



Sutton Benger Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Together as one family we...
Strive "for faith, love and peace" (2 Timothy 2:22)
Believe in the values of God
Succeed with grace

1 Aims and objectives

- 1.1 As a school we support and live out the Church of England's vision for education as well as our schools' individual Christian vision. We believe that every child should flourish and 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). We believe that RE will help educate for 'dignity' and 'respect' through developing our understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. We believe in the power of community as lived out through the establishment and promotion of a positive school family. We believe that all children have the right to wisdom through a high quality and rich RE curriculum.

At the heart of our schools' vision is 'faith, love and peace'. We strive in all that we do to ensure that we promote positive relationships in our school family. Through our RE curriculum we prepare our children for their future responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain where we hope they will continue to live out our vision. Through our understanding and tolerance of the beliefs of others we believe that we will live out our vision, always striving for 'faith, love and peace'.

Christian Values are an important focus in the life of our school. Through the study of Christianity and other world religions children can see contexts for these values and learn about how others have chosen to follow them.

Through the recent introduction of the programme, 'Understanding Christianity', we aspire to engage our learners in an academic and theologically based curriculum, living out the Church of England's vision for education in terms of deep 'knowledge'.

- 1.2 Religious Education (RE) in Sutton Benger School is regarded as a central and important part of pupils' learning. The RE in the school explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the great religions of the world.
- 1.3 RE is taught using the Discovery RE materials and the 'Understanding Christianity' programme. The approach is an enquiry-based one, which aims to:
- enable children's critical thinking skills to be developed,
 - increase children's motivation to learn
 - enhance knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise.
- 1.3 The aims of RE are:
- To develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity, other principal world religions, other religious traditions and world views.

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- To develop pupils' understanding of different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stances), through exploring issues within and between faiths.
- To develop pupils' understanding of the influence of faith and belief on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- To encourage pupils to consider challenging questions of meaning and purpose of life; beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- To encourage pupils to understand the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures, and develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- To encourage pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and responses to questions of meaning.
- To encourage pupils to learn about religious and ethical teaching enabling them to make reasoned and informed responses to religious, moral and social issues.
- To encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural global society.
- To encourage pupils to develop their own creativity and spirituality, and an appreciation of the creativity and spirituality of others.
- To develop pupils' skills of enquiry and response, using religious vocabulary, questioning and empathy.
- To develop pupils' skills of reflection, expression, interpretation, application, analysis and evaluation of issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics.
- To develop pupils' skills of communicating personal responses to these issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics.

1.4 At the root of RE's significant contribution to pupil development, are the specific skills and attitudes that are at the heart of the process of teaching and learning in this subject. In the process of exploring religion and belief, RE seeks to develop the ability of pupils to:

- Investigate
- Express
- Interpret
- Reflect
- Empathise
- Apply
- Discern
- Analyse
- Synthesise
- Evaluate

1.5 RE encourages the development of:

- Self-awareness
- Respect for all
- Open-mindedness
- Appreciation and wonder
- Critical awareness

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 In our aided school the governors determine the RE policy and syllabus in consultation with the Head teacher, teaching staff and Diocesan advisor.

2.2 The Discovery RE materials are used for RE:

'The enquiry approach adds challenge, requiring children to retain knowledge and apply it to the big question using their critical thinking skills. Each of the Christianity enquiries addresses an aspect of Christian theology, sometimes explicitly using the theological language and sometimes laying foundations of experience and understanding which will later facilitate learning the explicit theology. The Discovery RE approach takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief. The materials do not try to persuade but

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rather to inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place.' - Jan Lever B.Ed (Hons), MA, Adv. Dip. Couns.

The 'Understanding Christianity' programme, recently introduced to supplement the agreed syllabus provides an additional focus that is theologically grounded.

2.3 We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our RE lessons which ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest and understand how beliefs can be expressed in a variety of ways including art, dance, music, ritual celebration and in different cultural settings.

2.4 Within Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage, persona dolls may be used to introduce and develop children's understanding of different religions. Whenever possible, visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE and visits to places of worship, including our local church, arranged.

2.5 We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different RE abilities in all classes, including those with special educational needs and those who are able, gifted and talented learners. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty;
- grouping children by ability and setting different tasks to each ability group, or mixing ability in order for children to support each other's learning;
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3 RE planning

3.1 We use the Discovery RE materials & Understanding Christianity for the teaching of RE. Each year, there is a strong focus on Christianity, covering the Christian Concepts of God, Creation, Incarnation and Salvation.

In addition, the following religions are explored in each year group:

Foundation Stage - Stories, special people and places related to the Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Islamic religions.

Year 1 - Judaism

Year 2 - Islam

Year 3 - Hinduism

Year 4 - Buddhism

Year 5 - Sikhism

Year 6 - Islam

3.2 To teach the syllabus effectively it is recognised that at KS1 there should be 45 minutes of teaching a week and at KS2 there should be 1 hour a week. This may be taught in blocks of teaching.

3.3 Within each unit a balance is maintained between the two attainment targets outlined in the syllabus - Attainment Target 1 (to develop a knowledge and understanding of religion) and Attainment Target 2 (to explore and respond to human experiences).

3.4 Teaching ensures that there are clear learning outcomes for all units of work, continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment in both attainment targets.

4 Teaching RE to children with special educational needs and to those who are able, gifted and talented

Learning opportunities will be matched to the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, and those who are able, gifted or talented learners. We take into account the targets set for individual children on our provision maps.

5 Assessment and recording

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5.1 RE is assessed 3 times throughout the year. This is through Discovery RE assessment tasks coupled with informal judgements made throughout the units of work. Teachers record assessment in both AT1 and AT2.

5.2 At the end of each unit of work, teachers assess children's progress against the specific objectives for that unit. They then use this information to plan future work with pupils, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

6 Resources

As a school we endeavour to regularly review resources to ensure that suitable resources are available to enhance teaching and learning. The school buys into a successful library resource-lending service from Wiltshire which helps children and teachers to access the curriculum in a new and exciting way.

7 Parental Right of Withdrawal from RE

The Education Reform Act allows parents to withdraw their children from RE if they so wish and a place of safety will be provided, but as RE is so central to the life and identity of Sutton Benger School we would ask parents to discuss with the Headteacher any reasons they might have for doing so.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard and quality of teaching and learning in RE. They monitor this through looking at planning, informal observations, work scrutiny, pupil conferencing and curriculum walks. This is then fed back to staff and link governors. The RE subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader highlights areas to be developed and shares this with staff through an action plan that is acted upon, reviewed and updated annually.

8.2 On an annual basis the school will report to parents on attainment and progress in RE based on teacher judgement and assessment.