

Canon Popham C of E Primary Academy
Statement of Intent for Religious Education.

Intent

Here, at Canon Popham, we believe that religious education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It promotes respect and open-mindedness towards others with different faiths and beliefs and encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging through self-awareness and reflection.

As a Church of England school, we have adopted six 'Christian Values for life' which underpin all of our work in school. These are Endurance, Compassion, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Justice and Hope; we aim to reflect upon these throughout our RE learning as links can be made with other religions. Through pupils' encounter with RE their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted and their awareness of the British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs is supported. Children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief. RE does not try to persuade but rather inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place.

The principle aim of RE is to engage pupils in an enquiry approach where they can develop an understanding and appreciation for the expression of beliefs, cultural practices and influence of principle religions and worldviews in the local, national and wider global community.

Implementation

Religious education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core nor a foundation subject, however the Guidance released in 2010 views it as an important curriculum subject. It is the intent of Canon Popham that religious education is delivered through an enquiry-based approach, therefore, we implement a combination of the Understanding Christianity resource and the Discovery RE scheme. These are complementary but distinct and together they deliver a holistic and balanced RE programme both of which promote subject specific Vocabulary.

The Understanding Christianity Project resource supports pupils in developing their understanding of Christianity as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. This is achieved by integrating pupils' developing understanding of significant theological concepts within Christianity with their own self-understanding and understanding of the world, as part of their wider religious literacy. The approach is based on the core concepts of Christian belief, as expressed in the Bible and lived out in the lives of Christians today. These core concepts are revisited as children move through the school, deepening pupil's understanding and making the links to the overall 'big story' or 'salvation narrative'. Understanding Christianity aims to

- enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith by exploring core theological concepts
- enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians

- Develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

It follows a three step enquiry based approach Making sense of the text related to the core concept, Understanding the impact of belief in these concepts in the lives of Christians and the Christian community and Making connections beyond the concepts with other learning, including pupils' own responses. This means that the move from text outwards through the world of the Christian and to the world of the pupil runs through each unit. Understanding Christianity also contributes to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the subject matter and the attitudes developed in the classroom.

The Discovery RE scheme covers the Doncaster Agreed Syllabus for RE from Key Stage One and Two and can be used to contribute to the learning experiences of the early learning goals within the Foundation Stage. Discovery RE follows a four-step enquiry of Engagement, Investigation, Evaluation and Expression. It begins each unit with a key question which requires pupils to use their subject knowledge and apply it, rather than the knowledge being an end in itself. Discovery RE embraces the need to challenge and extend children individually whilst encouraging skills of reflection and empathy, it is also a major source of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education with opportunities mapped in the medium term planning. At Canon Popham, we use this scheme to develop children's learning in a progressive way to teach Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Humanism.

There are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of the children and the staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity and we value the links, which are, and can be made between home, school, and a faith community. We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils and make cross curricular links where possible including Reading, Writing, Art and Design, Geography, History and Music. At Canon Popham, we promote teaching in RE that stresses open enquiry and first-hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children, including but not limited to;

- Handling artefacts
- Exploring sacred texts
- Responding to images, games, stories, art, music and dance.
- Using imaginative play or drama to express feelings and ideas
- Making visits to religious
- Taking part in whole school events (Harvest Festival, Christmas, Reason for the Season)
- Participating in moments of quiet reflection
- Participating in Open the Book assemblies
- Comparing religions and worldviews through discussion
- Debating and communicating religious belief, worldviews, philosophical ideas and answering and asking ultimate questions posed by these.

The key aims for religious education are reflected in the two attainment targets;

- Attainment Target 1- Learning about religion and belief
- Attainment Target 2- Learning from religion and belief
- Attainment Target 2- Personal Reflection

The development of knowledge, skills and understanding focuses on these key aspects of learning in Religious Education, both the Understanding Christianity resource and the Discovery RE scheme contribute to these; units of work have activities which contribute towards assessment and end of key stage expectations are provided.

Impact

Through their R.E. learning, the children at Canon Popham are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. Our children are developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life, which they are then able to communicate to the wider community. R.E. offers our children the means by which to understand how other people choose to live and to understand why they choose to live in that way. As such, R.E. is invaluable in an ever changing world.

The impact of our R.E. curriculum is also sought directly from the pupils through surveys, questionnaires and pupils self-reflection at the end of each unit of work, this helps to gather pupils' voice on this subject and together with summative assessment, action can be taken to further develop the R.E. curriculum.