

Chirbury and Stiperstones Federation - Religious Education Policy

The Aims of Religious Education

The Principal aims of Religious Education are to help young people

- to achieve knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights, beliefs and practices.
- To deepen or realise their own beliefs, and respect the freedom of other people to hold beliefs different from their own, so preparing them for adult life and citizens in a plural society.

These aims will be realised by helping children and young people to:

- develop an awareness:
 - that many people believe human life depends upon an ultimate being or a sustaining creative power often referred to as God;
 - of a spiritual dimension to life.
- develop an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the broad religious, spiritual and ethical heritage of their immediate and global communities.
- Reflect upon the experiences and mysteries of life and to recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief.
- Learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues.

The children will be encouraged to develop personally by fostering:

- a sensitive interest in the spiritual dimension of life. This will include the desire to investigate or respond to religious traditions, beliefs, practices and the natural world.
- An enthusiastic and positive manner when exploring their own or the beliefs and traditions of other people.
- Consideration and understanding for other people and for the world in which we live.
- A respect for the freedom of everyone in society to practice or not to practice a religious belief.
- Confidence in their own background, which for some will include a cultural and/or religious heritage.
- An understanding of the effects the commitment to belief may have on their own lives or the lives of others.
- An ability to respond to the challenge of life.

These are the skills that the children will use in Religious Education as well as across the curriculum. These skills must be present for the learning to be effective.

- Investigation / Exploration
- Questioning / Enquiry
- Interpretation / Application
- Communication / Sharing
- Understanding / Evaluation
- Sensitivity / Empathy
- Self-Understanding / Reflection

What is Religion?

We believe religion to be a human response to ultimate questions, such as;

What is this all about?

What is Good?

Why are we here?

What is beautiful?

What is true?

What is right?

Why we believe it is important that primary children should study religion.

Religion is part of children's cultural heritage, part of themselves; life without religion would be a spiritual vacuum. There is a fundamental human need to search for purpose, and children need to be given the best possible chance of deciding for themselves whether there is or not a purpose to life. They need to decide how we should behave and why we should behave as we do, in other words to develop a conscience.

How we are going to teach Religious Education? The quest for Truth?

By presenting children with some form of stimulus or experience that readily enables us, or themselves, to ask some of the ultimate questions. To fulfil this description the most accessible experiences will be numinous, i.e. generating a sense of awe, wonder or amazement.

The response we hope to elicit from the children will be one of searching for the level of meaning beyond the superficial surface structures of their experience. (For example fables or parables.)

Therefore these experiences need to be either quite extraordinary for the children, or in contrast very mundane but at the same time allowing us to ask for a response at a much deeper level than is usual.

We can categorise the experiences we are able to offer the children into two classes, those things occurring in the natural world, and those that are manmade.

By looking at natural things we are able to ask many of the ultimate questions, which enables the children to devise a natural philosophy or theology based on their powers of reason, that makes most sense to them at their current state of development.

By looking at manmade objects or systems, such as a church, enables us to ask why did people construct this building, what did they believe? This leads into the concept of revelation, i.e. religious truths (beliefs) that have to be taught, or implanted from beyond ourselves.

The next stage in the children's work will be one of theological/religious experimentation as they seek to make sense of their most recent experiences and assimilate these into their cognitive structure, which may be modified as a result.

The final stage will be to produce a finished polished piece of work in an appropriate medium. These may be in the form of practices designed to help them to tune into the above messages, for example prayer, and dance, feature periods of contemplative practice. Prayers can be seen as a time of tuning in and becoming spiritually receptive, and should include an element of praise and adoration, thanks and confession.

There are two main attainment targets in Religious Education. They are :

- AT1 – Learning about Religion

This includes the ability to

- identify, name, describe and give accounts, in order to build a coherent picture of religion,
- explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism,
- explain similarities and differences between and within religions.

SCAA Model Syllabuses 1994

- AT2 – Learning from Religion

This includes the ability to:

- give an informed response to religious and moral issues,
- reflect on what might be learnt from religions in the light of one's own beliefs and experiences,
- identify and respond to questions of meaning within religions.

SCAA Model Syllabuses 1994

Breadth of Study

The schemes of work will ensure that :

- Christianity is included in every class
- Other world religions are included as follows:

Key Stage 1 – two other religions

Key Stage 2 – Five other religions

	Religions
KS 1	Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism
KS 2	Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism Buddhism and Sikhism

Time Allocation

The minimum teaching time necessary to fulfil the requirements is

KS1 – 25 – 30 hours in each year

KS 2 – 35 hours in each year

This may be done in weekly timetabled slots or in substantial blocks.

It is vital that the RE scheme contains progression. Progression and continuity will be ensured by reference to the Shropshire County Council Agreed Syllabus and collaborative planning and record keeping. (See pages 32 and 34 of the Agreed Syllabus 2004).

Work kept in topic books or portfolios will be used for assessment purposes. Also the subject co-ordinator will assess the coverage and teaching in the subject as often as she is given the opportunity. The law requires that parents are given an annual report

on RE. This should indicate the progress made along with significant strengths and weaknesses.

Every class has access to a copy of the Agreed Syllabus 2004 and the scheme of work and is expected to follow it and discuss any problems or concerns with the subject co-ordinator.

Collective worship will be used to deliver elements of the agreed syllabus, with attention given to using stories from a variety of faith traditions, our own rituals will feature as part of collective worship.

The children will be given the opportunity to work individually, collaboratively or as a whole class, relying upon as much direct experience as we can give them.

Teacher Responsible:

Governor Responsible:

Last ratified by governing body: