
R.E. Policy



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Approved By: Ethos Committee

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Mission Statement

With God's help we will live kindly, love each other, learn and laugh together!

Ethos Statement

Recognising our historic foundation, The March Church of England Primary School will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The March CE School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At The March CE Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and also some of the major world faiths. This is so they can address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to 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.

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 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 understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural similarities and 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.

Philosophy

The teaching of RE at The March School follows the practices and recommendations of the West Sussex County Council Agreed RE Syllabus, that includes Understanding Christianity. Advice has also been taken from the Diocese of Chichester and from our latest SIAMS inspection. We firmly believe that RE and Collective Worship are separate, but linked. For further information, please see the Collective Worship Policy.

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 to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Harvest, Easter, Diwali, Passover, etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

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. Sometimes, they prepare presentations on a computer and share these in assemblies.

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);
- grouping the children by mixed ability in the room, allowing for children to support and encourage one another;
- 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.

RE curriculum planning

RE is a core subject here at The March CE Primary School. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning and dovetail with the collective worship themes and our school values. 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.

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. Some of our medium-term (termly) topics have a particular historical focus. 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. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

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.

The Foundation Stage

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In reception class, 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 Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five alongside units from Understanding Christianity.

RE and ICT

ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet for independent research. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to 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 their classmates acting out a Bible story, 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.

RE and the creative curriculum

When topics relate overtly to religious themes, for example Tudors, links can be made. We believe it is important not to force links as these may be tenuous and cause confusion. Children may choose to use their skills in art, music, design or ICT to express their understanding of RE and not rely exclusively on writing. We aim for a mixed portfolio of expression to ensure children use their talents and potential.

RE and inclusion

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. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

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 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.

Assessment for learning

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a well know story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation or video based on their investigation of sacred texts.

Each lesson begins with the class teacher sharing the WALT (We are learning to) with the children and sharing the lesson's Big Question. 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 feedback that identifies their success linked to the learning objective and a questions to deepen their thinking on the given topic. The children then have to opportunity to answer the questions at the start of the following week's lesson.

We follow the assessment policy as set out in the West Sussex Agreed Curriculum. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each Key Stage.

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.

Resources

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.

Monitoring and review

The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe RE lessons across the school.

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations. Children's work and planning is scrutinised once a term. Lessons will be observed twice a year by the Head Teacher and/or RE Co-ordinator.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

Signed:

Date



