

Policy for Religious Education at
Pontarddulais Primary School

At Pontarddulais Primary School we believe that the very nature of Religious Education provides opportunities for our pupils to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is receptive and respectful towards others. This is demonstrated within our schools' mission statement that;

**'Everyone is unique,
Everyone is important
and everyone deserves the very best.'**

At Pontarddulais Primary School Religious Education is delivered in line with the County Agreed Syllabus 2008.

Aims

The central aims of Religious Education in the school are to help children to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- Grow in their spiritual development through reflection on their thoughts feelings and relationships.
- To develop particular skills (reflection, empathy, communication, reasoning, enquiry, analysis and evaluation) and attitudes (respect, open-mindedness, self-esteem, sensitivity, critical awareness, appreciation and wonder) which enable effective learning to take place.
- Explore a range of questions of meaning and how religious teachings have responded to these issues.
- Explore issues within and between faiths to help them understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions and understand the influence of these on individuals, societies, communities and cultures.
- Extend their thinking and analytical skills as well as developing creatively, imaginatively and emotionally.
- To develop pupils' ability to evaluate their learning experience in RE.

Objectives

We believe the above aims can be achieved if we:

- Help children to understand the religious beliefs, attitudes and activities of other people and develop and express their own beliefs and values.
- Foster children's awe and wonder; extend their natural curiosity and help them to use their imagination in order to extend their spiritual development.
- Encourage children to recognise their own value and importance as individuals; promote their social development so that they can give as well as receive, and develop their understanding that life is a series of significant stages.
- Consider some basic religious concepts and ways in which they have been expressed in sacred books, language and writings, symbols and the arts, daily living and rituals.
- Introduce children to the lives of key figures in various religions and to people who have responded to their teaching and example.
- Familiarise children with stories, which are an authentic part of religious traditions.
- Provide opportunities for children to share in memorable and festive experiences from various cultures and traditions, thus stimulating questions about the meaning of such occasions.

Approaches and the Organisation of Religious Education

We believe that Religious Education should be an exciting subject, so we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, dance and drama, the use of stillness and periods of quiet reflection, exploring artefacts, stories, pictures and photographs, ICT and by visiting local places of worship and learning from members of local faith communities.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

The RE curriculum is currently delivered using a school-produced scheme of work based on activities that aim to develop the essential skills in religious learning. The core RE Skills are:

- ~ **Engaging with fundamental questions**
- ~ **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practices and**
- ~ **Expressing personal responses**

The Foundation Phase and Key Stage 1 R.E. syllabus deals mainly with Christianity and generic areas e.g. Special People, Special Places and celebrations. In Key Stage 2 skills that the children have acquired during the Foundation Phase /Key Stage 1 are developed and provide opportunities for learners to compare Christianity with the other principal religions.

Children are taught through a variety of methods, incorporating individual, paired, group and whole class activities.

Key Skills

A non-statutory *Skills framework for 3-19 year olds in Wales* has been developed in order to provide guidance about continuity and progression in developing thinking, communication, ICT and number for learners from 3-19. At Key stage 2 learners should be given opportunities to build on skills they have started to acquire and developed during the Foundation Phase. Progression can be seen in terms of the refinement of these skills and by their application to tasks that move from concrete to abstract; simple to complex; personal to the 'big picture'; familiar to unfamiliar and supported to become more independent in their learning.

- **Developing thinking**

Learners develop their thinking across the curriculum through the processes of planning, developing and reflecting. In religious education, learners develop thinking skills through a range of activities. Learners ask fundamental questions which are raised by human experience, the world and aspects of religion. They explore and make links between the religious beliefs, teachings and practices that they study. They plan investigations by

gathering and utilising a range of religious and nonreligious sources and use these to evaluate and justify their personal responses. They use a range of critical and creative problem solving techniques in order to develop ideas and explore and challenge interpretations, preconceptions and possibilities.

- **Developing communication**

Learners develop their communication skills across the curriculum through the skills of oracy, reading, writing and wider communication.

In religious education, learners develop skills in oracy, reading and writing, and wider communication skills through a range of activities. Learners ask questions, communicate ideas and express their own feelings and opinions using different forms as appropriate to the audience and purpose of the activity. They listen carefully to others, noting the strengths and weaknesses of viewpoints or lines of reasoning. They use different reading/writing strategies depending on the investigation or activity they are undertaking and show increasing understanding of religious/symbolic language with a growing awareness of the range of possible interpretation.

