

Religious Education Policy

This policy has been written for the non-church schools within the First Federation Trust.

The Importance of Religious Education

RE has a very high profile within the curriculum of our school and learning activities provide fully for the needs of all learners. Learners will be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of higher level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion on the world. Attainment should be high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religions and world views.

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Religious Education (RE) has an important place in the curriculum of all schools. It provides a safe space for young people to develop their understanding of people, cultures, faiths and relationships. (The Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus)

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at Gatehouse Primary Academy. The spiritual and moral development of our children underpins all aspects of our school life.

Legal Requirements

The board of directors is responsible for the subject in the school. This is delegated to the Head of School and the Religious Education subject leader on a daily basis.

The Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus requires that all pupils develop understanding of Christianity in each key stage. In addition, across the age range, pupils will develop understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. These are Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all of our classrooms. These worldviews, including, for example Humanism, will also be the focus for study in thematic units.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of five per cent of curriculum time for RE.

This is set out in the table below, and based on the most recent national guidance.

4-5s	36 hours of RE (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
5-7s	36 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)
7-11s	45 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours of RE)

Withdrawals

At Gatehouse Primary Academy, RE is taught as an engaging, inclusive and enquiry-led subject, open to all and at the centre of the curriculum, and we would hope that all parents would understand the value of this for all children. However, parents have a right by law to withdraw their children from the Religious Education curriculum. In this event, the school will undertake responsibility for the supervision of withdrawn pupils with regard to health and safety, alternative work will be provided. We always encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have about the RE curriculum with the headteacher/ subject leader before making a final decision. Request for full or partial withdrawal need to be made to the headteacher in writing.

Aims

The purpose of teaching Religious Education at Gatehouse Primary Academy is to:

- Enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- Enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Principles

At Gatehouse Primary Academy by the end of year 6 all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum pupils are able to:

- Give an informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Effective teaching and learning about Religions and World Views

At Gatehouse Primary Academy we have a duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views.

We aim to provide:

- A challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework.
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development.

We aim through our teaching:

- To provide a curriculum of Religious Education appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our school, at their different stages of development.
- To contribute to the spiritual, social and moral development of the school as a caring community and the pupils as individuals.
- Through study of major world religions to encourage an understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice in society today.

We aim to encourage children in our school:

- To grow an awareness of others through learning activities involving sharing and co-operation and to develop trust and respect for others.
- To learn something of the religious experiences of others.
- To develop their own beliefs, values and ideals in the light of their experiences.
- To develop respect for other people, their beliefs and their life-styles.
- To develop an enquiring attitude towards religion.

Entitlement

- In the main, Religious Education will be taught as a discrete subject although the approach may vary.
- Religious Education at Gatehouse Primary Academy is organised using a whole school overview or plan. This lays out which units, or themes, should be studied by each year group. The Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus is referred to and the units of work about the Christian faith will use the Understanding Christianity materials.
- Wherever possible all children will learn from primary source material, will be taken on trips to places of worship, and will meet outside speakers representing their beliefs.

Implementation

- Religious Education will be taught throughout the school. Mainly by the class teacher and may be supported from time to time by clergy from local churches and visiting speakers.
- Religious Education may be taught in a 'whole class' setting but with flexibility to allow for discussion, questioning and reflection in small groups and individually.

- Visits to local churches such as St Gregory's and Dawlish Christian Fellowship and other places of worship such as Exeter Islamic Centre and Exeter Synagogue.
- A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
 - ◊ Teacher presentations, role play and story telling.
 - ◊ Question and answer sessions, discussions and debates.
 - ◊ Individual and group research.
 - ◊ Photographs, pictures and maps
 - ◊ ICT, film, podcasts, radio, websites, newspapers to research and communicate ideas.
- Progression will be guided by The Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.
- Classroom support will be welcomed under the guidance of the teacher, e.g. skilled individuals and parents etc.

Special Educational Needs.

Children with special educational needs will work alongside the other children in their group, as in other curriculum areas, but differentiation in approach, language and expected outcome will be appropriate to the varying needs in the class. We aim to meet the full entitlement of every child in our school. To optimise inclusion, the children's differing needs for learning (including children with special educational needs) will be addressed through differentiated activities.

Planning, Assessment, Reporting and Record Keeping

- All pupils will be assessed based on the assessment procedures used throughout the school and the guidance offered by the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.
- Children's work is evaluated and assessments for each child are carried out at agreed points in the academic year. These statements will inform future planning assessment; reporting to parents; and curriculum monitoring by the coordinator and the Head of School.
- Summative reports to parents will be made at the end of the year.
- Long Term Planning is informed by guidance offered by the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Head of School has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The subject leader will assist the Head of School by monitoring Long Term and Medium Term plans.
- The subject leader will assist the Head of School by monitoring RE through work scrutinies.
- The subject leader will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in Religious Education and disseminate this as appropriate.
- The subject leader will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- The subject leader will be responsible for identifying where the strengths and areas to develop are within the subject. They may create an annual plan for Religious Education.