



## RE Policy

*Religious education in Beam County Primary School asks about meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end. It gives space for individual reflection and wondering who and why; it explores Christianity, other principal religions and world views, and how they affect the fabric of personal and social life; it identifies the reality of evil, injustice and suffering and it opens up visions of how life for all the world's citizens may be transformed by truth, beauty and goodness.*

Religious Education has much to contribute to helping children and young people to value themselves and their families, the groups to which they belong, the environment and the diversity of society. Through their learning in RE they will develop an understanding of the role and significance of religion in the world and the important beliefs and values that shape it.

### Aims of religious education in the wider curriculum

- to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve
- to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

### iii. The importance of religious education

*'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 students' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances students' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings and practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.*

*Religious education encourages students to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.*

*It challenges students to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith, ethics and to communicate their responses.*

*Religious education encourages students to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community. Religious education has an important role in preparing students for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables students to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables students to combat prejudice.'*

(The non-statutory national framework for RE, p.7, 2004)

The key concepts for religious education



The national guidance recommends that syllabuses adopt a concept-based approach. It is important to ensure that the key concepts listed below match the level statements to ensure coherent planning, teaching and assessment.

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- expressing meaning
- identity, diversity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitments

Religious Education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) and well-being

RE has the potential to make a significant contribution to schools' statutory duty to promote well-being of pupils, supporting them in becoming confident individuals and responsible citizens. Good RE engages the whole person and is particularly relevant to well-being in terms of relationships and in developing the emotional, social, moral, cultural, intellectual, economic and spiritual aspects of life. It helps pupils to build the knowledge, skills and dispositions to search for meaning in life and deepen their understanding of themselves and others, distinguish between right and wrong, and help them to deal with challenges and difficulties. Through their study of religions students will realise that the impact of religions and beliefs can be both positive and negative and evaluate both kinds of outcome in order to help them make positive and healthy choices. The study of how religions respond to issues such as conflict and justice, sex and relationships, crime and punishment, prejudice and discrimination can give students insight into the reasons for harmful behaviour and the impact of beliefs on actions, and provide them with opportunities to reflect on their own responses.

By taking part in activities in RE such as public speaking, debates, investigating and evaluating beliefs and religious practice, exploring ultimate questions, taking part in role play or responding to reflective experiences, students learn to listen carefully, develop self-awareness and self-esteem and understand the needs of others.

Community cohesion is promoted by children working together to create a society in which there is a common vision and a sense of belonging by all communities; a society where the diversity of peoples' backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society where strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace and wider community.



RE plays a key role in enabling students to develop their understanding and appreciation of diversity through the study of religion and belief. It helps to promote shared values, respect for all, and to challenge racism and discrimination.

This can be achieved by providing a high quality classroom experience of RE enriched by opportunities to meet with representatives from, and make visits to, religious and non-religious belief groups in the local area.

Effective RE will promote community cohesion in:

- the school community
- the community where the school is located
- the UK community
- the global community

RE in Beam provides an effective context to promote community cohesion and focusses on securing high standards of attainment for all students from all backgrounds. In order to achieve this students' progress in RE will be monitored carefully and any under-achievement by particular groups addressed.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that lessons are appropriately differentiated for those with special educational needs and those that are Gifted and Talented. A proportion of lessons will be taught using P4C as a means of delivering content and to explore concepts and views. ICT will be used as appropriate to deliver lessons and for pupils to use as a means of demonstrating their understanding and presenting work.

#### Legal requirements for religious education

- Schools must provide RE for all registered pupils, although parents may choose to withdraw their child. This includes children in reception in Sixth Form Colleges who wish to receive it.
- We must teach RE according to this locally agreed syllabus. Inspection is based upon the implementation of this syllabus.

#### Time allocation

Schools are advised by SACRE to devote 5% of curriculum time in key stages 1 – 4 to religious education. This equates to the following hours:

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### FOUNDATION STAGE

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage RE should be a discernible element of the curriculum.



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## KEY STAGE 1

36 hours per year (approximately 50 minutes per week)

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## KEY STAGE 2

45 hours per year (approximately 1hr 15 minutes per week)

### Right to withdraw

The headteacher and the school governors have a responsibility to ensure that religious education (and collective worship) is provided in the school and that parents / carers have information about the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE – usually in the school prospectus.

Should such a request apply to a child at Beam an offer to meet and communicate with parents/carers will be made to clarify what happens in RE so that parents are clear about the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision. Although they do not have to give a reasons for withdrawing their child from RE, the intention of the law was so that parents could arrange for their child to have their own RE rather than that offered by the school.

