

Altrincham CE Aided Primary School
Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

To work in partnership with parents and the churches, to nurture children in the Christian faith and to provide them with the best possible educational opportunities.

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Altrincham CE Aided Church of England Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style 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.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children learn about 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 discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different 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.

Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Chester Diocesan Scheme and supplemented with Southwark document and Trafford's SACRE Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. 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.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

In reception classes, religious education 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 religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Additional RE topics covered throughout the year are outlined in the long term plan and taught weekly within the reception classes.

Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy Hour have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and CD ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to religious education.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a mosque or temple, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the expectations of the unit. We record the attainment grades in our assessment files, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a separate box of equipment and a collection of religious artefacts for each religion.

Monitoring and review

The RE subject leader (the **head teacher**) is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. He is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The annual R.E. review is completed by the headteacher (RE Coordinator) which informs the action plan that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the subject.

Time is allocated for observing R.E. teaching and reviewing samples of the children's work.

Collective Worship

This is a Church of England School in the Diocese of Chester. The school is intended to serve the local parish churches of ST George, St John and St Margaret. All pupils attend a daily act of worship and on a Friday there is a school family service which starts at 9.10 a.m. in the school hall when any adult is welcome to attend. A coffee club operates in the school hall after the end of term service.

Worship is an integral part of school life. It makes a significant contribution to the Christian ethos of the school.

Each school day commences with an act of Christian worship. The staff, clergy parents and children are involved. Our Anglican ministers assist with religious education in school, are actively involved with their junior children in their classroom activities and conduct the school assembly each Wednesday. On special occasions, children are taken to services held in church during school hours.

The children visit one of the parish churches as part of the Christmas celebrations. Easter, Pentecost and Harvest thanksgiving services are celebrated with families and friends in school.

A log book is kept of the daily acts of worship. This records the focus, the hymns or songs sung, any biblical references, the prayer and the name of the person who presented the assembly.

The normal weekly pattern is

Monday	Whole School	Head teacher or deputy
Tuesday	Infant assembly	Infant member of staff
Wednesday	Whole school	Clergy
Thursday	Junior Assembly	Junior member of staff

or hymn practice

Friday	Family Assembly	
	Class Assembly	Children
	or Parents	Parents
	Visitor	Visitor
	Head teacher	Head teacher

Each main class presents the assembly on three occasions in the year. The nursery are usually able to make a contribution to one. All pupils in the school contribute to the Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost celebrations.

It is hoped that through worship, children learn how to express praise, adoration and thanksgiving, learn how to pray, grow in the knowledge of God, the Bible and the Christian faith and gain the sense of well being that comes from knowing that they belong to God's family and are extremely special to him.

It is hoped that the style and presentation will be varied providing times for meditation and contemplation, for joyous celebration, for sharing of experiences and learn from and about one another.

Equal Opportunities

The School Mission Statement requires the School to examine the values transmitted, either intentionally or unintentionally, to pupils and to ensure that the curriculum, organisation, ethos and attitudes provide all pupils with equal opportunity for educational achievement. The Governing Body will therefore seek to ensure that all pupils in the School have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum and that the specific needs of pupils are met to ensure equality of access.

The practices and procedures followed are as outlined in the school policies on Equal Opportunities and School Inclusion. This includes planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs (SEN), children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups including, and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The school strives to provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination, in which children's contributions are valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged.

Date agreed by staff.....

Date approved by Governing Body.....

Head teacher's signature.....

Chairman's signature.....