



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

## SEPTEMBER 2021

### **Purpose**

This policy outlines our rationale behind teaching Religious Education (R.E.) with sensitivity and respect for the needs of each pupil. The guidance reflects the main aims of Fairlawn and Haseltine's School's R.E. curriculum and legal requirements of the Education Act 1944, Education Reform Act 1988 and the DfES circular 1/94 -Para 44 regarding withdrawal of children from religious education.

### **Rationale**

Our School community is made up of pupils and staff who originate from different nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including new arrivals and non-native English speakers. We believe that Religious Education provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school and the wider world. It is a subject that celebrates diversity, challenges stereotypes and helps to develop cohesive communities.

### **Aims**

R.E. is taught in accordance with the aims of the Lewisham Agreed Syllabus which state:

Religious Education should help pupils to:

- develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of many religions and beliefs;
- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and non-religious world views represented in Great Britain;
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to their own beliefs and the teachings of the principal religions and beliefs represented in Great Britain;
- enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
  - Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and how religious teachings and philosophies can relate to them;

- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their own understanding and experience;
- Developing the ability to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

### **Fundamental British values**

Schools should promote the fundamental British values of **democracy**, the **rule of law**, **individual liberty**, and **mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**.

Ofsted stated in the *School inspection handbook 2015*: "RE contributes to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children and young people when taught well in schools, and through this makes a significant contribution to helping pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain."

Through practising the skills of tolerance and mutual respect as seen in fundamental British values, religious education provides schools with opportunities to develop pupils learning, understanding around people they will meet, work and live alongside. It can help schools build up resilience skills within the lives of children and young people.

### **Legal Requirements**

In accordance with the law we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The teaching of R.E. comprises 5% of the curriculum timetable as required by the Agreed Syllabus and recommended by the QCA.

At Fairlawn school, in order that children may fully immerse in their learning, there are dedicated RE days once every half term, in addition to assemblies and whole school celebrations around festivals of faith and culture.

At Haseltine school, RE is woven into the daily teaching of class topic. Through the termly cultural and historical topics, children learn about a wide variety of religious beliefs, past and present, and are encouraged to explore the similarities and differences between these and their own belief systems. They explore the concept of religion and belief and the roles these play in our daily lives.

If parents wish to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons they must do this by writing to the head teacher.

### **The Scheme of Work**

The scheme of work for Religious Education covers all the requirements of the Lewisham Agreed Syllabus 2018. R.E. is taught in half-termly units in a combination of religion-based and thematic topics.

In Nursery and Reception, children learn through role play, storytelling and taking part in their own celebrations.

In Key Stage 1, children learn about Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, as well as other topics such as Weddings, Belonging, Right and Wrong and the Natural World.

In Key Stage 2, children continue to build on the knowledge acquired from the religions learnt in Key Stage 1, as well as being introduced to Buddhism, Sikhism and Judaism. They also learn about the Journey of Death within different religions and Peace. The new curriculum has also introduced Understanding Faith and Belief in Lewisham which is taught in Year 6.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:

1. Learning about Religions
2. Learning from Religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices. It looks at the impact of religion on the lives of believers and communities and the varying ways in which these are expressed. This includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary as well as identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflective abilities in response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It is also concerned with wider issues such as questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth values and commitments

Inclusion and differentiation for children with S.E.N. and E.A.L. are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of R.E. we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make R.E. relevant and interesting to our pupils. One way of doing this is through our links with local religious communities and places of worship. We try to ensure that children have at least one local R.E. visit in the academic year, e.g. visiting a local church or temple.

### **Marking and Assessment**

Assessment of R.E. is ongoing. RE is assessed in accordance to school policy and any written learning is marked in response to the RE learning question. Due to our creative approach to RE which includes educational visits, drama, music, art and DT, much of the feedback to children is verbal.

### **Community cohesion**

R.E. makes an important contribution to the school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective R.E. promotes community cohesion at each of the four levels:

- The school community
- The community within which the school is located
- The U.K. community
- The global community

### **Management**

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the R.E. curriculum leader. Resources are bought with the annually allocated R.E. budget and stored in a central place for use by all staff. The storing of the school's R.E. resources is organised by the R.E. leader.