### Attainment targets: Learning about and learning from religion

The key indicators of attainment in religious education are contained in the following two attainment targets:

Attainment target 1 (AT1): Learning about religion including enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion. It focuses on beliefs, teachings and sources, practices and ways of life and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Students learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Attainment target 2 (AT2): Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on, and response to, their own experiences and learning about religion. It develops students' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

### Assessment

In religious education, just as in other subjects of the curriculum, there is a body of content that forms the basis of pupils' study in the subject. It is important to let pupils know how they are doing and what they must do next to make progress. As well as knowledge and skills, it is a key part of religious education that pupils' positive attitudes to study should be encouraged and praised.



The justification for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in RE is largely the same for any curriculum subject, with benefits for pupils (for example, in letting them know how well they are doing in relation to expected standards) and their teachers (for example, in helping them plan to meet pupils' learning needs), as well as providing information for parents / carers and the wider community (for example, in reporting on standards being achieved).

In RE, as for other subjects, assessment can only be made of what pupils actually communicate. There may be all sorts of progress going on in pupils' minds, and a self-assessment exercise may bring out some of this, but unless newly gained knowledge and understanding is in some way communicated, teachers and pupils' peers will not be able to comment.

The level descriptions in the locally agreed syllabus ' Learning for Life' provide the basis to make judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. In the foundation stage, pupils' attainment is assessed in relation to the early learning goals, (Page 43).

The scheme has a section of 'I can Statements'

Assessment may be done with whole class(es), smaller groups or individual pupils:

a) as an integral, ongoing and informal part of teaching, through, for example:

- conversations with pupils about what they know and can do;
- questions differentiated to provide opportunities for pupils of differing abilities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding;
- gathering information from pupils' self and peer assessment activities.

b) as a formal, planned activity, through, for example:

- an initial assessment of what pupils already know and can do, e.g., through a mind-map;
- differentiated tasks linked to the 'levels' in your RE syllabus;
- summative tests or examinations;
- pupil interviews.

Evidence of pupils' attainment in RE is gathered from the whole range of learning experiences..

### Feedback for Learners

Clear feedback with explanations of strengths and weaknesses can help direct pupils' attention towards the gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills that are worth developing in order that they can grow in (a) their awareness of





## Collective Worship

### Beam's aims of Collective Worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- To provide an opportunity for the children to consider the purpose and meaning of life;
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- To encourage children to participate and respond;
- To develop children's sense of community spirit ;
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and reinforce positive attitudes;
- To provide an opportunity for calm reflection.

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together, as a class, key stage or whole school participating in an act of worship.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of broadly Christian character', we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious beliefs and traditions that are represented in the school and wider community.

### Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of worship in our school and this forms part of our assembly held in key stages, or individually within class. It may include music, song, stories, and shared experiences, readings from sacred writings, prayer and reflection.

KS1 have assemblies in Monday, Wednesday and /Friday afternoons. KS2 have assemblies on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. For the remaining two sessions, a week the class teacher is responsible for providing an opportunity for collective worship.

At the end of every half term, both Key Stages &2 come together for a special assembly where we celebrate the children's achievements.

If for any reason an assembly does not take place the class teacher is responsible for ensuring the children have time for prayer and reflection in the classroom

We conduct our assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell the children that assembly is a period of calm and reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect the children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet



thoughtful, listen carefully to the teachings, and participate fully (where possible) in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects as a focal point for the attention of children.

The Head teacher, senior management and other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, however local clergy or other representative of local religious groups conduct them as well. We do, on occasions, have representatives from charities or organisations lead assemblies.

We take our themes for most assemblies from the Christian faith and we often reflect on the festivals and events of the Christian Calendar. Those taking assemblies plan in advance ensuring that important themes are covered without repetition. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the curriculum. Further opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder are provided in curriculum areas such as RE, Literacy, Art, Science PSHE and Music.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to partake in assemblies by showing their work to other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies are an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements recognised. Beam County primary school is a successful school and we aim to celebrate this achievement.

On occasion, parents are invited to attend assemblies and this promotes a sense of community spirit and is a demonstration of how home and school together support the achievements of our children. We also have assemblies such as Harvest, where parents, friends and the wider community are invited to join us. Our Governor's attendance is welcomed.

## Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their choice, in accordance with the 1944 Education Act that was revised in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The head teacher has a record of the children who withdraw from collective worship.

## Monitoring and Review

