

A Curriculum with HEART....

Our forest/rural surroundings encourage curiosity and wonder and therefore our curriculum is an adventure that allows our children to explore new things, discover more about themselves and the world around them and create a toolkit of knowledge and skills that mean they are well equipped to face the next stage of their adventure. Our values run through everything we do and mean we face adventures with HEART.

RE Subject Statement 2023-2024

Through RE, children are introduced to what a religious way of looking at and existing in the world may offer in leading one's life, individually and collectively. As a federation, we follow the agreed syllabus *Living Difference IV* for Hampshire. It recognises and acknowledges that the question as to what it means to live one's life with a religious 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 that the idea to live a religious life is characterised by a particular way of being in and with the world, with a particular awareness of, and faith in, the world and in other human beings (religion as existence).

RE plays an educational part in the lives of children as they come to speak, think and act in the world. Teachers bring children to first attend to their own experience and that of others, to engage intellectually with material that is new and to discern what is valuable with regard to living a religious life or one informed by non-religious or other perspectives.

Religions and other traditions engaged with

The agreed syllabus reflects that religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian and takes into account the teachings and practices of other principal religions in Great Britain. It is not designed to convert pupils. In each key stage, Christianity is studied proportionally more than any other single perspective. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Dharmic religion of Sikhism is also introduced. In KS1, Sikhism is studied in-depth. In KS2, Judaism and Islam are studied in depth and Buddhist, Sikhism and Humanism also taught. Teachers also include the religious traditions and non-religious perspectives from children in their classes in the curriculum.

Time for RE

RE is taught as a stand alone subject following the time requirements of the agreed syllabus. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children study RE for a week each half

term, totalling 36 hours over the year. In KS1, children are taught RE weekly in hour lessons, totally 36 hours over the year. In KS2, children are taught RE for the equivalent of one hour 15 minutes per week. These lessons may be blocked and total 45 hours over the year.

Spiral curriculum

RE is taught through a spiral curriculum which deepens and broadens over time. There are four golden thread concepts of community, belonging, love and special which thread through all key stages. Three broad groups of concepts/words (which give expression to human experience) are used in the spiral curriculum. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn about one golden thread and then other A concepts/words (which are shared within and outside religions and religious traditions). In KS1, children learn about all four golden threads, other A concepts/words and a B concept/word at the end of each year to prepare them for KS2 (B concepts/words are shared across religions and religious traditions). In lower KS2, children learn about all four golden threads and A and B concepts/words. In upper KS2, children learn about all four golden threads, A and B concepts/words and also C concepts/words (distinctive to particular religions and religious traditions). Material studied is well sequenced, connected and revisited over time.

Cycle of enquiry

Each unit is taught through a cycle of enquiry. This normally begins with an **experiential** stage, where children experience the concept/word for themselves in concrete and real situations. Then the children move to the **communicate** stage, where they are introduced to the concept/word and invited to share their experiences in different ways. This can be creative and does not always include writing, especially for younger children. Next children move to the **apply** stage, where classroom conversation is opened up. At this stage, children become aware of what others believe, beginning with those in their class. After that, children move to the **inquire** stage, where the teacher introduces material and vocabulary of the religious traditions and practices. Although this stage is normally new information, sometimes it can include previously encountered learning which is then revisited in new ways to broaden and deepen understanding. The children then move to the **contextualise** stage, where they learn about the experience of those living a life with religious orientation. Lastly, children enter the **evaluate** stage. Here they consider the value of what has been taught for those living within the context studied and also discern what value it has for their own lives.

There are times when the cycle of enquiry may start at the inquire stage if the concept/word is not as easily translatable into the children's own experiences.

Classroom dialogue

Questions are important in RE and the children's questions are valued, when regarding their own and others experiences, when considering different religious traditions and practices and when they come to discern what is of value for themselves. Teachers use questioning to help children engage intellectually, use new vocabulary and to support them to speak, think and act.

Ensuring progression across and over key stages

Teachers use the RE progression document in their planning of RE which sets out the end of year expectations for Y1, 2, lower KS2 and upper KS2. These expectations are broken down into the different stages of the cycle of enquiry: communicate, apply, inquire and contextualise and then evaluate.

For Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 children, there is a greater emphasis on the experiential, communicate and apply stages. Over time in KS2, children will spend more time studying increased content and living examples in the inquire and contextualise stages.

Assessment

Teachers use assessment opportunities throughout the year. Formative assessment checks misunderstandings, gaps and misconceptions of traditions and religious practices. Summative assessment, informed by end of year expectations, takes place during each unit focused on a particular stage in the cycle of enquiry. The stages assessed are recorded on the RE progression document and take into account that KS2 children will spend more time studying the inquire and contextualise stages.

