



**VERNHAM DEAN AND GILLUMS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**



Religious Education in Vernham Dean Gillum's School will reflect its Church of England status by studying the beliefs and practices of Christians today. Religious Education will provide pupils with the opportunity to explore Christianity in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and acquire knowledge of the beliefs and practices of other Christian denominations and faiths, and of other religious groups.

**Aims for Religious Education**

**1. To develop a knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, to include:**

- An awareness of the central beliefs of Christianity
- Helping each child on his/her journey in faith and ever-developing spirituality
- Recognising and exploring religious experience
- Exploring spiritual aspects of our daily lives
- An awareness of the importance of beliefs and faiths of individuals
- Recognising that an individual's faith affects their lives and behaviour
- Familiarity with practice, language and symbols of faith
- Exploring key stories and becoming familiar with the Bible
- Understanding the central importance of Jesus to the Christian faith
- Exploring places of worship and their worshipping communities
- Developing an understanding that we are all unique in the eyes of God
- Encouraging children to develop self-respect, respect for others and God's creation.

**2. To develop pupil's growth and faith, to include:**

- Encouraging the search for meaning and purpose in life promoting self-esteem
- Developing empathic skills to enable a greater understanding of self and others
- Exploring religious questions in life
- Developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues
- Developing attitudes of respect and sensitivity for other's beliefs, respecting the right to hold other beliefs in a society of diverse religions
- Developing an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions in a range of faiths, societies and cultures
- Recognising the importance of love, courage, hope and other principles through which we lead our lives
- Providing learning opportunities which will encourage spiritual development, e.g. stillness, wonder, action, charities
- Developing a caring attitude towards all mankind, creation and the environment
- Appreciating natural beauty
- Reflecting on other beliefs, values and experiences

**3. To enable pupils to encounter a living faith, to include:**

- Experiencing the Christian faith within the school environment, represented through relationships, values and visual symbols
- Acquiring and developing an understanding and knowledge of Christianity

- Encountering a consistent Christian ethos
- Encouraging children to analyse and develop their own faith by investigation and reflection
- A freedom to express faith in a systematic environment
- Developing an understanding of the relevance of the Christian faith to their everyday lives
- Acquiring and developing an understanding of other religions
- Encounters and experiences which create awe, wonder and engagement with the children that can then be explicitly linked to their own spiritual development

#### **4. Teaching and learning style**

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences of religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups through topics such as festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues and have the opportunity to use computers and working individually or in groups. Often they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in Collective Worship.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of 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. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks)
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child; • using learning support assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children

#### **5. Curriculum planning in religious education**

At Vernham Dean Gillums' CE School we use the Living Difference IV planning as well as Understanding Christianity as we feel that children's learning in RE is enhanced by basing each unit of work around a key concept. These concepts are structured through our long term planning to build upon previous knowledge and challenge children in each year group to ask questions and find out more at each stage of their learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The long term planning and medium term planning will be organised within the curriculum planning area within the teaching pool.

#### **6. Foundation Stage**

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In the reception class, religious education is taught in conjunction with the Living Difference IV planning, HIAS RE Early years Understanding of the World guidance and Understanding Christianity. It is also an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

## **7. Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects**

### **English**

Religious education contributes to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

### **Computing**

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information using appropriate websites and programmes. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation. ICT is also used to communicate, reflect and challenge children's own spiritual understanding.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE/RSHE) and citizenship**

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions and our Code of Conduct. We aim to develop the children's understanding of spirituality through reflecting on our relationships with ourselves, others, the world and other beings. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values, and through this they have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

## **8. Teaching religious education to children with special needs**

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties.

## **9. Assessment and recording**

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. Teachers will comment on the range of statements of attainment throughout the Key Stages. We recognise that sometimes RE activities can take place as part of a group and may be based around practical or discussion tasks, therefore individual written work may not be produced for more formal assessment. In such cases we will keep evidence such as photographs to aid more formal assessment.

We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary using the school's marking policy. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the key concepts from our Living Differences planning. Termly a sample of work will be group moderated and monitored in order ensure whole school progression.

## **10. Resources**

We have some resources in our school to be able to teach our religious education teaching units and make use of the RE centre boxes to supplement these as required. There is a set of bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The use of artefacts will also be supplemented by other resources including books, posters, video clips and web sites in order to make RE relevant and immediate for the children. In addition, we also invite visitors in to tell children about religion from a more personal view.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

The Headteacher, along with the RE subject manager, are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are 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. The RE subject leaders presents the Headteacher with an annual action plan which is reviewed termly and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

## **12. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

We live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society and we encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We intend to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another, regardless of race and culture. The school will respect faith traditions of all children attending the school.

## **13. Right of withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education as identified in the Education Reform Act. Vernham Dean Gillums' is a Church of England Primary School where Christian values underpin the whole curriculum. In order to preserve the distinctiveness of this church school community, we encourage everyone to be involved in Religious Education and Collective Worship. It is the hope of the staff and governors that, in choosing to send their child to this Church school, parents will be happy to allow their child to participate.

Approved by Governors

(Signature Chair of Cttee)

Next Review July 2022