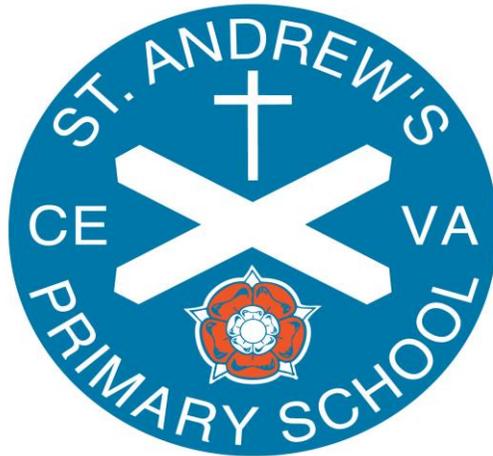


St. Andrew's CEVA Primary School,
Northampton



"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it"
Proverbs 22:6

Religious Education Policy
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St. Andrew's CEVA Primary School

Religious Education Policy

At St Andrew's CEVA Primary School we provide Christian worship and Christian teaching. Spiritual and moral development are central to the life of our school and this will be reinforced in the school's RE Policy where appropriate.

1.National and Legal Framework

The 1988 Education Reform Act and Circular 1/94 set the legal framework for Religious Education at St. Andrew's C.E.V.A Primary School. We follow the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which contains a programme of study for Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and supplementary guidance.

2.The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Northamptonshire

The Agreed Syllabus contains the aims, Programmes of Study, Attainment Targets and Level Descriptions which are the legal requirements for R.E. in Northamptonshire. Our medium term plans are based on the Programmes of Study and the new scheme Understanding Christianity and take account of the two attainment targets and the Level Descriptions therefore fulfilling the statutory requirement.

3. Whole School Aims and Objectives

R.E. has an important contribution to make in supporting the Christian ethos of St. Andrew's by providing a caring environment where children feel secure and able to express their views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others.

Pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the school and of the wider community. Links are made with a variety of faith groups to help develop this aim.

3.1 Aims and Purposes of R.E.

The aims of R.E. in the Agreed Syllabus for Northamptonshire are for children/young people to:

- Learn about religious traditions, beliefs and practices, and to understand that they are responses to fundamental questions of human existence;
- Be given the opportunity to reflect on and make decisions about a personal response to questions of meaning and value.

R.E. provides opportunities for pupils to:

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of and their ability to respond to, Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain;
- Explore issues within and between faiths to help them understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stories), and understand the influence of these individuals, societies, communities and cultures;

- Consider questions of meaning and purpose in life;
- Learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgments on religious and moral issues;
- Develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;
- Develop enquiry and response skills through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy;
- Reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses.

4. Right to withdrawal

R.E. does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children, or to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

Teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching R.E. if they do not wish to do so but must give notice of their intention in writing to the Governing Body.

In keeping with the law as stated in Circular 1/94, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. The school will ensure that suitable supervision is provided. However, we hope that all parents and teachers would feel comfortable with the Religious Education being taught at our school and we encourage the participation of all.

5. Other School Policies

5.1 Inclusion

We recognise the fact that children at our school have a wide variety of different abilities and backgrounds and we try to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the task to the ability and experience of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways.

For example:

- Differentiated tasks
- Differentiated resources
- Teaching Assistants to support children where necessary
- Using open ended questioning techniques
- Using a range of teaching and learning styles

5.2 Equal Opportunities

In keeping with the aims of the school policy for equal opportunities, the teaching of R.E. endeavours to ensure that all pupils receive equal access to educational opportunities regardless of their religious beliefs, gender, race, ability, social background or physical capacity. Care is taken in R.E. to avoid the reinforcement of negative or stereotypical images and aims to celebrate and appreciate cultural diversity through a variety of materials, tasks and experiences, in order to reflect the cultural diversities of our society.

5.3 Special Educational Needs

R.E. contributes towards the policy by ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties are able to:

- Develop their self –confidence and awareness;

- Understand the world they live in as individuals and as members of groups;
- Bring their own experiences and understanding of life into the classroom;
- Develop positive attitudes towards others, respecting their beliefs and experience;
- Reflect on and consider their own values and those of others;
- Deal with issues that form the basis for personal choices and behaviour.

Access to R.E for pupils with learning difficulties can be improved by:

- Using sensory materials and resources through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell, for example, music, tactile artefacts, plants in a sensory garden;
- Giving pupils first hand experiences, for example visitors to schools, visits to religious buildings, involvement in festivals;
- Organizing a range of activities to give personal experiences, for example, dance, drama, visits to a range of environments;
- Helping pupils to understand and appreciate their world and its diversity;
- Using a range of resources, for example, interactive/sensory stimuli, information and communication technology (ICT), to increase pupils' knowledge of religions and the elements in them;
- Using specialist aids and equipment;
- Providing support from adults or other pupils when necessary, while allowing pupils the space, time and freedom to develop skills for them selves;
- Adapting tasks or environments and providing alternative activities where necessary, for example, tactile story books, puppets, role-play, music making, presenting work as a painting instead of writing.
- Being aware of the pace at which pupils work and of the physical and mental effort required.
- Balancing consistency and challenge, according to individual needs.

5.4 Gifted and Talented

Gifted in Religious Education is not the same as being religiously gifted.

Gifted and talented pupils in R.E. are identified by teachers as those pupils who:

- Show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond the obvious and ordinary;
- Make sense of and drawing meaning from religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- Are sensitive to, or aware of, the mystery of life and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- Understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in Religious Education and into other religious and cultural contexts.

