

Holly Hill Methodist /Church of England
(Aided) Infant and Nursery School

Religious Education Policy



Religious Education Policy – October 2016
Holly Hill Methodist and Church of England Infant and Nursery School

As a Christian school our vision is to promote 'Life in All its Fullness.' Our ethos is based on our 12 Christian values of hope, honesty, patience, joy, forgiveness, tolerance, thankfulness, respect, kindness, friendship, gentleness and love. It is within the vision and the ethos that this policy is written and will be implemented.

This policy has been drawn up by the governors of the school in consultation with the Headteacher, Religious Education subject leader and other members of staff.

1. The legal position of RE in our school.

The 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

Holly Hill Methodist and Church of England Infant and Nursery School is a Methodist and Church of England Voluntary Aided School with a VA heritage therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, following advice from the diocese, have decided to adopt the Guildford Agreed Syllabus and supplement this with material from the Methodist Church publication 'Religious Education: Guidance in teaching Christianity.'

2. Rationale/Aims for teaching RE

As a church school, the aims of Religious Education at Holly Hill Methodist and Church of England Infant and Nursery School are:

- to enable pupils to encounter Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage;
- to enable pupils to learn about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, facilitating pupils' expression of responses and insights;
- to contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

At the end of their **KS1** education in our Church school the expectation is that pupils should be able to:

- talk about ideas about God and important aspects of Christian belief, and explain why they are important for Christians;
- show awareness that Christianity is followed by people of many churches and in other parts of the world;
- respect the faith of others, and value the journey of faith;
- talk with, and listen to, each other and people of other faiths and none about belief;
- speak comfortably about their understandings of faith and life choices.
- identify some similarities in features of religions and beliefs;
- retell some religious, spiritual and moral stories;
- identify possible meanings for stories, symbols and other forms of religious expression;
- identify how religion and belief is expressed in different ways;
- respond sensitively and imaginatively to questions about their own and others' ideas, experiences and feelings;
- ask questions about their own and others' ideas, feelings and experiences;
- give a reason why something may be valued by themselves and others;
- recognise that some questions about life are difficult to answer.

3. The distinctive contribution RE makes to the life of the school and other curriculum aims (and community cohesion)

Our school ethos is based on our 12 Christian values of hope, honesty, patience, joy, forgiveness, tolerance, thankfulness, respect, kindness, friendship, gentleness and love. Religious Education at Holly Hill Methodist and Church of England Infant and Nursery School provides opportunities for pupils to make links between our school's Christian values and Biblical teaching and to recognise that these values are also important to those of other traditions and those of none.

As a church school we are called to find ways to work towards every pupil having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and with the person of Jesus Christ. In Birmingham Diocese, this means that we will endeavour to ensure that encounters with the Christian faith will be positive for the pupils and that they will hear of the story of Jesus. Such encounters will show to the pupils the treasures of the Christian faith in a way that invites, but does not coerce. The values and character of the school will also be shown in the way that attention is paid to the teaching of world faiths particularly those represented in the school community and local neighbourhood.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Learning about and from religious traditions helps pupils to appreciate which aspects of life have been significant for most of humanity throughout the ages. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding. It also helps to show them what

shapes people's behaviour and motivations, and points pupils towards positive models for their own lives.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

4. Approaches to teaching RE

As a VA church school we have taken into account the need to offer breadth of content in Religious Education and sought Diocesan advice to inform our decision to adopt the Guildford Agreed Syllabus supplemented with material from the Methodist Church publication RE Today. This provides a framework which supports our planning for high quality learning experiences in RE.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. We want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship. We use a variety of approaches of helping pupils to appreciate, and to begin to develop critical thinking about, religious life and teachings, including enquiry based and philosophical approaches.

5. How RE is organised.

The nominated person with subject leadership responsibility for Religious Education in our school is Dawn Gallagher, Deputy Headteacher.

In our part time Nursery Class RE is delivered in a small group, adult-led focussed activity each week.

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, RE is delivered every Friday afternoon in a 50 minute RE lesson from 1.30pm – 2.20pm.

In the Foundation Stage, learning in RE is linked to learning in the EYFS curriculum. Children have opportunities to

- explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship, starting with Christianity as the foundational faith of their Church school;
- listen to and talk about Bible stories and stories from other religious traditions, where appropriate;
- use religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression;
- reflect on their own feelings and experiences;
- use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

In KS1 children have opportunities to

- learn what Christians believe about God and the world around them, and be introduced to what Jews & Muslims believe;

- encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials, such as art & music;
- learn to recognise that peoples' beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use subject specific vocabulary;
- begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children, their families and the communities they belong to;
- ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imagination;
- ask questions and express their own views about what is important to themselves and to others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Teachers use a range of books, resources and artefacts to enhance children's learning in RE. Books are stored on the book shelf in the 'Lilac Room', RE big books are stored in the 'Big Book Room' and RE resources and artefacts are stored in the RE resources cupboard.

In addition to weekly RE lessons, learning in RE is enhanced through RE educational visits to local places of worship. These include

RE Educational Visits		
Year Group	Venue	Theme
Nursery	St John's Church	Story windows
Reception Year 1 Year 2	St Leonard's Church	All Saints Day service (All years) Our Church School (Reception) What is a church? (Year 1) Belonging Together (Year 2)
Reception	St John's Church	Epiphany and Why do we visit church?
Year 1	Pagoda and St John's Church	Why do we Pray?
Year 1	Synagogue and St John's Church	Shabbat and the Torah
Year 2	Mosque and St John's Church	What's important for Muslim Families
Year 2	Northfield Methodist Church	Belonging Together

6. Assessment and Recording of RE

Assessment and recording in RE is in accordance with the school's Assessment Policy.

7. Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE and how RE contributes to School Self Evaluation

The RE subject leader will monitor teaching and learning in RE within the school through half termly analysis of assessment data, RE learning walks and RE work scrutiny.

The RE subject leader will use the monitoring of RE to inform and evaluate the RE Subject Development Plan and the relevant section of the School Improvement Plan.

The RE subject leader will report on progress and attainment in RE to the Governing Body through the half termly Standards Committee.

The RE subject leader will use monitoring of RE to contribute to the Church school self evaluation process.

8.Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum;
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD;
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives;
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw;
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so;
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress;
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

9.The right of withdrawal from RE

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Holly Hill Methodist and Church of England Infant and Nursery School.

10. Date of policy review: