

## Woolenwick Junior School Religious Education Policy V1

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### Version History

Version	Amendments	Date	Author
V1	Original document	Oct 2015	TB

### **BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT WOOLENWICK JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Religious Education (RE) holds a special status, as although it is not a National Curriculum subject, it must be taught to all pupils as part of the basic curriculum. As RE is not nationally determined, the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2012-2017 which we have used as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE.

Families who send their children to our school are in the main 'nominally' Christian but we do have children from practising Christian families. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity, particularly Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, while some come from non-religious backgrounds. RE is concerned with "learning about religion" and "learning from religion" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from religious education (RE). If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes this may consult the headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE. (See *Appendix 1: DFE Circular 1/94 paragraphs 44-49.*)

## **A. VALUES AND AIMS**

At Woolenwick Junior School, we believe that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the six principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These are Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is also represented in Hertfordshire;
2. Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;
3. Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. Enhance their own **spiritual, moral, social and cultural** development by:
  - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
  - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
  - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
  - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. Recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

## **B. OBJECTIVES**

### **Learning**

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses. RE should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

**Religious Education has two closely related aspects:**

### **Learning *about* Religion (AT 1) and Learning *from* Religion (AT 2)**

These two attainment targets with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum. RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience.

#### **AT1 Learning about Religion**

- identify, name, describe and give an account, in order to build a coherent picture of each religion;
- explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism;
- explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

#### **AT2 Learning from Religion**

- respond to religious and moral issues in an informed and considered manner;
- reflect on what might be learnt from religion in the light of personal beliefs and life experience;
- identify and respond to the question of meaning within religion.

### **Teaching**

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between the two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of RE at Woolenwick Junior School.

Teaching the programmes of study contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

- **Beliefs and teachings** - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;

- **Religious practices and lifestyles** - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- **Ways of expressing meaning** - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
- **Human identity, personality and experience** - e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- **Questions of meaning and purpose** - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- **Values and commitments** - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

**RE teaching specifically draws on the following:**

1. Visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith.
2. Role play; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters.
3. Artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge.
4. Parents; by the valuing of family religious backgrounds and ensuring they are part of the school community.

The teaching of RE will involve direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions and exploring artefacts.

**ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING** *(see school Assessment policy)*

The Agreed Syllabus sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the statements of attainment as outlined following the Eight Level Scale in the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2012-2017. (See Appendix 2) Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing.

Through activities such as pupil voice, group activities, marking and guiding childrens' work, observing, displaying learning, asking and answering

questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against the statements of attainment in line with other areas of the curriculum. At Woolenwick Junior School we understand that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

## **TIME ALLOCATION**

In line with the requirements of the Key Stage 2 Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2012-2017, RE will be delivered for 156 hours over 4 years (approximately 13 hours per term). Time allocation does include visits and RE curriculum days but not include school productions related to festivals or collective worship time. (See Collective Worship policy).

## **PLANNING**

At Woolenwick Junior School, Religious Education lessons are taught once a week for between 45 minutes and 1 hour. The Religious Education curriculum is based on the ***Hertfordshire Scheme of Work for Primary Religious Education***, which is based on the ***Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2012-2017***. Teachers create their own medium term plans and adapt the Hertfordshire scheme of work as appropriate in order to meet the needs of the children in their classes and ensure progress is made. When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts of the programme of study are to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The RE Subject Leader is available to help with this and a range of teacher's resources are kept in the cupboard in Year 3.

## **CROSS CURRICULAR ISSUES**

RE is part of the SMSC curriculum and is particularly linked with aspects of PSHE. It can also be linked with other curriculum areas. For example, religious stories may be explored in English and guided reading. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will also be made with people and communities within the locality where there are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues

Children's skills in speaking and listening, problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will also be developed.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The RE subject leader manages this area of the curriculum in line with our job description for subject leaders.

There is a termly staff meeting on RE, led by the subject leader, where areas for development are discussed. The RE subject leader monitors the quality of

provision by conducting learning walks, monitoring planning and conducting a scrutiny of children's recorded tasks.

### **NOTES**

1. Voluntary Controlled schools should follow this pattern Voluntary Aided schools are not obliged to use the Agreed Syllabus. They must, however teach RE in accordance with their trust deed.
2. DFE Circular 1/94 paragraphs 44-49.
3. See Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus pages 33-37. The Eight Level Scale of Attainment.