It is important that the full range and scope of Religious Education activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. For example, pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education should be appropriately challenged by:

- Using a variety of challenging questioning strategies to explore religious phenomena;
- Setting extension tasks to encourage greater depth of understanding;
- Using authentic materials from a faith;

- Focusing on interpretation of symbol, metaphor, text and story and the ways in which these stimulate reflection on meaning and discernment;
- Challenging and developing use of spoken and written religious language with both sacred texts and general literature;
- Teaching pupils correct terminology and language needed to handle sophisticated religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical questions ideas and materials;
- Using questions and tasks from later Key Stages and stimulate responses through argument, analysis and prediction;
- Encouraging pupils to make connections between their work in R.E. and other subjects.

5.5 ICT

ICT contributes towards the objectives of R.E. by the use of:

- Interactive whiteboards
- Internet
- C.D.s/Video/DVD and other multi media
- Digital photography
- Power-point presentations

5.6 PSHE and Citizenship

Religious Education looks at moral codes and values that underpin people's behaviour. It promotes values and attitudes that develop respect and sensitivity for others and it also discusses a range of views, opinions and beliefs which help to prepare children to become valuable citizens in a diverse, pluralistic society. Links between PSHE and our Jigsaw Scheme of work should be made with RE whenever possible.

5.7 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education plays a key role in pupils' spiritual and moral development, and makes a distinctive contribution to their social and cultural development as well as knowing and understanding British Values. This is outlined in detail in the Agreed Syllabus.

In our school we try to foster spiritual development in R.E. by encouraging the following aspects:

5.8 Beliefs:

- The development of personal attitudes and beliefs (including religious beliefs);
- An appreciation that people have individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives;
- Developing understanding of how beliefs contribute to personal identity.

A sense of awe, wonder and mystery:

- Being inspired by the natural world, mystery, human achievement etc.

Experiencing feelings of transcendence:

- Feelings which may give rise to belief in the existence of a divine being, or the belief that one's inner resources provide the ability to rise above everyday experiences.

Search for meaning and purpose:

- Asking “why me?” at times of hardship and suffering;
- Reflecting on the origins and purpose of life;
- Responding to challenging experiences of life such as beauty, joy, suffering and death.

5.9 Literacy

R.E. embeds skills of literacy in a variety of ways. For example, speaking and listening skills, drama conventions, reading different texts and writing in different genres.

5.10 Collective Worship

Religious Education is different in nature to both Worship and Assembly. The aims and objectives of R.E. are different and distinct from those of worship. R.E. is about developing skills, knowledge and understanding in order to make decisions about the important questions. Worship is about being given the opportunity to participate in an experience which can lead to a heightened sense of spiritual awareness. Assembly can emphasise the more ritual and ceremonial aspects of worship and can be used as a springboard from which to launch a project or inspire a larger number of children at one time.

Religious Education cannot be taught wholly through assemblies. The assembly context does not give the opportunity for the exercise of many skills; for example research, which is a part of Religious Education for which a classroom context is essential.

Assembly, Worship and Religious Education are distinctive activities which help the school deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.

6. Organisation of R.E.

Religious Education is a timetabled subject throughout the school except in the Foundation Stage where it is integrated within the areas of learning. Each class has one lesson of at least 60 minutes per week. Classes are taught in mixed ability groups in their own classroom.

7. R.E. Subject Leadership

The role of the subject leader incorporates aspects such as:

- Lead the development of RE in the school
- Provide guidance to individual members of staff
- Keep up to date with local, diocesan and national developments in RE and disseminate relevant information.
- Review and monitor the success and progress of the planned units of work
- Setting and helping to moderate assessments
- Attending coordinator training
- Organisation, ordering and maintaining of resources

8. Teaching and Learning Styles

A variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted by teachers in Religious Education to allow access by all pupils. The variety enables pupils to encounter their preferred learning style as well as to develop a broad repertoire. The teaching and learning styles used, promote a range of skills such as thinking skills, reasoning, enquiry and research. Examples of activities which use different teaching and learning styles are:

- Dramatic conventions
- Group work
- Individual reflection
- Use of music and drama
- Artefact handling
- Multisensory
- ICT

9. Resources

A wide range of resources are in place for each topic area within Religious Education. These are all individually boxed according to religion and a list of contents for each resource box is displayed on the front of each box and a master copy is available in the 'Resource Room' and on the computer system in the 'shared staff' area.

The resource boxes for R.E. can be found in the 'Resource Room'. In addition, there is also a book shelf where a selection of posters, books, videos and DVD's can be found to compliment topics within R.E.

10. Staff Development and Training

All staff are responsible for teaching R.E. The training needs of the staff are monitored, reviewed and addressed through staff surveys, the performance management process and as part of the School Improvement Plan. Subject leaders are expected to attend subject related courses when appropriate and to disseminate relevant information to colleagues. The R.E. co-ordinator may participate in a staff meeting, lead meetings and have informal chats about individual teacher needs.

11. Assessment, Recording and Reporting.

In line with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for R.E. we use Level Descriptions to help make judgments about pupil progress and attainment. Pupils' work in R.E. is assessed by making informal judgments both by staff and the pupils themselves during lessons and at the end of a unit of work. These judgments are used by the teacher to decide 'where next' within a lesson and within the unit, as well as the next time that particular skill, attitude or knowledge is encountered. In addition a limited number of more formal assessments take place during the year where the pupils will be given a level of attainment.

All teachers to have the symphony sheets for their Key Stage for RE to assess the children each term. An annual report for R.E. informs parents of their child's progress and achievement.