



Our Vision: A caring Christian community where children thrive; enthusiasm and excellence lead to high aspirations and outstanding achievements.

# Religious Education Policy

## 2017

### **Aims and objectives**

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Croft Church of England Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on own experiences and develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills, and make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other people's views, and celebrate the diversity in society.

### **The legal position of religious education**

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of

their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship and community cohesion. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

### **Teaching and learning style**

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE 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.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

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 investigate religious and moral issues either individually, in pairs or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, 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:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty;
- grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using adults to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

### **Curriculum planning in religious education**

We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

The RE area of learning leader writes the long term planning and reviews plans each year. The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. We base our planning and units on a combination of 'Understanding Christianity' and the Leicestershire agreed syllabus.

## **The Foundation Stage**

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in EYFS. In EYFS, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Pre-school actively participate in learning about the Christian faith and what it means to belong to a church school.

## **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 and through our embedded whole school Christian values. 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 and the lives of others.

## **RE and inclusion**

At our school we teach religious education to all children, as we value all God's children whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious education forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom for example, visits to places of worship, we carry out a risk assessments prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **Assessment for learning**

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. This information is

used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher and the RE leader through out the year. Children are tracked on Target Tracker and through the use of the learning outcomes in Understanding Christianity and the locally agreed syllabus.

### **Resources**

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books.

### **Monitoring and review**

The RE leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school.

To be reviewed: October 2019

Signed: *Nik Watts* (Chair of Governors)