

Religious Education Policy



Swansfield Park
Primary School

POLICY

Summary of Contents:

Wider Context	1
Aims	2
Objectives	2
Planning	3
Planning Across The Curriculum	4
Teaching & Learning	4
Mastery	5
Assessment & Record Keeping	5
Marking	6
Resources	6
CPD	6
Monitoring & Evaluation	7

The National Curriculum summarises the role of Religious Education as:

“Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual’s knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society.”

Religious education provokes challenging 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. It can develop children’s knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these.

Wider context for RE

The UK has a rich heritage of culture and diversity. This continues today in an era of globalisation and an increasingly interdependent world. Religion and belief for many people forms a crucial part of their culture and identity.

Religion and beliefs have become more visible in public life locally, nationally and internationally. The impact of religion on society and public life is constantly brought to public attention through extensive media coverage. The rapid pace of development in scientific and medical technologies and the environmental debate continue to present new issues which raise religious, moral and social questions. The internet enables learning and encourages participation in public discussion of issues in a new and revolutionary way.



At Swansfield Park Primary School, we believe RE also contributes to children's personal development, their well-being as well as community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in today's diverse society. RE is a cross curricular, interconnected subject connecting citizenship, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE education) and the humanities. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in their lives and the lives of others.

Overall, we believe religions and worldviews must be explored from the perspectives of those who subscribe to them as well as from those who do not. To acquire a complete picture, it is not enough to merely know about different religions and worldviews; it is also important to understand what can be learned from them.

Aims:

- To implement the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus, for Key Stage 1 and 2, for RE ensuring equal access to all children.
- To enable children to know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
 - Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals; enabling different individuals and communities to live together respectfully.
 - Develop the skills to express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.
- To help children become aware of traditions, festivals and symbolism associated with religion.
- To enable children to develop their own spirituality.
- To give children a positive attitude towards Religious Education.
- To help children to make appropriate moral judgements.

Objectives:

- To provide stimulating and challenging learning experiences.
- To use local houses of worship and local visiting clergy as a learning resource.
- To teach children about different religions through listening to stories, assemblies and visiting dignitaries.



- To develop an awareness of other world religions.
- To celebrate religious festivals
- To actively teach children to question and discuss topics related faith and personal values.
- To address moral issues/dilemmas through storytelling, role play and discussions.
- To provide opportunities for reflection stimulated by the natural world.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum based upon the school's RE scheme which ensures that the "Religious Education in Northumberland" and the Early Years Foundation stage programmes of study are covered. We use Discovery RE as our scheme of work.
- To promote thinking skills.
- To promote a clear and acceptable code of conduct as implemented through the school's behaviour policy.
- To continue to develop and regularly review RE within the school's RE scheme.

Planning:

At Swansfield Park Primary School, we believe that children learn best when learning activities are well planned, stimulating and challenging, ensuring progress in the long, medium and short-term.

This is taught through planned cross curricular topics and discrete units of work where relevant, based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Northumberland SACRE, Development matters document for the EYFS and follows the Discovery RE programme.

Planning is undertaken on three levels:

Long-term planning:

Religious Education is taught as part of a two-year topic based approach to teaching and learning. Annually, teaching teams will review their RE topics and plan for the future year, which then informs the medium term plans from Years 1 to 6. The RE Subject Leader will review these plans for curriculum coverage to ensure full statutory coverage. Work undertaken within the Foundation Stage is guided by the requirements and recommendations set out in the People and Communities section of the Early Years 'Development Matters' document. A set planning pro forma is used by all staff when completing long-term planning and



teachers are responsible for making sure that these are available on their class' Curriculum Information page of the school website.

Medium-term planning:

Medium term planning is carried out half –termly or sometimes termly. Teachers work in Key-Stage teams to identify and select objectives. Topic specific lessons as well as cross-curricular opportunities to both reinforce and embed children's learning are identified. Key-Stage teaching teams are responsible for generating planning overviews using the schools pro forma and ensuring that these are available on their class' Curriculum Information page of the school website.

Short-term planning:

Short-term planning is carried out on a weekly basis. Individual teachers are responsible for the planning of thoughtful, stimulating weekly lessons for their class. The school does not have a set pro forma for short-term planning, but it is expected that staff will detail the intended learning of each lesson, the teaching activities to be used as well as the learning outcomes.

Planning across the curriculum

By approaching the planning process in a cross-curricular manner, teachers are routinely identifying opportunities for our children to apply, and subsequently deepen their knowledge and understanding of RE topics. Also, opportunities are identified to develop their communication skills, creativity and personal insights of topics developing in their communities.

Teaching and Learning

At Swansfield Park Primary School, we use a variety of age-appropriate teaching strategies to cater for the varied learning styles of our children.

