

ELM GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

R.E POLICY



Written by:
Approved by Governors:
Review Date:

Elm Grove Religious Education Policy

Policy Statement

The major content of Religious Education is the religious understanding of life and the human response to it.

It makes a contribution to the school curriculum in terms of knowledge, concept, skills and attitudes as well as sharing common grounds with other subjects, in contributing to the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of children and preparing them for adult life.

It is not designed to try and convert or persuade children to a particular religious faith, but rather concerned to promote, through an encounter with Christian and other principle religions found in Britain today, the children's search for values, meaning and purpose. The faith, as well as non-religious values and ethics, of all members of the school community is respected and valued to help promote tolerance and understanding of the diverse community.

Aims and Objectives

At Elm Grove School we aim to give the children the opportunity to:

- understand and respect the diversity of the local, as well as wider, community
- develop their knowledge and understanding of the nature of Christian and other religious beliefs and traditions, including Hinduism, Islam and Judaism
- understand and respect the importance of these traditions and beliefs in the lives of the believers and to respect the right of all people to hold their own view
- reflect on things that are important to them and to be mindful of them across other curriculum areas
- explore those aspects of human experiences which give rise to spiritual awareness
- enrich their understanding of themselves and others and to reflect on their own view of the natural world
- express their own personal view in a thoughtful, reasoned and respectful way
- understand and reflect on other interpretations of the human experience which are not religious

The Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus has 2 main aims for the teaching of RE:

- 1) The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all children to learn and achieve.
- 2) The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

It states that the teaching of RE involves learning a body of knowledge and learning from that knowledge. Pupils should also experience other interpretations of human experiences that are not religious and include other values and ethics.

All schools should consider:

- * the diversity within Brighton and Hove, religious and non-religious
- * conceptual development
- * the acquisition of particular skills and attitudes

The Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus also maintains that these considerations will contribute to the children's understanding of the importance which a belief has for an individual or group, and reflect on it for their own developing values.

Legal Framework

The 1988 Education Act includes Religious Education as part of the basic curriculum but not the national one. It requires that RE has an equal standing in relation to the core and other subjects and that it must be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The RE provided must not be denominational, but teaching about denominational differences is permitted. Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage with the main emphasis on Christianity but other major religions in Britain must also be included. RE must reflect the religious traditions of Great Britain, recognising that these traditions are 'in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' – The Education Act 1996, ch 56, section 375 (3).

Statutory requirements:

1. RE must be provided for all registered pupils
2. The parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from RE
3. Individual teachers have the right to withdraw from teaching RE

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from RE if it is taught as a discrete subject and this intent must be put in writing to the head teacher. In this instance, parents/carers are required to provide work of a religious/faith/belief-based nature in accordance with the SACRE guidelines. The right to withdraw a child from RE does not extend to RE themes being discussed in other areas of the curriculum.

However, it is the policy of the school to adopt a broad and non-evangelical approach and children of other faiths are encouraged to take part.

RE is the one subject area in the curriculum for which school governors are responsible.

Promoting Community Cohesion Through RE

Promoting Community Cohesion stands alongside The Human Rights Act, The Race Relations Act and The Equality Act in seeking to promote fair treatment and to counteract all negative stereotyping.

RE is intended to help people respect each other (Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus) alongside the school ethos, Golden Rules and PSHE curriculum at Elm Grove School.

Organisation

This policy and the curriculum at Elm Grove School recognise the objectives identified in the Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus for RE, in consultation with The Standing Advisory Service for Education (SACRE).

RE is taught as a discrete subject or integrated with other subjects as part of the termly learning journey. RE as a discrete subject gives it a defined slot in the timetable. In planning, the teachers ensure that the RE provides worthwhile and relevant experiences for all children. The strength in this approach is that it gives children regular experiences of RE.

When appropriate, RE can be delivered in a cross-curricular way within learning journeys or a series of mini topics. Care is taken to ensure full coverage of the appropriate programmes of study.

