and foundation Governors to ensure quality of provision in R.E.