



St. Augustine's CofE (VA) Junior School R.E. Policy



RE in VA Church of England Schools is the particular responsibility of the governing body: governors should agree the RE Syllabus and policy, and monitor provision in their school. The Diocese of Ely does not have a Diocesan RE Syllabus but recommends to all VA Schools the use of the County Agreed Syllabus in conjunction with the national documents.

Recognising its historic foundation, St. Augustine's School will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils and staff.

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Religious Education aims to enable pupils to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. (Attainment target 1: Learning about religion).
- develop the ability to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions. (Attainment target 2: Learning from religion).

Our guidelines for R.E provision in the school are in line with the revised Peterborough and Cambridgeshire scheme of R.E., although Christian based, we also study the other Five main faiths: Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism, in order to teach difference and diversity in the world. The new curriculum is enquiry based and gives children the opportunity to debate and question their own understanding of how to relate to religion.

Subject Leader's Role

The role is to provide RE leadership across the school. It will involve coordinating, supporting, monitoring and where appropriate improving the quality of teaching and learning of R.E in the school. It is to ensure that all staff are following the syllabus correctly and that the children are learning from well structured and knowledgeably accurate teaching. The subject leader will collect and collate materials and resources, planning and evidence of children's work, photographs of visits and integrated work carried out through excellence and enjoyment.

Professional Development

- The staff of St. Augustine's School is its greatest resource and teachers' professional development is ongoing.
- Wherever possible the subject leader attends termly subject network meetings.
- Where appropriate the co-ordinator attends other suitable courses. Information is then shared at team/staff meetings.
- The subject leader makes every effort to assist colleagues, however if additional expertise is needed they can contact Reverend William Gammon or the Ely Diocesan Religious Education advisor for further support.
- The subject leader is responsible for updating the school's Religious Education policy and Scheme of Work.

Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

The school encourages the use of a great range of teaching approaches in Religious Education, as suggested in the Agreed Syllabus.

- Pupils learn about religions from a wide range of sources of information including the local environment, artefacts, pictures, photographs and videos, books and buildings,
- People talking about their experience of religions are a valuable source of information and at school we welcome contributions from well informed followers of any of the major world faiths who are able to communicate well with our children.

- Teaching includes the use of stories and poems, music, dance, drama, art and ICT as avenues for exploring human and religious experience. *(It should, however, be borne in mind that it may not be appropriate for pupils of some religious backgrounds to be asked to express their learning about religions through music, dance and drama).*
- Pupils will have opportunities to express their learning and their own beliefs and ideas in a variety of ways including written work, discussion, creative and imaginative work.
- Specific themed weeks and days, eg Easter/Christmas activity week, where the children split into mixed age groups to complete a rotation of activities.
- Religious Education should occupy, on average, one hour each week.

For thought:

It is important when dealing with issues of religious belief, where there is often no right answer, for teachers to take particular care about the language they use. Pupils can tend to accept what is said by a teacher as being unquestionably correct. What one says as a teacher carries greater implicit authority than what one says as an individual. It is important that teachers give careful consideration to the way in which they communicate their own personal beliefs to pupils, always making clear that there is no expectation placed upon pupils to adopt the same beliefs as the teacher. They should ensure that pupils understand that it is up to them to establish belief systems for themselves. Keeping integrity with sensitivity is important.

Resources

The Religious Education resources of St. Augustine's School are continuing being developed. These include:

- Peterborough Agreed Syllabus
- Books for the use of both teachers and pupils.
- Video/DVD and CD/Audio tapes with appropriate handbooks where possible.
- Artefact Boxes containing collections of objects relating to each of the major World Religions. Additional contributions from parents, governors and staff are always welcome.
- CD Roms and Internet Websites. There is a booklet of websites suitable for classroom use in each classroom. The scheme of work also contains suggestions of appropriate sites for some topics. Teacher information is available through the RE gateway websites www.stir-up.org.uk and www.ely.anglican.org/education

There are outside agencies able to assist in the provision of resources for the teaching of Religious Education at St. Augustine's School. The Peterborough Multicultural Centre (PCME) has a wide variety of resources available on loan as does the Diocesan Education office.

Religious Education and the Wider Curriculum

There are clear links between Religious Education and other areas of the curriculum and our core values are reflected across all areas. Work in Religious Education should give strong support to work in literacy, citizenship, PSHE and ICT. It also makes a major contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although it is not exclusively the responsibility of Religious Education to encourage this development. At St. Augustine's School we follow guidance in the Agreed Syllabus in Religious Education and the other areas concerned. *(Time Allocation: The Dearing Review of the curriculum recommended that Religious Education should be taught for 36 hours a year at Key Stage 1 and 45 hours a year at Key Stage 2. The Agreed Syllabus is based on an expectation that this will be the time allocated).*

Assessment, recording and reporting

Religious Education at St Augustine's School is assessed, in line with the school's assessment policy, against the eight level scale in the Agreed Syllabus. These outline the standards of knowledge, understanding and skills pupils are expected to reach by the ends of each key stage. The eight level scale also provides useful assessment indicators. Pupils progress is assessed informally on the basis of work in class, but from time to time formal tasks will be set to assess progress against the eight level scale in both AT1 and AT2; although we firmly believe vital elements of our Christian teaching can only be gleaned through observing our ethos and talking to our children. Children's levels will be recorded and samples of work in both AT1 and AT2 retained to record work covered and ensure coverage of different objectives across the school. Children's progress will be recorded and tracked using the schools assessment grids.

