

CROFT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Our school has a planned approach to Religious Education following the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. It is an open, exploratory approach.

As a Church of England School, our main emphasis is teaching about the Christian tradition. We do, however, have a duty to teach about other major world faiths. We have chosen to study Judaism, Sikhism and Islam at KS2. At KS1 pupils explore the traditions of a Hindu family and a Jewish family. In Early Years, pupils follow the recommended units from the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus, adapted to meet our children's needs. Religious Education is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all registered pupils. As R.E. is not nationally determined, the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2013-2018, which we have used as the basis of our planning and delivery of R.E.

Families who send their children to this school are predominantly from Christian backgrounds, with some practising and non – practising Christian families. Religious Education is concerned with 'learning about religions and beliefs' and 'learning from religions and beliefs' and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

Aims

We believe that R.E. both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, R.E. at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in North Yorkshire;
2. Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;
3. Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. Enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
 - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
 - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
 - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. Recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

Therefore, we aim to:

- Teach the children about the Christian Faith: the life and teaching of Jesus, festivals, religious buildings, bible stories and symbols
- Ensure that a broad education is offered to pupils which reflects the multi-faith nature of British society
- Develop in children a sense of self-awareness, a sense of mystery, awe and wonder
- Emphasise the importance of relationships
- Encourage the child's positive response to the natural world
- Give children the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon important issues and develop within themselves a growing sense of spirituality
- Maintain the links already established with the local parish church, community and wider world
- Ensure progression throughout the Key Stages by following the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. Differentiation within each class is generally through outcome

- Provide a quiet, visible Christian area in each class and around school to allow reflection and prayer

Parental rights to withdraw children from R.E.

We acknowledge that parents have the right to withdraw their children from R.E. However, by choosing to send their child to a Church of England School, parents should acknowledge that the ethos of the school is underpinned by Christian values. As we are a voluntary controlled school, parents or guardians have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE programme. Where parents have concerns about their children taking part in R.E., they are asked to discuss their concerns first with the Headteacher and/or subject leader. They will be able to discuss the R.E. programme and teaching methods in greater detail and give parents access to the R.E. unit materials and resources used. Agreement on alternative provision for the children would need to be reached should they be withdrawn from the R.E. programme.

Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of R.E.

Teaching and Learning

Learning

R.E. provokes challenging questions about the ultimate 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. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

R.E. should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Religious Education has two closely related aspects:

AT1 Learning about religions and beliefs

Building up knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs:

This includes investigating, thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

AT2 Learning from Religion

Building up investigative, reasoning and evaluation skills:

This includes engaging with, reflecting on and responding to questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

Teaching

Teaching the programmes of study should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

- Beliefs, teachings and sources - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
- Practices and lifestyles - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- Expressing meaning - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
- Identity, diversity and belonging- e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- Meaning, purpose and truth - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- Values and commitments - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of R.E. seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between the two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of R.E. at this school.

At Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism.

At Key Stage 2 pupils build on their understanding of Christianity, Sikhism, Islam and Judaism.

R.E. teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. Visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith
2. Role play and drama; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters
3. Artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge
4. Music and the arts; enabling children to experience elements of religions in a sensory way
5. Parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community
6. Food sampling, making and baking foods from different faiths to support children's understanding.

The teaching of R.E. will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and faith visitors, to ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teacher assessment in Religious Education is on-going and summative at the end of each topic and is used to inform future planning. Children are assessed against our Croft Curriculum Skills for R.E. These are split into the following areas: *Learning About Religion*: Beliefs and Teachings, Practices and Lifestyles, Expressing Meaning and *Learning From religion*: Identity and Experience (making sense of who we are), Meaning and Purpose (making sense of life) and Values and commitments (making sense of right and wrong). This informs us as to whether each child is working significantly below, below, expected or at greater depth. Observation, discussion and the use of photographs will be used to record achievement in addition to written evidence in the children's books. Staff undertake moderation exercises to ensure that we are familiar with assessment statements and what they mean in the context of a pupil's work. School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the R.E. report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

Time Allocation

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus, a minimum allocation of curriculum time for R.E. based upon the law and DfE guidance:

5-7 years: 36 hours per year (e.g. 50 minutes a week, or an R.E. week each term)

7-11 years: 45 hours per year (e.g. an hour a week, a series of R.E. days)

Planning

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school uses the North Yorkshire units of learning for R.E. which builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the Agreed Syllabus. In addition, we have developed our own units of learning around based on our whole school topics. We have used a combination of teaching R.E. through cross – curricular activities and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

The R.E. Subject Leader reviews the schools planning and procedures. As we have mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.

Short term planning of individual lessons is a matter for the class teacher. The R.E. Subject Leader is available to help with this and keeps a range of teachers' resources as a guide. (When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts of the programme of study are to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The work planned must be relevant to the needs of the pupils).

Cross Curricular Teaching

R.E. teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. There are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment and to explore the school's Christian Values. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit R.E. curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

Children's oral and written skills will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

Equal Opportunities

Provision for R.E. is in accordance with the school's equal opportunities policy. In accordance with the aims of the school, pupils will develop an appreciation of and respect for the beliefs and philosophies of others, pupils will be encouraged to value the rich variety of cultural traditions and lifestyles represented in Great Britain. It is acknowledged and respected that deep beliefs are held in the area of Religious Education. It is therefore our aim to deal with any matters arising as sensitively as possible.

Provision for children with special educational needs, including more able children will follow the school's policies in these areas. Children's needs are carefully monitored and supported through teacher planning and assessment. This enables objectives, tasks, teaching methods, resources and teacher/adult input to be matched to pupil needs. It includes the use of more challenging objectives or extension materials and tasks for the more able

Leadership and Management

The R.E. subject leader manages this area of the curriculum and monitors and evaluates the quality of R.E. teaching across the school. Where possible they will attend North Yorkshire network meetings and Diocesan training to ensure they are up to date with current practice in R.E. Updates, guidance and CPD are provided by the subject leader in school and development issues are discussed in staff meetings. The R.E. policy is reviewed at least bi-annually to ensure that it represents the values and practice of the school.

Collective Worship

Collective worship happens daily. There is a separate policy for Collective Worship.

This policy was reviewed in September 2017