



Religious Education Policy

Written by: Sajeda Assenjee

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Mayespark Primary School

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Introduction

Mayespark Primary is made up of staff and pupils who are linked with many parts of the world and faith groups, or who have no recognised faith group. As a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including those who have recently become part of our community and those for who English is a second language.

We believe that Religious Education (R.E.) provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school and the wider world. It is a subject that celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes.

Religious Education is taught in accordance with the aims of the Redbridge and Havering Agreed Syllabus;

1) Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.

2) Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions.

3) Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

In keeping with the syllabus, we recognise that through religious education we can provoke questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. We can develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the main religions (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) but also the other religions recognised by the UK government (The Baha’i Faith, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Rastafarianism, Shintoism, Taoism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism) and the alternative worldview, Humanism. Religious education offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances pupils’ awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression and the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

Religious education encourages pupils to explore their own and others’ religions, beliefs, values and traditions. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses. Religious education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.

Religious education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life. Now, more than ever, it is vital that young people are able to understand themselves within the context of a diverse society so that they are equipped to be active citizens with the confidence to participate with peers whose background can often be different to their own. Religious education helps develop pupils’ understanding and tolerance from learning about those different to ourselves and thus lead to a positive approach to life and respect for others.

Legal Requirements

Since Religious Education is not part of the National Curriculum it is not subject to its statutory orders such as national attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements. Instead, it is locally determined: under the 1988 Act each Local Authority (LA) is required to establish a Standing Advisory Council for RE (SACRE) to advise the authority and its teachers on matters concerning Religious Education.

In accordance with the law we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The teaching of RE comprises 5% of the curriculum timetable as recommended by the QCA and required by the Agreed Syllabus. This equates to 36 hours per year in EYFS and KS1 and 45 hours per year in KS2. This requirement does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools.

Parents are informed in the school prospectus that they have the right to withdraw their pupils from religious education. Parents who choose to withdraw their children from religious education lessons are required to state this in writing annually to the Head teacher.

Planning

The scheme of work for religious education covers all the requirements of the Redbridge and Havering Agreed Syllabus (2015-2021). RE is taught weekly.

Teaching and Learning

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:

1. Learning *about* religions

2. Learning *from* religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impacts on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils’ reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils’ skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEND and EAL are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of RE we aim to make the most of opportunities to help children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. One way of doing this is through our links with local religious communities and places of worship. We attempt to provide children with at least one local RE visit every year.

Through RE children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as investigating, applying analysing, discerning, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Wherever appropriate, links are made between religious education and other curriculum subjects .

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as RHSE and our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people’s responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious education also introduces pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

Recording, Marking and Assessment

Pupils’ work is marked and assessed in line with our policies on assessment and marking and this assessment is used to inform planning, to recognise and celebrate achievement and motivate the learner. Teachers ensure that lessons have a clear focus and objective and that learning experiences are evaluated. Work is displayed in religious education floor books around the school.

Role of Subject Leader

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of religious education is managed by the RE subject leader, in close collaboration with the senior leadership team. The curriculum leader attends appropriate training and professional development, and organises INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary. RE planning and floor books are collected for monitoring termly, and schemes of work are evaluated annually.

Resources are stored in a central place for use by all staff and children have access to some resources in their classroom on a daily basis.