RE accounts for approximately 5% of the total curriculum time. This also takes into account time allocated for daily/weekly Collective Worship, singing assembly etc. This may be weighted more in some areas e.g. Nativity, Harvest Festival Celebrations, Christmas performances.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Elm Grove School encourages and reflective approach to learning where children feel safe and supported in asking questions and contemplating possibilities, where they develop an awareness of prejudice and its impact, where they contemplate and develop a self understanding and where a respect for the rights of others to hold different beliefs is nurtured.

The Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus identifies 3 key skills:

- reflection (one of Elm Grove's Learning Powers)
- empathy (part of the school ethos)
- creativity of thought and expression (encouraged by the Elm Grove Creative Curriculum through performances, art, drama, music, PSHE etc)

A variety of teaching methods and activities are used to encourage and support quality teaching and learning within RE. For example:

- whole class and group discussions

- creative daily starters using theological questions
- reflection and meditation times
- drama and role play
- creative art work/ work stemming from artists' work
- music and poetry
- religious festivals
- individual and group projects
- research using books and ICT resources (internet, e mail)
- DVD and video – an extensive range of resources that can be used in conjunction with interactive whiteboards is in the resource room
- Artefacts – to stimulate and support learning
- Books, booklets and worksheets
- Photo packs and posters
- Visits to religious buildings
- Visitors of faith coming the school to talk about their religious beliefs and experiences

These targets outline the entitlement for children in respect of the teaching and learning in RE.

At least once in a key stage all children should:

- meet with people who profess a commitment to a faith
- visit a religious building for the purpose of increasing their knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice
- have the opportunity to have rich and sensitive learning experiences which involve the use of story, practical activity, exploration of artefacts and discussions about belief and values
- years 5 and 6: carry out a project on an area of interest drawn from either Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or Judaism, involving an element of choice on the part of the children

Further information for providing experiences and opportunities for teaching and learning are found in the Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus, broken down into EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

Resources

Resources for the teaching of RE are stored in the humanities resource room in labelled boxes. There is a yearly review of resources ensuring that they are relevant to the teaching in school. Teachers can also speak to the RE co-ordinator if they need further resources. Purchases are funded by the subject budget and any grants that may be available.

Cross-Curricular Links

Because RE touches, to varying extents, history, geography, art, science, music and dance, many cross-curricular links are innate and planned for by teachers. Moral questions will be raised and children will have the opportunity to reflect on these with reference to RE learning, as well as other curriculum areas such as PSHE.

Visits to religious buildings and places of worship should be researched thoroughly and a risk assessment form completed (to be found on the school network) ensuring adequate levels of adult to child ratios.

Differentiation

It is important that all work undertaken in RE will be differentiated so that children of all abilities will have access to the curriculum being offered. Topics and activities will be carefully planned to enable all children to reach their maximum potential. Differentiation may occur through varying the stimulus, tasks or responses related to the learning intentions.

A wide variety of teaching methods are employed in RE, many of which do not require reading or writing and are therefore suitable for all children, including those with SEN, e.g. discussions, art/creative work, music, drama and role play. Ideas and concepts can be presented in several different ways, to enable access by all children.

Motivation will increase by matching, as far as possible, the interests of individual pupils with available tasks.

Equal Opportunities

RE will be taught at Elm Grove School with equal access for all, regardless of gender, race or ability. We also take care to ensure that children from any religious background, denomination or culture have equal access to the subject.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring RE throughout the school takes place through the co-ordinator discussions with class teachers, looking at year group planning and work scrutiny.

The co-ordinator will attend courses and in-service training, make regular contact with the advisor, attend co-ordinator meetings and disseminate information to other members of staff.

A practical form of assessment in RE is now being developed at Elm Grove School. RE should be assessed according to levels in the key skills the children are achieving in AT1 and AT2 (detailed in the Brighton and Hove Agreed Syllabus for RE).

AT1 refers to learning about religion and belief:

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- meaning

AT2 refers to learning from religion and belief:

- identity, diversity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitments

There are 8 levels that the children can progress through (and also P levels where appropriate) and recorded work will evidence their journey through the relevant levels. Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing.

There must be evidence of work covered and a development of skills in reflection, empathy and creativity of thought and expression. Progression will be found in children's improved awareness of religious beliefs and practices.

Next Review Date: 2018