Children's progress is reported to parents at teacher/parent consultation evening throughout the year and in the annual end of year report, (unless they are withdrawn from lessons by their carers).

Monitoring and Reviewing

Within the school's rolling programme of lesson monitoring the subject leader will develop a fuller appreciation of the planning and teaching of Religious Education within St. Augustine's. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure consistency throughout the development of Religious Education skills as well as ensuring that the pupils' level of knowledge about religion is increasing. The subject leader will then be able to review standards and progress in Religious Education on a regular basis.

School and Community Links

St. Augustine's has developed links with community members who can contribute to the success of the RE programme including Reverend William Gammon and representatives of other Christian churches. Several lay members of various denominations are also available to talk to pupils. Fieldwork has become an important part of the Religious Education curriculum and pupils visit the local church as part of their studies. Some pupils also have the opportunity to visit other Christian places of worship.

The school is developing our knowledge of religious communities in the area and are currently able to make use of ICT to make 'virtual tours' of unfamiliar places of worship to supplement our visits of different places of worship. First hand experience provided through meeting people, making visits, and handling artefacts appropriately will be incorporated wherever possible within the scheme. We consider that appropriate visits to places of worship can be a valuable addition to our pupils' knowledge of religious beliefs, customs and ceremonies.

Religious Education and Collective Worship

Religious Education is a main core purpose of the school. Its aims and objectives are different from those that apply to Collective Worship. There may be some links in content between the two (eg when a religious story is told) but Collective Worship is not part of the teaching day and cannot be used to deliver the Religious Education curriculum. At times Religious Education and Collective Worship support each other (eg at times of festivals such as Christmas/Easter) but they cannot be substituted for each other. There is a separate Collective Worship policy.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC)

The quality of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils is demonstrated when pupils are able to:

1. acknowledge and understand the spiritual dimension of life
2. communicate a sense of awe and wonder
3. acknowledge and understand the importance of moral values in society
4. show an understanding of intention, attitudes/behaviour in relation to right and wrong
5. demonstrate an understanding of their role and responsibility as citizens
6. communicate in an effective and appropriate manner with one another
7. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of other cultures
8. demonstrate respect for all people regardless of their background.

Inclusion

Religious Education at St Augustine's provides equal opportunities for all pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and to consider their responses to those faiths regardless of their gender, race or ability. Pupils with Special Educational Needs will complete appropriate work set by their teacher, supported by other adults when appropriate/available. These pupils are able to make considered responses to their work and their contributions in class are valued.

Teachers aim to make their work in Religious Education relevant, interesting and of educational value to all pupils, whatever their religious or philosophical background. Lessons may, at times, provide opportunities for pupils and their parents to contribute from a particular faith's standpoint. Religious Education resources are chosen to reflect the global nature of many religious communities (eg Christians around the world, Hindus in Britain as well as in India). In some religious contexts there are specific roles for men, women and children. Pupils will learn about such differences within and between religions.

Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the right to request that their children are withdrawn from all or any part of Religious Education. This right is rarely exercised and for this reason it is expected that, if such a request is being considered, the parents will make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the Headteacher, before making a final decision which should be notified to the school in writing.

Any child who is withdrawn from Religious Education lessons should still be supervised and provision should be made, wherever possible, for him/her to work separately from the class. Where appropriate, parents of pupils withdrawn from Religious Education are encouraged to provide suitable material relating to their own beliefs for their child to study during that time. Where this does not happen the child(ren) will be expected to continue with an aspect of their learning provided by the classteacher. A statement about the parental right of withdrawal is included in the St. Augustine's School brochure to fulfil the legal requirement. *There will be occasions when spontaneous enquiries made by pupils on religious matters arise in other areas of the curriculum. Circumstances will vary, but responses to such enquiries are unlikely to constitute Religious Education within the meaning of the legislation and a parent would not be able to insist on a child being withdrawn every time issues relating to religion and spiritual values were raised.*

Teachers, including the Headteacher, similarly have the right to withdraw from teaching Religious Education. Any colleague who feels that they are unable to carry out their professional responsibilities with regard to Religious Education, because of their own religious beliefs, should discuss this with the Headteacher. In the case of the Headteacher exercising the right of withdrawal, it is the responsibility of the Governing Body to ensure continuity of provision of Religious Education in School.

Date ratified by Governing Body: 18/03/15

Signed:  Chair of Governors.

Signed:  Headteacher.

Date of review: Spring term 2017 or earlier if considered necessary.



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