



Moulsham

Junior School

Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

Date of Policy: January 2017

Ratified by Governors: Spring Term 2017

Next Review: Spring Term 2021

Our mission

'To work together enthusiastically so as to inspire children to achieve their personal best and be well equipped for the future'

Introduction

Moulsham Junior School is made up of staff and pupils who originate from different nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment including new arrivals.

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.

Provision of RE

RE is taught in accordance with the Religious Education in Essex Scheme and is taught for 1 hour a week. This time lies outside the time allocated for assemblies and collective worship. In accordance with the law we provide RE for all pupils of the school. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE lessons through discussion and agreement with the Headteacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from teaching RE. It is important to stress that learning about and from religion does not mean learning to be religious and our aim is not to convert pupils or urge a particular religious viewpoint on them.

Teaching and Learning

In accordance with the Essex Syllabus for RE (exploRE) we will teach 7 major religions: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Humanism. We focus on Christianity as the main religion with this being taught in every year group.

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 impact 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.

The second of these Attainment Targets is achieved through realising the first. It is important therefore to acknowledge the independence of learning **about** and learning **from** religion in order to ensure effective RE teaching. For example, exploring places special to religious believers could lead to consideration of pupils' special places or vice versa.

Equal Opportunities

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN, EAL or G and T 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 staff, pupils and parents in order to make RE relevant and interesting to all our pupils. When appropriate, important festivals are celebrated from different religions within the school and wider community.

Skills

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 RE and other curriculum subjects for example:

Year 3 study Hindu gods and goddesses and worshipping and celebrating Diwali as part of their India topic.

Year 4 Study Moses, Exodus, Pesach and Journey to the Promised Land as part of their Ancient Egyptian topic, and Christianity in the Local community as part of their Local History topic, Sikhism; the five 5s and features of a gurdwara.

Year 5 study Hinduism linking with their topics on India and Rivers. They link stories of Hindu gods with their English units on 'stories from other cultures.'

Year 6 study the Jewish Home and Synagogue as part of their World War Two topic as well as introduce the beliefs and ideas of Humanism.

RE is a key opportunity for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. In RE, as well as CPSHE, children are invited to reflect on their 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. RE also supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider context, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

Outcomes in Children's Learning

These are the outcomes we aspire to:

- That children will take a positive view of RE and increase their interest in the subject
- That they will develop a knowledge and understanding about Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Humanism.
- That their study of other people and their beliefs will enable them to respect others as well as develop their own beliefs and values
- Opportunities to develop other key skills such as listening, reading, writing, working with others, communication, computing skills, application of number and problem solving

Assessing Pupils

Assessment will take place at the end of every term when teachers will assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of the unit that they have studied. This will be through observation, discussion and marking of work. Pupils are guided to think about what they have done well, what they need to improve and ways in which they might make that improvement.

Monitoring of the Policy

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the RE subject leader in the following ways:

- Undertaking planning and learning scrutinies
- Undertaking pupil perception interviews
- Evaluating and auditing the use of resources

Collective Worship

Rationale

School worship is an affirmation and celebration of the values and ethos of the school.

Aims

Through our collective worship we aim to:

- Provide an experience of worship that will allow children of any faith to respond to the power and peace created during reflection
- To help create a warm community spirit, within the school and beyond
- Strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the values of the school
- To help generate a culturally and spiritually nurturing atmosphere
- Encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them
- Foster a concern for others within the school and wider world
- Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

Legal Framework and Right of Withdrawal

The law says that there must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude. (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements will be made to accommodate these children.

The School requires a written request to enable a child to be withdrawn from collective worship.

Organisation

We hold a daily act of collective worship in school. This may either form part of an assembly, which could be whole school or class based, or an act of reflection within a classroom.

Worship is led by a member of staff but other church leaders or representatives of religious groups may also be invited to lead worship from time to time.

We reflect the festivals and celebrations of all the major faith groups.

In our Collective Worship and RE lessons children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's views, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We hold special times to share our learning with each other; in school once a year each class takes assembly and in church we share Christmas and Easter and parents are invited to join us for these excellent times of worship and praise.

How Worship is planned

We use a range of approaches in worship. We tell stories, from all the major faith groups; we sing a variety of hymns and songs; we use data projection, music, signs and symbols. We seek to create an atmosphere in a variety of ways, sometimes in quietness and stillness, sometimes in noise and movement.

School assemblies may incorporate singing and always include a time for reflection.

Once a week, we use assembly time to celebrate the achievements and learning of the children. We also use this assembly to reward children for achievements both in and out of school. These celebration assemblies, play an important part in recognising the unique worth of every member of the school community.