



**GREAT FINBOROUGH
CHURCH PRIMARY**

Religious Education Policy

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Great Finborough Church Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

Religious education is an entitlement for all pupils and its place in the school curriculum is an acknowledgement of the important role which beliefs and values play in people's lives, regardless of particular religious commitments. It is also an acknowledgement that religious beliefs and practices play a key part in the lives of many people worldwide today as they have done throughout history. As a curriculum area religious education offers pupils an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

Our school is a caring Christian community which values every individual member. Our aim is for each child to feel secure and happy at school whilst developing a love of learning. Each child is different and we encourage him or her to take pride in individual achievements and together to strive for excellence. In order to achieve these aims, we believe it is essential for our school to work closely with parents, carers and the community to enable children to become life-long learners and responsible members of society. Our school is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School and we value its Christian ethos.

These are that:

- the basic curriculum must include religious education provision for all pupils on the school roll
- the content of religious education must reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain
- religious education must be provided according to the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus—2012

Aims

Within the framework of the Education Acts and Agreed Syllabus, our aims in religious education are:

- To enable each child to explore the human experiences people share and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from those experiences
- To enable pupils to know about and understand the beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Suffolk and the UK. Among these, Christianity has a particular place, and is taught in each year of the primary phase
- To promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region and the country
- To affirm each child in his/her own family tradition, religious or secular
- To provide opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Attitudes and values

The development of positive attitudes and values is part of school life as a whole but RE can make a particular contribution. It deals specifically with issues of belief and idea which are valuable or precious to people. It is therefore important that:

- Pupils feel they are working in an atmosphere where it is safe to share thoughts and ideas
- Beliefs and customs are not subject to ridicule or criticism simply because they are 'different'
- Staff draw on their pupils' experience of life to help them understand specific religious stances

The following words should form a basis for teaching attitudes and values in RE at Great Finborough Church Primary School:

"Pupils should be encouraged to develop those attitudes and values which will promote self-respect, respect for others, a willingness to accommodate other faiths and cultures, respect for the natural world and sensitivity towards the mystery which underlies human experience."

The requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus

At Great Finborough Church Primary School, our Religious Education is based on the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. The syllabus sets out a programme of study for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Two. The programme of study develops continuity and progression in Religious Education. They detail requirements for 'learning about religions' and 'learning from religions' for each key stage.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects. Children share religious stories and are introduced to some specialist words. They use their senses to explore religious practices. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences, using their imagination and curiosity to develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live.

Our long term planning ensures children cover the religions and areas of study as described in the 'Breadth of Study' section. Our medium term planning ensures children are provided the experiences and opportunities they are entitled to according to the agreed syllabus.

At Great Finborough we use the Emmanuel Project Scheme of Work that meets the requirements for the Suffolk RE Agreed Syllabus 2012, which states what should be taught, suitable for Community and Voluntary Controlled C of E primaries.

Resources

Good resources are essential to fulfil the teaching requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and for Great Finborough Church Primary School this has been and continues to be an improving area. Resources are stored in the resource cupboard in boxes labelled to their corresponding faiths.

Teaching and learning styles

Ofsted reports suggest the range of teaching and learning strategies in religious education as often too narrow, with overuse of stories and a limited range of drawing and written tasks.

At Great Finborough Church Primary School we are using increasingly varied and active ways of working which include art and drama, debating, visits, posters, photos, videos and interactive displays. Pupils are given the opportunity to apply and develop their ICT skills.

Religious education and its relationship to collective worship

In law, religious education and collective worship are distinct. Religious education is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during collective worship. However, during collective worship at Great

Finborough Church Primary School stories from the Bible, Christian and other traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned, and we enjoy assemblies led by members of religious communities. These complement and bring depth to our religious education programme. A separate policy is available for collective worship.

Assessment, recording and reporting

It is important to note that pupils' work in religious education can be assessed; we are not assessing degrees of spirituality but their knowledge, skills and understanding. It is important that their progress is acknowledged, just as in any other subject. We are also required by law to report on pupils' progress and attainment in religious education to parents. The Emmanuel Project provides descriptions of levels of attainment to use as a basis for assessment and reporting. With this new scheme of work, a bank of examples of work is being created, designed to help judge attainment and progress.

At the end of the year we aim to make specific, individual, accurate comments on a child's progress, based on the monitoring of work in relation to the religious education attainment targets. We transfer this information to the receiving school when pupils leave.

Use of ICT

Pupils are being given increasing opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability where appropriate in religious education. Use of CD-ROMS and the internet for virtual visits to places of worship, digital cameras and interactive whiteboards have all helped pupils develop their learning in and enjoyment of religious education.

Professional development for staff

The school acknowledges that no teacher can be expert in six religions. The school acknowledges that professional development of this kind is not easy to organise or finance but is committed to ensuring all staff are well equipped to teach religious education.

Visits and visitors

Visits and visitors can provide powerful learning experiences for both teachers and pupils. Visits to places of worship as part of professional development for staff have proved useful.

We have developed close links with the Christian church in the vicinity of the school. Clergy and other members of the community meet with the children. Activities and discussions are focused on specific areas of the curriculum as we aim to revisit this church with all classes.

We try to enable Key Stage 2 pupils to visit a place of worship from another religious tradition but it is not always possible.

Matching work to pupils' needs

Whole school policy with regard to special needs and differentiation applies to religious education and the SENDCO will give advice on adapting work. However, teachers should be aware that some children have additional experience of a religion through family practice and may show greater ability and understanding than they do generally.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The subject leaders' role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice and, in particular, monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Contribution to spiritual, moral, social, cultural development

These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute. At Great Finborough Church Primary School religious education should play a part in:

- developing an awareness of a 'spiritual' dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way (spiritual)
- Providing a forum for pupils to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by (moral)
- Encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and a sense of 'community' (social)
- Evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, art, music, drama and literature and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers (cultural)

Provision for withdrawal from religious education

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from religious education in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25(4) and 30, which was re-enacted in 1988. Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given and the school must enable parents to exercise this legal entitlement. The school brochure advises parents of the current provision for religious education. They are asked to contact the Headteacher if they wish to withdraw their child. It is hoped that, in discussing the requirements, an understanding can be reached and arrangements for alternative religious education or supervision made.