In the Early Years, teachers use the Development Matters document as a guide to provide positive relationships and enabling environments to promote children's understanding of People and Communities, within Understanding of the World. Children are given opportunities through stories, play and other creative endeavours to broaden their understanding. At Swansfield Park Primary School, teachers link these activities to important occasions that children may have experience of outside of the classroom – such as Diwali– so children gain an appreciation of the cultural significance of those events.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in RE through a range of different activities. As such, children of all abilities and ages have the opportunity to develop their skills and



knowledge in each unit, and, through the planned progression and greater expectation of each Key Stage, they are offered increasing challenge as they progress through the school. Teachers use information and communication technologies to gain children's interest in the subject, as well as using techniques such as engaging story-telling, drama, use of the outdoor environment, art and design technology, and hands-on opportunities (either on educational visits or use of artefacts in the classroom). At Swansfield Park Primary School, we believe that a rich, engaging curriculum involves the use of all of these methods throughout the year.

Mastery:

At Swansfield Park Primary School, we are working towards the goal of mastery in all of our curriculum areas. We believe that mastery is a journey, not a destination and that it is something that we, and our children, continually strive towards. The principals of mastery as it relates to RE are as follows:

- The large majority of pupils progress through the curriculum content at the same pace and differentiation is achieved by emphasising deep knowledge and individual support.
- A language rich environment is central to the teaching and learning process. Precise language is modelled in this context by teaching and support staff, and then by children either to their talk partner, the class as a whole or in their work.
- Teachers use enquiry based questioning to give children opportunities to express their knowledge of religions, which also tests and promotes understanding.

Assessment and Record-Keeping

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of the teaching and learning process at Swansfield Park Primary School. Whilst formative and summative assessments are both important in fully understanding the depth and extent of a child's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, assessment in RE is primarily formative due to the nature of activities and learning processes. However, it may take the form of a summative assessment at the end of a topic if the teacher feels that it is appropriate. At the end of each school year, the class teacher uses their professional judgement to complete the RE progress sheet to assess the number of children in their class who are working towards, meeting or exceeding the National Curriculum's learning outcomes for their age; these numbers are then reported to the subject leader.

At Swansfield Park Primary School, the key sources of assessment in RE are:

- Informal annotations on planning
- Discussions with and observations of individuals or groups of children
- Marking and feedback in children's books



- Photographs or videos of children's work
- Peer and self-assessment
- RE progress sheets (Years 1 – 6)

Marking and Feedback

A large proportion of the feedback given to children in RE is verbal and given during a lesson to correct any misunderstandings or to clarify points. Discussion, feedback and questioning is vital so that children are able to continually develop their understanding of religions and be able to learn from these. This allows for additional personal reflection, subject matter insight and use of language. In addition to verbal feedback, children receive feedback in their books after each piece of work. As teachers are encouraged to teach RE using a range of different strategies, the extent and form of this feedback will differ depending on the type of work children have produced, but will guide the children to identify any misunderstandings they may have and where they can broaden their knowledge. When work is cross-curricular, written feedback may be given in children's books from other subject areas.

Resources

RE is resourced alongside the topic areas children are studying. These resources can be found in the subject cupboard and the subject leader is responsible for ensuring that current resources meet the requirements of the Northumberland SACRE, the school's long-term planning documents, and that teachers have a bank of resources to draw on. These resources are audited, checked and updated annually, with areas of need identified and addressed using the school's subject bidding process.

The school has a central Learning Hub with 18 thin-client computers, a class set of iPads, and each individual classroom is equipped with a SMART board, projector and PC. Teachers use these modern technologies to help engage children and draw them into their lessons.

Continuing Professional Development:

All staff are encouraged to develop, assess and improve their teaching of RE. Where a member of staff feels a need for particular INSET, discussions should take place with their line manager as part of their Performance Management.

At Swansfield Park Primary School, we encourage staff to attend school-based INSET as well as external training courses advertised through the online E-Courier. We also involve staff with policy and decision making, as well



providing opportunities for in-school coaching where staff can both work with, and observe other colleagues.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Monitoring of the standards of children’s work and the quality of teaching in RE is the responsibility of both the RE subject leader and the senior leadership team. It involves: lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, pupil interviews, data analysis and planning reviews. The RE Subject Leader will also assess the effectiveness of action plans and results as well as identifying leaning opportunities in the local community.

Review of the policy

This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body.

VERSION HISTORY		
VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
This Version	March 2018	Adapted into Swansfield Park Primary School

APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION				
	NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Approved by	Jenny Smith	Headteacher		
Approved by	Bill Grisdale	Governor		

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	
----------------------------	--