



**PENCOMBE
C.E. SCHOOL**

Religious Education Policy

In God's hands, we love, learn, grow and inspire

“What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like the mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on the earth. Yet, when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.

Mark 4: 30-32

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Religious Education Policy

Pencombe C of E Primary School

Vision Statement: Our vision is inspired by the Parable of the Mustard Seed:

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From this we developed our school motto:

“In God's hands, we love, learn, grow and inspire.”

We are committed to supporting support our pupils to develop their knowledge, perseverance, resilience and the imagination to develop themselves spiritually, academically and socially; living out Christian values in order to live happy, fulfilling and considerate lives. We uphold the right of every individual to learn, to be valued and to flourish.

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, RE is taught under the Trust Deed. The policy has been written in consultation with the staff of the school and approved by the Governors who, along with the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and RE subject lead are responsible for the teaching of RE.

What do we mean by RE?

RE refers to Religious Education and is a subject within the National Curriculum. Every pupil is therefore entitled to a broad and balanced provision of RE.

Religious Education is an amazing subject where pupils engage in theological, sociological and philosophical enquiry to explore the key beliefs and practices from the religious and non-religious worldviews. It also provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values. In our school, RE provision is highly valued and brings the school community together through shared dialogue and understanding. The content of RE is determined at local level to take into account the backgrounds, cultures and experiences of the local community.

Our Aims

Our children will, through RE as an educational activity and through exploring religious belief and practices related to life's experiences, be enabled to mature in relation to their own patterns of belief, values and behaviour. RE contributes to the child's own search for meaning and purpose in life by his/her learning what it means to be religious, and it also contributes to his/her moral, social and cultural development. It is an important part of helping children to develop their identity, discuss their own uniqueness and reflect on their purpose.

Furthermore, we aim to:

- To assist them in their exploration of the meaning of life, to support them in making life choices and help them confront difficult or painful situations they may have to encounter. This will enhance their own spiritual and moral growth;
- To value themselves and to recognise the ways in which people believe they are valued by God, enabling them to show care and respect for others;
- Allow them to explore their own feelings, experiences and emotions as they explore some of the puzzling questions of life;
- To foster children's feelings of awe and wonder, delight and mystery;

Through the effective teaching of Religious Education, we seek to:

- Provide pupils with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain;
- Give pupils knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and encourage them to develop positive attitudes towards other people who hold religious beliefs different from their own;
- Encourage pupils to have respect for others with different beliefs, practices and ways of living developing their understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, outlook and practices;

At Pencombe C of E primary, RE is taught and learned within the context of a place where children encounter 'living faith' through:

- The value which is placed on every person, as a part of God's creation;
- An ethos which reflects mutual care and concern;
- An expression of Christian values;
- The experience of collective worship, as a quality activity important to the life of the school;
- An environment and curriculum which encourages spiritual, moral and religious growth;
- Active links with the wider community - including the Parish Church, the Diocese and other local school communities.

How do we teach RE?

Our educational aims are achieved through our school curriculum which is organised in relation to the needs of the National Curriculum and the Herefordshire Locally Agreed Syllabus. To help create consistency in the way the Christianity units within our RE curriculum is taught, the Understanding Christianity resource is used to help create a clear structure.

Learning and Teaching

The contribution Religious Education makes to pupils' growth and maturity will be recognised through the variety of teaching strategies adopted, including art, music, drama and discussion. Interacting with texts, stories and story-telling also form an important part of Religious Education. Learning also takes place through the collective worship experiences. They are separate activities in school but complement each other well.

Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on what and how they learn through the use of open questions. Children are encouraged to develop skills in using artefacts and pictures as a source of information about religions. When possible, they will have the opportunity to go on visits to places of worship as well as opportunities to learn from members of different faiths invited to the school.

Visiting Places of Worship

Where possible educational visits are made to places of worship, including the Parish Church, other Churches and the Cathedrals in Hereford and Worcester as resources for the teaching of Christianity. We also include visits to places of worship from other religions for example, the Mosque in Birmingham. Children are given guidance as to their conduct, appearance and dress on these visits to the faith communities' places of worship - holy places of prayer, worship and peace.

Pupils are not asked to evaluate one religion against another but to reflect and consider their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of what they have learned develop an understanding that the religious beliefs of others are to be respected for themselves.

Time and resources allocation

RE is taught weekly in every class. To support the teaching and learning of RE, finance is made available in the budget arising from the School Development Plan to enable the purchase of resources - books, artefacts etc. Visits are planned as appropriate. Resources are held centrally and in the library under the care of the SLT & RE Subject Lead.

Personal Development, Mental Health and Well-Being

Religious education plays a vital role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. The contribution it makes to learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development enables children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

An Inclusive Curriculum

The aim of RE is the same for all pupils. In line with the school's SEND policy, careful thought is given to making adaptations to ensure that each individual can access RE in an appropriate way for them. Although a child may have limitations in other areas of the curriculum it is not assumed that he/she lacks the capacity to respond to the spiritual and religious. More able children also may or may not have particular aptitudes in these domains.

Links with other policies

Equal Opportunities: in line with the school policy of Equal Opportunities, RE is relevant and worthwhile for all pupils - in accordance with the principle that all pupils are valued equally as expressed in the school aims. Learning in RE helps pupils:

- respect themselves;
- to be sensitive to the needs and value of others;
- challenge inequalities of race, gender, ability, age, socio-economic group.

(See RE and Equal Opportunities, Hereford and Worcester Agreed Syllabus p 17:7 and p22:6)

PHSE and RSE: RE particularly supports the aims of developing self-confidence and good relationships with others, and respecting the differences between people.

Collective Worship Policy: although RE and Collective Worship complement and support each other, they are separate activities within the school (please refer to the Collective Worship Policy).

Assessment and Recording

The subject leader monitors RE across the school through lesson observations, book looks and pupil interviews. This information feeds into the Church school self-evaluation process (SIAMS).

The progress of pupils within the specific subject of RE will be reported to parents in the End of Year School Reports.

What impact do we intend our RE to have?

It is our intention that the RE taught at Pencombe C of E Primary School transcends simple knowledge and understanding of world religions' beliefs and practices. We intend for RE to help pupils to open their ears and minds to the opinions and views around them, which will in turn help shape their own sense of identity, talent and purpose.

Leading by example, the staff and governors at the school will:

- Elevate the profile of RE within the school;
- Carefully monitor the teaching and learning of RE;
- Ensure that the RE curriculum is diverse and inclusive;
- Let children talk, discuss and question.

Pupil's will:

- Have the confidence to ask thoughtful questions to deepen their knowledge and understanding of themselves and the worlds around them;
- Listen, with respect, to the thoughts and beliefs of others;
- Respect diversity and difference of opinion;
- Explore their views and opinions with reasons and explanations.

Complaints or Concerns

Any complaints or concerns regarding the RE provision at Pencombe C of E Primary School can be directed to the Head of School, Executive Headteacher, or in extreme cases, the Chair of Governors. Contact details can be found on the school website.