

WESTBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



INTRODUCTION

Westbury Junior is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School, where an overt Christian ethos is actively promoted. We believe that all children, regardless of ability or background, should be given the opportunity to develop spiritually, morally, socially and educationally. Christian values inform all aspects of the school's work, including the personal conduct of pupils and staff.

MISSION STATEMENT

Westbury C of E Junior School
Will Care for, Respect and Inspire
All
To create a
Vibrant Christian Learning Community

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The school has a separate policy for Collective worship which can be read alongside this policy. Each day the children will participate in school assemblies. Each day the act of worship will be led by a teacher, a visiting speaker, or the local clergy. Worship begins with the lighting of a candle, usually a child, and the liturgy: 'This is the day the Lord has made' with the response 'We will rejoice and be glad of it.'

WITHDRAWAL RIGHTS

Although parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons or from the Act of Collective Worship, the school has worked hard to build bridges with the families of children from other religions in order to make the assemblies as inclusive as possible. Muslim families have agreed that their children are allowed to remain in the assemblies, although they do not take part in the prayers or songs if they do not wish to.

SEN

We have above the national average in numbers of children in our care who have special educational needs related to medical issues, learning difficulties or behavioural problems.

Where there is a concern over a pupils' attainment in RE, or access to the lessons or assemblies, they will be supported in line with the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice.

RATIONALE

Religious education in this Church of England Voluntary Controlled school is firmly rooted in the basic tenets of Christianity. Whilst the diocesan guidelines for religious education are incorporated into the schemes of work, our approach is ecumenical and children of all faiths and no faith are encouraged to reflect on what might be learnt from religion in the light of their own beliefs and experiences.

We believe that it is fundamental for the children to belong to a safe and nurturing community, founded on strong Christian values. This enables children to develop an array of skills that will equip them to meet the challenges of our ever changing world in which they can make their own positive contribution to our global society.

Although our school has a comparatively limited ethnic mix, it is an important part of religious education to encourage tolerance and respect for other cultures and faiths.

AIMS

In Religious Education our aim is:

1. To provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
2. To develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, religious traditions and world-views, which offer answers to ultimate questions.
3. To encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, in order to flourish within communities, as responsible citizens in society, and global communities.
4. To teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
5. To prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society; to encourage empathy, generosity and compassion in day to day life.

Westbury Junior School seeks to maintain close links with local churches and other religious communities.

PROCESS OF LEARNING

At Westbury Junior School we want children to feel happy, secure and confident in their learning and to be able to express their developing spirituality. Every child is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and at this school we want this to be provided in a way which inspires, motivates and makes learning fun. Our Christian ethos affects not only what we teach, but also how we teach. As part of the children's journey of learning, we look for evidence of what they have achieved and interpret this, so that we can decide where the children are, where they need to go and how best to get there.

The programme of study, Discovery RE, is an enquiry based syllabus with lesson plans, starter activities and one where a 'Big Question' follows a sequence for learning and teaching which enables pupils to engage with their own and others' experiences. It provides a model for a sequence of enquiry and skills that reflects the principles of the school learning policy.

We aim to develop the children's ability to ask and pursue questions and aim to use a range of resources including religious stories, art, music, festivals, artefacts, places of worship, rituals and prayers, visits and visitors.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING OF RE

At the end of each unit of work, teachers will assess the children based on their work and contributions during class activities. Twice a year a formal assessment task will be given. Attainment of the children will be recorded on the year group R.E. tracking sheet where progress throughout each year can be monitored.

ARRANGEMENT FOR MONITORING STANDARDS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE

The head teacher and RE subject leader will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data, through lesson observations, through work scrutiny and through pupil interviews.

This information will feed into the Church school self-evaluation process. (SIAMS)

SOME FURTHER PRINCIPLES FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING:

- Children's questions will be dealt with sensitively and, although no definitive answer may be given to specific questions about the mysteries of life, we will share and promote Christian values and explanations.
- Planning and delivery of religious education will be carried out by the class teacher in accordance with other policies, specifically health and safety, equal opportunity, PSHE. behaviour and special needs.
- Assessment procedures for Religious Education are in line with the assessment and marking policy and with agreed attainment targets to inform progress and planning.

TIMINGS

Religious Education in Westbury CE Junior School is taught in accordance with the legal requirements of the Agreed syllabus for Wiltshire and follows the recommended annual time allocation of Religious Education in Key stage 2.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the 1988 Education Reform Act the Head teacher is required to secure that:-

- i) All pupils take part in daily collective worship.
- ii) RE is given to all such pupils in accordance with the provision in the school's basic curriculum.

Our RE teaching recognises their rights as a child in conjunction with the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly articles 12, 14 and 30 which state that:

Article 12 - Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

Article 14 - Children have the right to think and feel what they want, and to practise their religion as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide their children on these matters.

Article 30 - Children have a right to learn and use the customs and language of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

THE GOVERNING BODY WILL:

- i. Review the provision made for RE and collective worship.
- ii. Take a role in the monitoring of RE across the school.
- iii. Ensure that RE will conform to any arrangements made at the request of parents that it be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and reflect the fact that Westbury Junior School is a distinctively and recognizably Christian institution.

This RE Policy was approved on behalf of the Governing Body by:

Chair of GB: Ian Cunningham

Date: September 2015