



Barwell C of E Academy Religious Education 2017-2018

We want happy, confident, successful children.

We want all of our children to be **happy, confident** and **successful**. As a **Church of England School**, we believe that part of helping children and adults on their **journey** to becoming the **best version of themselves** includes developing their knowledge and understanding of their own and others' faiths, beliefs and **spirituality**. Religious Education empowers children to investigate and **reflect** on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people and we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of major world faiths and views, whilst addressing fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions and views represented locally and in the UK. We help children learn about and from religions and viewpoints, encouraging reflection and expression of views whilst providing opportunities for active, systematic enquiry and investigation. This will support children (and adults) to deepen their **spiritual, moral, social** and **cultural** development by providing them with the chance to learn, **reflect**, question and share responses amongst their peers about what faith and beliefs may mean for themselves and others, building their **character** and developing **Christian** and **British Values** within a safe and secure environment for living in a diverse society.

Our ambitious target for Collective Worship this academic year is: 78% of children will be achieving at or above Age Related Expectations by the end of the academic year.

Aims and Objectives:

The principal aim of Religious Education is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own. Children will acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions and world views represented locally and within the United Kingdom. This will encourage their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development so that they develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own, preparing children for living in a society of diverse religions and beliefs.

By following these aims of our Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE we aim to ensure that all pupils:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The Legal Position:

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 this should only be done after the parents have met with the head teacher and 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 and cultural teaching and development. It also promotes education for citizenship.

Our school Religious Education curriculum is based on Leicestershire's Locally Agreed Syllabus, Leicestershire's Diocesan and national Christianity guidelines and it meets the requirements set out by these. The ERA states that the Religious Education syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in the United Kingdom are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions and world views.

Curriculum Planning:

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Local Authority's Locally Agreed Syllabus - *Leicestershire Religious Literacy for All* and using *Understanding Christianity* (a national initiative introduced in 2016-2017) as per Diocesan recommendation as the basis of our RE planning. Being a Church School, 2/3 of teaching focus covers Christianity, as stipulated in the Statement of Entitlement and agreed with the LA and by the vast majority of schools within Leicestershire.

We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, building on prior learning, and we ensure that the planned progression built into units offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Curriculum planning in Religious Education is conducted in three phases - long-term, medium-term and short-term. Within our Barwell Curriculum, the long-term plan maps out the Religious Education topics studied by each Key Stage 2 year group. The RE subject leader plans this programme of study, making cross-curricular links with other subjects to provide a greater context for the learning.

Teaching staff then plan the teaching and learning across the year, placing specific units where appropriate within their Learning Journeys. Teaching staff can use the guidance from the Locally Agreed Syllabus- *Leicestershire Religious Literacy for All* planning and *Understanding Christianity*, tailoring teaching and learning activities to the needs of their own classes.

The class teacher organises the plans for each session. Short term planning may be in note form at the teacher's discretion, but detailing key questions, outcomes to be taught and assessed, differentiation and resources that are to be used.

Teaching and Learning:

We base our teaching and learning in Religious Education on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions, systematically enquire and investigate, in order to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to others and them. Through collaborative exploration, children are encouraged to question and share responses respectfully and sensitively prior to determining the impact of learning on themselves. This enables children to extend their own sense of values and character and promotes their spiritual growth and development via given opportunities to think about and reflect upon their own views and beliefs in relation to the themes and topics studied.

Our teaching and learning styles in Religious Education enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. Experiences of and at religious festivals can be drawn upon 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 and secular views on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children consider and discuss religious and moral issues and may use interactive and computing tools, and work individually or in groups, presenting their findings in different ways.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we deliver suitable learning opportunities to provide the varying challenge required. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to start at the same point or to complete all tasks);
 - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to level of challenge required;
 - enable mixed attainment groups to interact to encourage discussion, questioning and sharing of responses and understanding, whilst always being prepared to intervene and scaffold where required;
- using learning support assistants to support children's needs.

Contribution of Religious Education to Other Subjects:

Our school uses a Learning Journey, topic based approach for the teaching of subjects and so Religious Education is taught through chosen topics of year group teachers choosing. In this way, it forms cross-curricular links with all subjects taught within this approach but fundamentally, with English, Computing and PSHE whilst also being key to the development of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. At times, texts that we use in Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and promotes speaking and listening opportunities. We also encourage the children to write and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Computing

We use computing where appropriate in Religious Education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and software packages and may use this to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation. All classrooms have an interactive whiteboard and we have numerous resources to aid teaching using computing. Computing is firmly embedded in the teaching of Religious Education and other subjects across the school.

The Arts

Incorporating art, music and drama with the teaching of Religious Education enables the children to develop their spiritually by forming creative connections with what they see, hear, compose and engage with whilst providing an avenue to express their views.

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 pluralistic society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development

Teaching Religious Education in our school provides opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help children to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions whilst enhancing 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, develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Resources:

Whilst we have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach our chosen Religious Education units of work, we regularly review, refresh, update and extend our range of resources. We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store or electronically within a shared area for all staff to access. There is a set of bibles or bible story books for every class and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in Religious Education. The school library has a good supply of religious topic books and specific computer software supports the children's learning and research. Teachers draw upon the internet and our interactive whiteboards for resources to support teaching. Fundamentally, we believe that chances to see religious buildings, rituals, rites, customs and artefacts in context at places of worship or through visitors to school sharing experiences with the children, provides the most awe and wonder, and makes learning real which we believe will encourage more exploration, questioning, reflection and deepen understanding. For this reason, educational visits to places of worship and inviting guest speakers into school of different faiths are invaluable resources.

Teaching Religious Education to children with Special Educational Needs:

Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the Locally Agreed Syllabus allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expectations.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have an additional educational need which in some cases may match the criteria necessary to be classified as a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we may 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. Intervention within SEND levels will lead to the creation of a Personalised Provision Plan for children assessed as meeting the criteria for SEND.

Children who are identified as being of general or specific higher ability are identified on our assessment tracking system. All staff have access to assessment tracking documentation and plan their lessons with the needs of all children in mind, including those of higher ability.

Where appropriate, higher ability children are given challenges to ensure that our teaching is matched to their needs.

Assessment:

We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informed judgements as we observe them during lessons. Feedback is made using the school's agreed Feedback Policy and we make a summative judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to age related assessment expectations within the Locally Agreed Syllabus – *Religious Literacy for All* and *Understanding Christianity* outcomes. We record the attainment of each pupil on a year group tracker and this information is passed to the Assessment Leader and the RE Leader and shared with the SLT at the end of each half term. The information is collated and any lack of progress is investigated and measures taken to accelerate progress in subsequent terms. Tracked assessment outcomes are passed on to the next year group at the end of each academic year.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Every six weeks, the Religious Education subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of learning in Religious Education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. She evaluates Religious Education through direct observation of teaching where appropriate, work and planning scrutiny, monitoring of assessment outcomes and through pupil interviews throughout each academic year. Results are shared with the SLT, Governors and teaching staff.