

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,
Love as God Loves You and Let Your Light Shine!'*

R. E. POLICY



Introduction

The outcome of Religious Education at The Bishops' School is to produce religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, to think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Aims

Our aims are in line with our Mission Statement, with “Every Child Matters” and with the Chelmsford and Brentwood Diocesan Guidelines.

- Acknowledgement of the unique value of each person as a child of God as the children develop an awareness of God as a creator, friend and comforter with whom we can have a personal and growing relationship.
- Fostering in the children a sense of awe, wonder and enjoyment of God's creation and a sense of responsibility for the stewardship of all God's gifts.
- Religious education will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge, and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- Opportunities are offered for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross-curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and to think creatively.
- Engagement with their own and others' beliefs and values will help to develop good attitudes and dispositions so that children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.
- Engagement with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face will enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- Offer the children a sense of self-worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Strategies to Achieve Aims:

- To help the children to understand that God has revealed Himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ. The children learn about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the significance of His teaching for us today. We use the Bible as a resource to study God's dealings with this world.
- To introduce the children to the idea that the Church is a community of people, guided by the Holy Spirit, endeavouring to continue the work of Christ in the world and to which we are all invited to belong. We study our local churches, their beliefs, their practices and their ministry to the local community. (Our local clergy make frequent visits and regularly assist with class lessons and lead worship.) We study the Universal Church

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and the lives and experiences of people in different places and in different times who have set an example of Christian living.

- Children are helped to understand the diversity of mankind and our interdependence. Children must be helped towards an understanding and appreciation of the variety of beliefs and customs in the world and have opportunities to explore the difference and similarities in other world religions, as well as in the various Christian denominations. We aim to promote discernment and enable pupils to combat prejudice.

The R.E. Scheme of Work

We use the "Come and See" scheme of work for our R.E. teaching to ensure continuity and development of knowledge, skills and understanding. The aims of the Chelmsford Diocese Curriculum Guidance are met within this programme. R.E. is taught as a discrete subject but, where possible, links are made with other curriculum areas.

Much of the work done is oral and takes the form of story-telling, group and class discussions and role play activities alongside formal recording. Creative responses to the R.E. teaching are encouraged through separate art and craft work, wall displays and class books. Hall display boards frequently reflect religious themes and festivals, or Christian Values.

Godly Play

Godly Play is a creative and imaginative approach to Christian nurture which The Bishops' has adopted. Each class is timetabled for a session once a term with a trained leader. These sessions allow children to express their thoughts and feelings in a non-judgemental way. They are always followed by a time for creativity to reflect the theme.

Differentiated learning

The individual educational needs of children are taken into account and pupils are presented with tasks and resources appropriate to their age and ability, in accordance with the school's policy on inclusion. Where necessary and possible, learning support assistants will facilitate children's learning.

Computing

Children use a range of computing skills to support their work in R.E. Use is made of cameras, DVDs and the Internet where appropriate.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

Termly assessments are sourced from Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, Department of Education, based on 'Come and See', which give us the children's levels of attainment in AT1 – *Learning about Religion* and AT2 – *Learning from Religion*. These can then be recorded at the end of each Key Stage. The R.E. leaders collect samples of levelled work to create a portfolio of assessed work for the whole school to be used for moderation and evaluation purposes.

Ongoing assessment is achieved through the Respond and Renew sections of 'Come and See'. In these the teacher helps the children to make individual responses to that topic.

Annual written reports are sent to parents/guardians each summer term, commenting on the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills acquired through R.E. in that year.

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Parental Involvement

Parents may be asked to provide appropriate photographs, mementoes and information relating to family life in order to support topic work. Parents with particular experience may be invited to participate in class activities, or lend resources. (e.g. cooking chapattis, bringing in newborn baby, loaning Sikh artefacts,.)

Resources

Teacher reference books, religious artefacts, visual aids, display materials and multi-faith books are stored in the R.E. cupboard in the amenity room or in the "Upper Room".

There is a section on Religion in the school library. Additional books and DVDs are borrowed from the County Library Service. A range of different editions and versions of The Bible are held in the "Upper Room". Each class has a set of age appropriate and easily accessible Bibles.

Staff access the Internet for resources and information.

Management and Staff Training

The R.E. leaders provide both a yearly overview and a termly plan of the topics to be covered by the whole school with a time allocation and significant religious dates for the term. Each term a comparative religion is studied from the four listed in 'Come and See': Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. These studies are chosen to coincide with a particular religious festival where possible, e.g. Hinduism was studied at the time of the festival of Divali, Judaism at Passover.

The R.E. leaders attend appropriate courses and meetings run by both dioceses and the County, where possible and pass the information through staff meetings.

Invited speakers with particular knowledge or expertise are sourced when required.

R.E. Leadership

At present (2015), R.E. leadership is shared by a Key Stage 1 and a Key Stage 2 member of staff to oversee the planning and teaching of R.E. lessons. Worship (which has its own separate policy), and charitable giving and fund raising are also currently part of this role.

Governors

The governors are responsible for ensuring that there is an appropriate R.E. curriculum in school and its organisation and implementation is entrusted to the headteacher.

Rev. Jane Anderson (C. of E.) and Fr. Nick De Keyser (R.C.) are the clergy for the two parishes and are *ex-officio* governors with responsibility for R.E. in the school.

A number of governors are appointed from the local churches of St. Augustine's, Church of Our Saviour and All Saints.

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Worship

Assemblies are held daily being made up of either whole school or Key Stage gatherings. Tuesday worship usually taking place in St. Augustine's Church, but on a three week cycle of whole school, Foundation Stage - Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. These church services are led by local clergy together with children from a particular class or year group on a rota basis, with the school staff taking the service once a term. The clergy also support Class Worship when classes are not attending the church service. There is a link between the 'Come and See' scheme of work and the theme of the worship.

Visiting speakers are often welcomed to the school to talk to the children about different topics, especially with regard to charitable giving or other faiths.

Singing and music form a very important part of our worship and membership of choirs and instrumental groups is encouraged. On occasions, groups of children are invited to share their music and participate in worship activities away from school, e.g. carol singing, cathedral concert.

Withdrawals

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from R.E. in part or whole. This is not normally exercised at The Bishops' School, as parents are made aware of the Christian ethos of the school before their children enter the school. Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the headteacher.

Finally, The foundation of The Bishops' C of E and RC Primary School is based on a vision for reconciliation and understanding between Christian communities. The school continues to value this vision of reconciliation and understanding extending to all religions and communities.