Newbold Church of England Primary School

At Newbold we aim to support each other to live, learn and excel together as a Christian community.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up," 1 Thessalonians 5:11

A Policy for the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education

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Responsible Personnel
- Subject Leader – Headteacher
- Governor – Emma Garratt

Aims and objectives

1.1. Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Newbold Church of England Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of 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 to learn from religions as well as about religions.

1.2. Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our 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;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of value systems adhered to in the UK, including: Christian Values;
- 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 understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
- to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

2. The legal position of religious education

2.1. Our school curriculum for RE meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written

notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions. The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship.

2.2. Our school curriculum meets the February 2019 Statement of Entitlement which states Christianity should be the majority study (2/3rds) in Church Schools.

3. Teaching and Learning

3.1. 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.

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

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;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- 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. Religious Education is taught throughout Key Stage 1 and 2 as a two-year rolling programme for mixed classes based on the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus (2021-2026) which includes Understanding Christianity units of study. 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.

5. The Foundation Stage

5.1. In the Foundation Stage, Religious education is taught as part of People & Communities, Understanding of the World and enriches their development in Personal, Social and Emotional. The aim is to affirm the religious/cultural background of each child; to encourage their natural curiosity and interest; to foster feelings of joy, wonder and mystery, developing their understanding, respect and sense of order and pattern; and helping them to begin to recognise different cultural patterns of life.

6. Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1. English

RE 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 Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion. We also encourage the children to record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

6.2. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our RE 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.

6.3. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE 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 multi-cultural 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.

7. RE and ICT

7.1. ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet. They may also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children for example, may 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 may make a class storybook of it, for example. 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 our school, 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.

8.2. 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.

8.3. Intervention may 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.

8.4. We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in off-site activities, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

9. Assessment for learning

9.1. Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. The teacher will formally assess children at the end of each school term. 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.

10. Resources

10.1. We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE units. We follow the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus for RE and also Understanding Christianity. As members of NATRE we are sent resources books regularly based on different RE themes. We keep a set of Bibles and RE resources/religious artefacts together, which we use to enrich teaching in RE. Resources from online websites support the teaching.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1. The monitoring of standards and achievement in RE is the responsibility of the subject leader. As part of the curriculum review cycle, the RE co-ordinator will audit the scheme of work, scrutinise planning, observe lessons, sample pupils' work, carry out pupil interviews and arrange for the governor to make a visit to observe the teaching and learning of RE within the school. This will enable the co-ordinator to provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school and will ensure that areas for improvement will be tackled.

11.2. This policy will be reviewed in two years or in the light of any significant changes to the Agreed Syllabus.