

# Religious Education Policy

## Introduction

Overton 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 believe that Religious Education 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.

RE is taught in accordance with the aims of the Agreed Syllabus. Particularly relevant to our school is the aim which states:

*‘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.’*

## Legal Requirements

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.

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.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the parents who have chosen to withdraw their children from school RE to provide acceptable alternative religious education work for their children to do during RE lessons. We expect that this work will be discussed with the class teacher so that these children can be fully included, and their alternative work linked to what the rest of the class is learning.

## The Scheme of Work

The scheme of work for Religious Education covers all the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. RE is taught in half-termly units in a combination of religion-based and thematic topics. In Key Stage 1, children study Christianity and Judaism and in Key Stage 2 build on this and also study Hinduism and Islam in Y5/6.

## 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 make the most of opportunities to help the 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 try to ensure that children have at least one local RE visit every year.

Through RE children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects. In particular we are developing art, ICT, design technology, drama and literacy combined appropriately the teaching of RE. (see the Curriculum Maps)

## 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 PHSE 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 strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing 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, Assessment and Reporting

At the end of each unit of work, the teacher assessing each child against statements and records each child as having achieved in line, above or below expectations. These are recorded on a class sheet and analysed so that any differences in achievement can be identified. A whole staff moderation is carried out each year to ensure consistency in marking and assessing. This information is used to report annually to parents.

## Management

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the Humanities Team, in close collaboration with the Leadership Team.

A member of the team attends regular training and professional development, and organises INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary. RE planning is collected for monitoring each year, and the scheme of work is evaluated annually.

Resources are bought with the annually allocated RE budget and stored in the resource Room for use by all staff. The storing of the school's RE resources is organised by the team and an audit completed annually