



William Gilpin Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Approval	Board of Governors	Chairman	Tim Skinner
Headteacher	Simon Croutear	Ratification	Curriculum Committee
Date of last review	December 2019	Date of this review	October 2024
Date of next review	October 2029 (5 years)	Maintenance	Headteacher

William Gilpin Church of England VA Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Aims

At William Gilpin Church of England VA Primary School our aims reflect those outlined in Living Difference III, these are included below;

“Living Difference III seeks to introduce children and young people to what a religious way of looking at and existing in the world may offer in leading one’s life, individually and collectively.

It recognises and acknowledges that the question as to what it means to lead one’s life with such an orientation can be answered in a number of qualitatively different ways. These include the idea that to live a religious life means to subscribe to certain propositional beliefs (religion as truth); the idea that to live a religious life means to adhere to certain practices (religion as practice); and the idea that to live a religious life is characterised by a particular way of being in and with the world: with a particular kind of awareness of and faith in the world and in other human beings (religion as existence).” Living Difference IV, 2021

As per the above, Religious Education (RE) enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people.

At William Gilpin School, the majority of our children are white British and very few faiths other than Christianity are represented. Due to this we aim to develop the children’s knowledge and understanding of some of the major world faiths, with a focus on cultural and religious celebrations. We address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine being. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. In line with the requirements of the ‘Terms of Union with the National Society’, we encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

At William Gilpin CE VA Primary School, we want children to have their own personal viewpoints and be able to articulate these to others.

The Legal Position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act. This Act stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education lessons if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the governors. We request that, where possible, the parents provide something suitable from their own religion for the child to work on during the withdrawn sessions.

Spirituality

It is important for children to be given opportunities to develop spiritually. Within school, we have a spirituality area where children can go for quiet reflection. Children are also provided occasions throughout the day for spirituality, for example Worships, prayers or mindfulness sessions.

Teaching and Learning

The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. We base our teaching and learning 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 and to share these in a sensitive and thoughtful manner.

In planning our religious education curriculum we take account of the Hampshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and Diocesan guidelines. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in two phases (long term and medium term). The long term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group and advisors from the Diocese.

All Religious Education units are delivered through the enquiry-based approach advised within the Living Difference Syllabus outline below.

The Living Difference IV approach to enquiry in religious education entails teachers bringing children and young people first to attend to their own experience of particular concepts, before enquiring into related religious as well as non-religious ways of living, represented in Great Britain and beyond.

This approach to enquiry has five key steps where the teacher brings the child:

- at the Communicate and Apply steps to attend to their own and others' experience*
- at the Enquire and Contextualise steps to engage intellectually*
- at the Evaluate step to discern value for others and themselves in a way dependent on the context of the enquiry.*

Living Difference IV, 2021

Further expansion on this approach can be found within the Living Difference IV syllabus.

Progression

There are a number of ways that children make progression within our R.E. curriculum.

Firstly, expectations of children become progressively more challenging as children move through the school. In Year One, children are expected to talk and think about their learning and understanding within R.E. In Year Two, Three and Four children are expected to describe their learning and understanding to their class teachers or others. In Year Five and Six children must explain their thinking, this is with the goal to clarify a concept and explain it in its simplest form, demonstrating a more complex understanding.

Secondly, children are taught concepts in a manner that moves learning from broader concepts to those concepts distinctive to a particular religion, this progression is shared below;

A concepts – examples of concepts common to all people

B concepts – examples of concepts shared by many religions

C concepts – examples of concepts distinctive to particular religions

Pupils in EYFS and KS1 focus on the 'A concepts', pupils in KS2 focus on the 'B concepts' and pupils in Years 5 & 6 begin to focus on the 'C concepts'.

In addition, the 'golden threads' of belonging, community, special and love are woven into R.E. teaching - with two golden threads per class each year.

In some units, children explore concepts distinctive to Christianity. This is done using the scheme of work 'Understanding Christianity' to enhance our teaching of Christianity.

Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

When planning, consideration is given to children with Special Educational Needs, More Able and vulnerable children to ensure they have equality of access and provision where possible.

Inclusion

The teaching of R.E. is a statutory responsibility and therefore all children, regardless of need, will receive appropriate teaching and learning in this subject. This may require reasonable adjustments to be made.

Foundation Stage

In the reception class, religious education 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 religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Health and Safety

As with all areas of school life due care and attention must be paid to the Health and Safety of children. All teaching is considerate of Health and Safety and where trips have been arranged they must be risk assessed and be registered on the Hampshire EVOLVE system.

Impact

In order to monitor the impact of the quality of education within R.E., we use a number of approaches. Learning walks and work scrutinies are used to assess how children are progressing towards the National Curriculum attainment targets in addition to assessing the quality of teaching in the subject.

We aim to collect a broad range of evidence to monitor the impact of R.E. at William Gilpin CE VA Primary School. Below is a list of forms that evidence may be collected.

- Learning walk/work scrutiny summaries
- Photographic evidence
- Samples of children's work
- Interviews or focus groups with children or staff

In addition to the above, we also assess children's progress at several points throughout the year. Assessment of R.E. is always linked to the cycle of enquiry. Teachers assess children's understanding through formative assessment in the classroom and foundation subject conferences with children. Reporting statements are used to ensure we assess children against key areas within the RE curriculum. Reporting statements assess children's knowledge of the taught religious curriculum, with a focus on one particular area of the cycle of enquiry each half-term. Parents receive this information in an annual written report in the summer term.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Religious Education is the responsibility of the R.E. subject leader and the Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2029.

Date: October 2024