

Religious Education Policy

Caslon Primary Community School, Beecher Bear
Daycare and Nursery, Beech Tree SEMH Base and
Tree Acre (Early Years Inclusion Hub)



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September 2024

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Introduction:

Caslon Primary School is a small primary school, serving children in the age range of 2-11 years. We deliver Religious Education (RE) in line with the Dudley Agreed Syllabus guidelines. We use the Jigsaw RE programme as our scheme of work. Caslon Primary School recognises and values the religious backgrounds and non-religious backgrounds of each of our pupils. Caslon is made up of staff and pupils who originate from many nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including new arrivals and non-native English speakers.

We intend to be sensitive to the home background of all and therefore work to ensure that RE is accessible to all pupils and teachers of any religious persuasion or none. We have a strong understanding of how RE can play a leading role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At Caslon we know how relationships with members of local communities and local faith communities can enrich pupils' experiences in RE and we strive to cultivate and maintain these relationships.

'Religious Education should help pupils to develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of many religions and beliefs.'

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
- RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential)
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)

Purpose

Religious Education is a compulsory subject and forms part of the National Curriculum to which every pupil should have access. It can provide the foundation for many people's lives and promote acceptance and understanding of other beliefs. Through the teaching of RE we aim to promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all pupils. The RE syllabus that we are currently following at Caslon Primary School is the 'SACRE Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2013'. At Caslon Primary School, we enable children to develop a sound knowledge for the following major religions; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, as well as Humanists who follow no religion. Both religious and non-religious world views are studied. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help children learn from religions as well as about religions.

Legal Requirements

Religious education is statutory for all registered pupils on the school roll. In Reception classes RE should be taught in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. Whilst Religious Education is not a statutory requirement for children in the Foundation Stage, it can however form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the Key Stage.

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 required by the Agreed Syllabus and recommended by the QCA.

Aims (Using the Jigsaw RE Scheme of Work)

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Jigsaw RE meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above.

By following Jigsaw RE at Caslon Primary School we intend that Religious Education will;

- **adopt an enquiry- based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.**
- **nurture children's own spiritual development.**

Objectives

- Children will learn about religions and religion – to ensure that religious education provides breadth and balance in both content and approaches to learning so that they become religiously literate.
- Children will learn from religions and religion – to ensure that they are able to: a) create meaning, find relevance and develop personally from their engagement with religious education;
- We provide opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and ensure the planned progression built into the syllabus offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. KS2 builds upon KS1, KS1 builds upon the Foundation Stage. In addition, certain skills and attitudes are encouraged e.g. learning to respect the skills of others, asking questions and listening to others, personal reflection on life and its values.
- Children with Special Educational Needs will access the R.E. study units at their own level by beginning with where the children are and developing their skills, knowledge and understanding at a rate that is challenging but appropriate for the individual child.
- The teaching and learning strategies within RE lessons will vary through reading and writing opportunities linked to the English curriculum as well having the opportunity to be creative in its broadest sense, including: thinking; doing; imagining; responding; speaking and listening; problem solving; as well as the creative and expressive arts.
- Teachers should ensure that their children have opportunities to encounter religions, faith and commitment through visits and visitors.
- Gifted and talented pupils will be offered differentiated opportunities, where appropriate, to extend their learning to reach their true potential.
- The children may use ICT to research and present their work. This will require discernment in their use of sources. Virtual tours of places of worship are used where actual visits are not possible.

Time spent on R.E:

FS & KS1: 36 hours (1 hour per week)

KS2: 36 hours (1 hour per week)

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Teaching and Learning

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, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

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 discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies. 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.

The Foundation Stage

It is important in the foundation stage to give children a broad, play based experience of RE in a range of contexts, including outdoor play. Early Years learning environments should feature RE scenarios based on experience in the real world, such as in role play. We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the Daycare, Nursery and Reception classes. In all classes, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year.

A long term plan has been created for the children split across EYFS. It is split into coverage for Daycare/Nursery and Reception. It focuses on key questions to develop the children's thinking and engage them in thought provoking questions.

Throughout EYFS, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in Birth to 5 and the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged two to five.

Pupils with SEND (see our SEND Policy)

We believe that all children have the right to access the RE curriculum. To ensure that children with special educational needs achieve to the best of their ability, it may be necessary to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for some pupils. We teach the RE curriculum to all children, whatever their ability. Through the teaching of RE 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. Where appropriate we may support SEN children in small groups or on a one to one basis.

Within Beech Tree SEMH Base, pupils will be taught a broad curriculum which will cover age and stage appropriate skills. Staff discretion will be used to determine the approaches used to teach these skills and always aim to build on prior learning. Although it will be the intention to cover as much of the National Curriculum content as possible, meeting the pupils' SEMH needs will take priority.

Meeting the needs of all pupils with SEND is a priority within RE and this is delivered through adaptive teaching approaches.

Pupils with SLCN needs may receive simplified questioning, be given more thinking time to process and come up with their responses and new vocabulary may be pre-taught to support understanding within lessons where topics and concepts are new.

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For those SEND pupils with cognition and learning difficulties, instructions and tasks may be chunked to ensure they are more manageable to understand and visual prompts/scaffolds may be given to support children to keep up with the lesson and manage their self-organisation. Where concepts need to be simplified or presented in a different manner to facilitate understanding, appropriate adaptations are made.

Staff are considerate of the cognitive load they put onto pupils and this means that slides are developed/adapted with this in mind to reduce overload on pupils who struggle with auditory and visual processing.

Pupils who may have SEMH needs, strategies such as use of fidget toys, accessing the calm corner and strategies to help reduce anxiety by preparing children ahead for trips and possibly changes.

For a pupil who may have physical and/or sensory needs, staff aim to consider implications of those needs at the point of planning, considering how a child may still access the curriculum fully with aids and/or alternative resources.

Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions, recorded work and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in assessing whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it. Children are assessed over three aspects of learning:

- a personal resonance with or reflection on the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- knowledge and understanding of the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question

These are tracked throughout the planning stage so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly. In line with non-statutory guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 (cited on page 1) descriptors of these aspects utilise age-related expectations of working towards, working at the expected attainment and working beyond.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring will support the self-evaluation process identifying areas of strength as well as those for development. The RE Lead is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into an Action Plan as necessary.

Through monitoring the coordinator will:

- Ensure that there is clear progression throughout the school
- Analyse assessment data and pupil progress
- Identify any training needs and offer extra support and guidance to staff when it is appropriate
- Ensure that there are suitable resources to help with the teaching and learning of RE

It is the responsibility of those working throughout the school to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and RE co-ordinator will carry out monitoring on RE as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Curriculum Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process. This policy will be reviewed as and when necessary.