

# Ashmole Primary School



## RE Policy

**Created by: James Hollingsworth**

**Date Created: January 2016**

Updated on:	Changes made / notes:

## **Policy on Religious Education (RE)**

### **1 Aims and objectives**

- 1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Ashmole, we develop children's knowledge and understanding of not only Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.
- 1.2 Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children including SEN and AG&T children:
- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
  - to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems adhered to in the UK;
  - to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
  - to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
  - to develop an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
  - to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society;
  - to extend and develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions
  - to encourage children to discuss and question key concepts linked to religions through regular Philosophy for Children (P4C) sessions

### **2 The legal position of RE**

- 2.1 As detailed in the government publication 'Religious Education guidance in English schools 2010' our school curriculum for RE meets the requirements of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (SSAFA) which stipulates that every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum including RE. Religious Education is compulsory for all registered pupils in the school, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The SSAFA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have been made aware of the education objectives and the content of the RE curriculum and given written notice to the school governors.
- 2.2 Ashmole's RE curriculum follows Lambeth's Agreed Syllabus for RE. In accordance with the 1996 Education Act the syllabus reflects that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and learning practices of other main religions in Great Britain. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Lambeth Agreed Syllabus, and meets all the requirements set out in that document. In accordance with Lambeth's syllabus, RE should be taught 5% of the curriculum time, which equates to 36 hours a year for KS1 and 45 hours a year for KS2.

### **3 Teaching and Learning**

- 3.1 We base our teaching and learning in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Religious education provokes challenging and interesting

questions and encourages children to develop their thinking skills across all ages and abilities. The inclusion of P4C sessions enables children to develop these skills.

- 3.2 Our teaching and learning practices in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences of religious festivals such as Harvest, Diwali, Eid, etc. to develop their religious thinking and understanding. We organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children, giving the pupils a chance to interact with different religions.
- 3.3 Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.
- 3.4 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, e.g. by:
- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
  - grouping the children by ability in the room, and differentiating the tasks for each ability group;
  - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
  - using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

#### **4 RE curriculum planning**

- 4.1 RE is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with Lambeth's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.
- 4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the RE topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group. We teach RE topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on the study of religious themes and topics in their own right. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. These units follow Lambeth's Agreed Syllabus.
- 4.3 The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

#### **5 The Foundation Stage**

- 5.1 We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.
- 5.2 In reception classes, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

#### **6 Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas**

- 6.1 RE contributes significantly to the teaching of other subjects in Ashmole, and can be taught in conjunction with them. For example, some of the texts that we use in Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and promotes children's speaking and listening skills. RE has a strong link with PSHCE, as through our RE lessons

we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. This also contributes to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people. We help children to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society.

## **7 RE and ICT**

- 7.1 ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. Children can watch information videos and read online information books. Children can select and analyse information, using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and improve its presentation. Older children use PowerPoint to help them to make presentations on various topics, such as sacred symbols in different world religions. Younger children can take photographs of the class acting out a Bible story. They can then make a class storybook of it, by adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text. Or, using desktop software, they can create a special book in which each pupil has his or her own page; they also make a cover and binding for the book, and draw up a set of rules for its use. A digital video camera can record a visit to a place of worship, and pupils can also find the various artefacts in churches by doing virtual tours on church websites.

## **8 RE and Inclusion**

- 8.1 At Ashmole, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- 8.2 Children who have shown a high level of reflective and questioning skills as well as a high ability to use and understand technical vocabulary and who appear on the AG&T register are provided with opportunities to cultivate these skills further in RE. Children participate in regular P4C sessions which further develop children's ability to question and reflect on difficult philosophical concepts. Teachers are very familiar with the attainment targets and use these to differentiate children's work and use differentiated questioning to extend children's learning further. AG&T children are also given the opportunity to participate in assemblies celebrating different religions and are frequently given a central role in the performance.
- 8.3 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **9 Assessment and Assessment for Learning**

- 9.1 Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written and/or verbal feedback to help guide progress. This will be in accordance with Ashmole's Marking Policy. Children are also encouraged to complete self-assessments and older children can make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future or set their own targets for learning.

- 9.2 We follow the assessment policy as set out by Lambeth's Agreed Syllabus. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each Key Stage. The use of attainment level guides may be used to support the teacher in making an overall judgement about the child's level of attainment in RE at the end of each academic year. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Class teachers will assess children's learning in RE and will record these levels on the universal foundation subject level sheet every 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> term. Teachers will consider whether each child has reached the expected level, is still emerging or has exceeded expectations in RE.
- 9.3 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.

## **10 Resources**

- 10.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of Bibles for both Key Stages, and a collection of religious artefacts, which we use to enrich teaching in RE. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.

## **11 Monitoring and review**

- 11.1 The monitoring and review of teaching and learning in RE is the responsibility of the subject leader, who:
- is responsible for coordinating and planning the RE curriculum;
  - supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
  - writes an annual action plan to detail work to be undertaken to promote excellence in the teaching and learning of RE;
  - gives the Head teacher a termly summary report in which s/he evaluates the progress made on the annual action plan and details the strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning throughout the school;
  - uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe RE lessons across the school.
- 11.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.