

Marwood RE Policy

Updated: November 2014 by Barbara
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Introduction

The importance of religious education in the curriculum

RE is a statutory subject of the school curriculum of maintained schools. Religious education provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

At Marwood we comply with the requirements for RE in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. This aims to develop children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity (which is taught throughout each key stage of learning) and the other principal religions. In Devon, Plymouth and Torbay these are Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. We have a multi faith approach to RE.

Consideration is also given to other non-religious perspectives.

RE offers children opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It considers the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

In Devon, Plymouth and Torbay RE has two central attainment targets.

- AT1 Learning about Religion
- AT2 Learning from Religion

In Learning about Religion children learn about different beliefs and teachings, practices and ways of life and how religions express themselves in different ways.

In Learning from Religion children reflect on and consider important questions of identity and belonging (e.g. who and what matters to me?) questions of meaning (e.g. what do people believe about how life began?) and values and commitments (e.g. who and what do I value?)

Key Skills in RE

At Marwood we consider that RE is more than just developing children's knowledge and understanding. It seeks to develop children's skills in investigation/enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis and evaluation. These are important skills for children to develop.

These include:

- Investigation/enquiry (finding out what people believe, how their beliefs affect the way they live and the different ways people express their beliefs).

- Communication (sharing their ideas and those within religions and beliefs in a lively, informed way including different styles of writing, oral contributions and the use of ICT).
- Interpretation (recognising and talking about religious symbols, stories and sacred texts).
- Analysis and evaluation (developing their own views and ideas, recognising the views of others).

Key Attitudes in RE

As with skills, RE has a number of key attitudes it seeks to promote. These include self-esteem (so that every child feels valued and significant), respect (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others), open-mindedness (being willing to learn and gain new understanding) and appreciation and wonder (developing children's imagination and curiosity).

Religious Education at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

At Marwood Religious Education is considered to be a vital part of learning because it allows people to think about the big questions in life and ways of answering them using a framework of different beliefs. It has close links with personal, social and emotional education and citizenship because all of these things address what makes us tick and how we live together.

RE encourages people not only to learn about religions but also to learn from religions, reflecting on their own thoughts, beliefs and opinions. It is a subject which gives people time to consider and develop their own ideas about critical issues and understand things of importance in the lives of others. It gives space for people to develop spiritually, morally and culturally.

Pupils should leave Key Stage 2 with a developing understanding of Christianity and some of the other principal religions of Britain. They should also have explored the ideas of those who hold other world views. They should have an improved understanding of the beliefs, teachings and practice of religions in Britain.

RE at Marwood school is a vibrant subject enriched by art and artefacts, music and drama, philosophy, history and geography. When taught well throughout the curriculum, it forms the basis of the whole-school ethos of care, respect, knowledge and valuing of others, and is therefore vital for good spiritual, cultural, moral and social development.

Approaches to teaching and learning in RE

RE is an exciting curriculum subject so we employ a variety of teaching methods. These include:-

- Visiting local places of worship and receiving visitors from faith communities
- Using art, music, dance and drama

- Children experiencing times of quiet reflection to develop their own thoughts and ideas
- Using story, pictures and photographs
- Using artefacts to help children develop their understanding of religious beliefs and forms of expression
- Discussing religious and philosophical questions giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- The use of ICT (particularly DVDs and the internet) to increase children's awareness of religions and beliefs.

Organisation of RE

RE is taught through a range of religions and beliefs and key themes. These are outlined below

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Foundation Stage	Myself Celebrations	Stories Special People	Belonging Beliefs
Year 1	Myself Celebrations	Stories Special People	Belonging Beliefs
Year 2	Myself Celebrations	Stories Leaders and Teachers	Belonging Beliefs
Year 3	Right and wrong Christmas	Creation Caring for the environment	Birth Ceremonies Christianity
Year 4	War and suffering Inspirational people	Judaism Sikhism	Becoming an adult Neighbours
Year 5	Life's big questions Marriage Buddhism	Islam Believing and belonging	Justice Poverty and wealth
Year 6	Moral Maze What happens when we die?	Race and diversity Belief	Hinduism Believing and belonging

Planning

We use LCP Resource folders for years 1-6 as the basis for our planning in RE. The subject matter and resources are also used appropriately to address the relevant objectives of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Assessment for learning in RE

'Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by their learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.'

