

WE 'GROW AND SHINE IN
GOD'S GLORY'



MOUNT CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Religious Education Policy

Updated: Autumn Term 2024

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Signed:
(Headteacher)

The Mount Church of England Primary Academy Religious Education Policy

Introduction

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At The Mount Church of England Primary Academy it has a special place in our life and work as we offer the distinctive curriculum of a Voluntary Controlled school. Through it we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity alongside the major world religions, and we address some of the fundamental questions in life. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, so that our children can reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religion as well as about religions, gaining and developing the skills for studying religions and world views. Guided by our cherished Christian values of Caring, Hope, Understanding, Respect, Co-operation, and Happiness, we cultivate an environment that celebrates diversity, fosters a deep sense of belonging, and inspires a lifelong love of learning. Together, we are committed to unlocking the extraordinary potential within every pupil, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and character to make a positive impact on the world. Together we, *'Grow and shine in God's glory'*.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." Matthew 13:31-32

Aims

The aims of Religious Education at The Mount C of E Primary are to enable all children:

- To allow children to flourish and *'live life in all its fullness'* (John 10:10)
- To encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and influences the lives of millions of people today.
- To learn about the other major religions and world views
- To develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- To develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- To develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- To be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- To develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- To have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools 2021
- DfE (2012) Religious Education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Education Reform Act 1988

This policy has due regard to the most recent version of the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Marking and feedback Policy

Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning in RE on the key principle that good teaching allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Spirituality is taught through a range of planned 'Wow, ow and now' opportunities to enable children to pause, observe and reflect on awe and wonder moments around them. 'Wow' boards are in every classroom to enable conversations about incidental 'wow' moments in life.

Teaching enables children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. For example, we use their experiences of religious festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter, but also teach about other important festivals such as Diwali and Passover to develop their religious thinking. Regular visits to our Parish church during the major Christian festivals and planned visits from our parish secure good links. Our vicar and curate also join us in school, on a fortnightly basis, to lead collective worship.

Children carry out research into religious topics. 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 explore religious and moral issues by working individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all children learn in different ways and may have widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- planning activities that incorporate a range of tasks that cater for the varying learning styles within our class; providing for Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic preferences;
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of

responses;

- setting differentiated tasks and/or grouping the children according to ability;
- providing resources of differentiated complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

Roles and responsibilities

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the quality of RE lessons across school.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression from year group to year group.
- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all RE-related resources.
- Liaising with teachers across EYFS, KS1 and KS2
- Communicating developments in the subject to all staff.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Advising on the contribution of RE to other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for the development of RE in subsequent years.

The classroom teacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the national curriculum expectations and knowledge and skills expected in their year group.
- Liaising with the subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader or a member of the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach the subject.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for:

- Liaising with the subject leader to implement and develop RE throughout the whole school.
- Organising and providing training for staff regarding the RE curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Advising staff how best to support pupils' needs.
- Advising staff on the use of teaching assistants in order to meet pupils' needs

Curriculum planning in Religious Education

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We also use two main external resources including but not limited to, Understanding Christianity and NATRE. These programmes of study are used to enable all teachers to support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity; as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. We aim to see pupils leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice as they explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson.

Foundation Stage:

In the Foundation Stage, Religious Education is an integral part of the work covered during the year. We relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework which underpin the curriculum planning for children in the Foundation Stage.

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. 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 our multicultural society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development - Through teaching 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.

Display

Each classroom has an RE display in the classroom area which displays work related to the current concept being taught. There is also a prayer and worship space/reflection area that children have access to. This includes visual prompts to our school values.

Assessment, Marking and Feedback

Assessment should be carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

At Mount, staff ensure that pupils have a sufficient understanding of, previously taught knowledge and skills in order to enable them to make progress within lessons. Marking and feedback in RE includes the following:

- o Peer marking and feedback using purple pens for editing.
- o Marking of books in green pen should be carried out before the next session so that this can inform planning/teaching/focus groups.
- o Children should respond to feedback as soon as possible after marking has been completed.
- o Verbal feedback should be recorded with VF when given

With specific reference to formative assessment in RE, the following will apply:

- Ongoing achievement of learning objectives should be reported against, to the subject leader, and through the agreed format at the end of each term/unit of work.
- Pre and post unit assessments are carried out for each unit taught and inform teachers' planning and differentiation.

Equal Opportunities

All children are entitled to an equal opportunity to learn regardless of race, culture, language, religion, colour, language, gender or ability. We aim to deliver a broad and balanced RE curriculum appropriate to children's needs, ages, and levels of understanding. Mutual respect and tolerance for all religions is actively promoted through the study of Religious Education.

As a Dyslexia-friendly school, we use a range of strategies to support pupils' reading and writing in foundation subjects. Staff have received specific training about special educational needs and use individual 'Structured Conversation Documents' which highlight strategies that are beneficial to particular children alongside our curriculum adaptation document (please see image below).

Cognition and Learning		Communication and interaction	
Barriers	Provision	Barriers	Provision
Ability to demonstrate knowledge through written work	Allow alternatives to writing or enable writing using sentence starters, scaffolds or speech to text software.	Learning of subject specific vocabulary.	- Topic specific vocabulary supported by artefacts, pictures etc. - Practical learning assists with development of new vocabulary. - Word mats, knowledge organisers, pre teaching of vocabulary.
Retention of previous learning in RE as often a large gap between revisiting topics.	- Recap of prior learning prior to the topic. - Knowledge organisers outlining key prior knowledge. - Visual prompts	Participation is subjects, which are predominantly discussion based.	- Scaffolded sentence starters 'I think that...' - Additional thinking time after posing a question before returning. - Emotions fans or cards. - Supporting by reasoning aloud, 'I think that'...
Understanding of more abstract concepts/themes.	Discussion prompts, regular revision of key themes, opportunities for overlearning and repetition.		
Physical and/or Sensory		Social, emotional and Mental Health	
Barriers	Provision	Barriers	Provision
Ability to read or to see text sources.	- Sources of information / text could be converted to electronic format so they can be read aloud using immersive reader or shown to the child in a larger print. - Consider how different sources could be used to - Convey the information - physical resources such as prayer mats, bibles etc. may be of greater interest to the child than photos.	Anxiety about visits to new places with different expectations.	- Prepare the children in advance using social stories, pictures, and video's to enable them to know what to expect. - Prepare the children with any routines/cultural expectations they may be asked to follow.
Sensory overload/unusual sensory stimuli.	- Be aware of any sensory stimuli such as the use of incense or religious music, which will be unfamiliar to the children. - Ensure they are sitting away from any sensory stimuli or are provided with ear defenders etc. if part of normal practice. - Advance preparation of any sensory stimuli.	Difficulty discussing topics/concepts that they find uncomfortable.	- Social stories around accepting different beliefs and views. - Clear expectations that no one will be made to share if they are not comfortable. - Emotions cards so that the child is able to communicate if they are uncomfortable with the discussion.
		Social appropriateness of discussing topics.	- Sentence starters to aid productive discussion/avoid offence. - Bank of appropriate words to discuss topics if this is a concern.