- **Developing ICT**

Learners develop their ICT skills across the curriculum by creating, presenting, finding and developing information and ideas and by using a wide range of equipment and software. In religious education, learners use ICT: to communicate and share information (using, for example, e-mails and PowerPoint); to present information in a variety of formats using word processing and graphics; to find and develop information on the internet and other sources including CD-ROMs, etc.; to support oral presentations and the creation of ideas and strategies to improve the impact of their work.

- **Developing number**

Learners develop their number skills across the curriculum by using mathematical information, calculating, and interpreting and presenting findings. In religious education, learners develop skills in the application of number by using information such as ordering events in time, by measuring time through the calendars of various religions, by calculating percentages and by considering the significance of number within religions. They interpret results/data and present findings from questionnaires, graphs and other forms of data in order to draw conclusions and ask further questions about issues relating to religion and the world.

Cwricwlwm Cymreig

Cwricwlwm Cymreig is considered to be an integral part of the children's education. Teacher's Long Term, Medium Term and Short Term plans are used to ensure inclusion throughout. The Agreed Syllabus is used and adapted to include the uniqueness of Wales and the children's local heritage as and when appropriate/possible. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.

Developing Welsh as a Second Language

Where appropriate, using and developing Welsh in R.E sessions is encouraged.

Resources

The school has an extensive bank of resources to support the teaching and learning of Religious Education. Resources include; artefacts to explore practices and customs of all the principal religions, teaching materials and information books, traditional religious stories, pictures and photographs and access to various forms of Information Technology.

Display

Children's success in R.E. is displayed through corridor displays and through the display of artefacts. It is also displayed through class assemblies.

Visits and Visitors

The R.E. curriculum very much relies on visits and visitors to develop children's understanding of what would otherwise be very difficult concepts.

We are very proud of our links with have made with the local religious community.

Health and Safety

All staff adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy and this includes any visits.

Planning, Assessment and Record Keeping

In Religious Education assessment involves Assessment Of Learning (AOL) and Assessment For Learning (AFL).

It is an essential part of the work of all teachers; it needs to be carried out in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. Assessment should support and inform future teaching and learning.

For more detail see the Pontarddulais Primary Assessment Policy.

Record Keeping

Records for Religious Education in our school:

- Provide evidence of the progress of the individual child and in particular against range of the RE Agreed syllabus.
- Can provide a basis for planning work
- Should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process
- Provide essential information to pass on to the next teacher
- Inform discussions with and report to parents
- Contribute to an overall school record
- Need to be useful, flexible and manageable

Monitoring Religious Education

It is the responsibility of the R.E Subject leader to monitor the standards of children's work. The Subject Leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. During the cycle of monitoring indicated in the SDP the RE Subject Leader delivers a summary report to staff in which she evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement [Action Plan].

Equal Opportunities and Right of Withdrawal

We are committed to providing a teaching environment that is conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability

At Pontarddulais Primary school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at Pontarddulais Primary school.

Additional Learning Needs

It is particularly important that activities for children with additional learning needs are appropriate for their specific requirements and take into account their IEP. For those of higher ability it is also important that they are suitably challenged.

We recognise the fact that children in the school have widely differing abilities and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

Role of Subject Leader

- To prepare the policy document and Scheme of Work and review when necessary
- To be aware of and manage the use of resources for Religious Education in the school.
- To purchase, organise and review resources when necessary
- To attend appropriate courses and give feedback to the staff
- To try to show good practice and to give help and support to other members of staff when needed.
- To compile portfolios of children's work.
- To liaise with other schools in the cluster group to encourage continuity of approach
- To advise on appropriate INSET training/ twilight training sessions for R.E.
- To monitor R.E. within the school and work with staff to ensure there is

revision, but not undue repetition and the balance is kept with the other subjects

- To contribute to the school development plan
- To submit an annual report to *Governors*.

Governors

A link Governor has been named to work with the R.E. subject leader to gain a greater understanding of the philosophy of R.E. teaching and learning in the school.

The R.E. leader will give an annual report to *Governors* regarding progress through the Curriculum Committee.

When will this policy be reviewed?

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2012 in consultation with the whole staff and *Governing Body* and every two years thereafter, unless an earlier review becomes necessary.