Assessment Reform Group 2002

Assessing progress in RE should allow people to be actively involved in their learning as well as helping you to adjust your teaching. Seeing what they have learnt and now know enables people to motivate themselves and raise their self-esteem.

Assessment for Learning is useful because it has the capacity to improve pupils' learning. Effective feedback allows pupils to identify what the next steps in their learning are and work out how to achieve them. It also allows them to consider the skills they have already gained. It is important for children to be aware of learning objectives and be involved in developing success criteria as this helps them understand the skills they need to develop. Using success criteria, pupils can often find it easier to identify and achieve the next steps in their learning.

Informally, assessment is taking place all the time, but it is possible to make a more formal assessment through detailed marking, discussion, focused observations or annotated photographs at some point in a unit of work. This often occurs towards the end of a unit but can be equally useful at the beginning or in the middle of a unit. It could be more formal still, assessing both learning about religion and learning from religion.

Assessment for Learning can be enhanced by:

- sharing learning objectives
- using pupil-friendly or can do statements*
- clear and appropriate task setting
- using a variety of activity types that appeal to all learners.

Schools are currently having to review assessment, recording and reporting procedures (2014-2015) and for this reason, *Just achieving*, *Achieving* and *Achieving well* (or similar terminology to fit with the New Curriculum) are appropriate summaries to describe how a child is progressing within a year group.

Good assessment activities are those:

- where people know what is expected of them
- that are integrated into planning
- with open-ended questions
- with open-ended activities
- with clear tasks that allow people to achieve across an appropriate number of levels
- with self-evaluation opportunities
- that allow self-assessment.

Rights of withdrawal

We firmly believe that RE is an important subject in children's learning. We fully recognise the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of RE on the grounds of conscience. We do encourage parents to contact the Headteacher if they have any concerns about RE provision and practice at the school.

Learning resources

The resources used are primarily associated with the guidelines of the LCP resource files for years 1-6, currently employed at our school for the teaching of RE.

We encourage the use of a wide range of resources to enrich children's learning. These include children's and teacher's books, library books (including School's Library Service topic boxes), DVDs, music, artefacts and CD ROMs. RE boxes are available in Class 3 containing a range of artefacts, books, DVDs and other learning resources for all teachers/teaching assistants to use. We try to ensure RE is a lively, stimulating subject which engages all children.

The contribution of RE to the wider curriculum

While RE has its own distinctive subject matter it does make an important contribution to other aspects of children's learning. The key ones are outlined below.

RE contributes to children's spiritual development by:-

- Discussing and reflecting on questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, good and evil, life after death, beliefs about God and humanity and values such as justice, honesty and truth.
- Learning about and reflecting on important concepts and experiences such as love, trust, forgiveness, obedience and sacrifice.
- Valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.
- Considering how religions and beliefs regard the value and purpose of human beings, the importance of the environment and the significance of emotions such as love, anger, joy, jealousy, happiness and pain.

RE contributes to children's moral development by:-

- Enabling children to value themselves and others.
- Exploring the influence of family, friends and other sources on moral choices.
- Considering what is of ultimate value both to children and within religious traditions.
- Developing an understanding in key beliefs and teachings in religion and values and moral choices.
- Considering ethical issues especially justice which promotes racial and religious respect.
- Reflecting on the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

RE contributes to children's social development by:-

- Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns.
- Reflecting on the importance of friendship and positive relationships.

RE contributes to children's cultural development by:-

- Encountering people, stories, artefacts and resources from differing cultures.
- Promoting respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination.
- Challenging stereotypes of religion and beliefs.

RE and the use of language

RE can also make an important contribution to children's use of language by enabling them to:-

- Acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary
- Communicate their ideas with clarity.
- Listen and respond to the views and ideas of others.
- Be inspired by the power and beauty of language.
- Write in different styles such as poetry, diaries and extended writing.
- Highlight their own ideas and those of others.

Conclusion

In essence we are aiming to help our children develop respect and sensitivity for all people and to understand more about the importance of different faiths in today's world.

Our future aims for RE are to continue to increase the opportunities of children encountering different religions through visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact of religion on the local and global community.