



Clophill St. Mary's VA CofE Lower School
Religious Education Policy
Including Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education

Purpose:

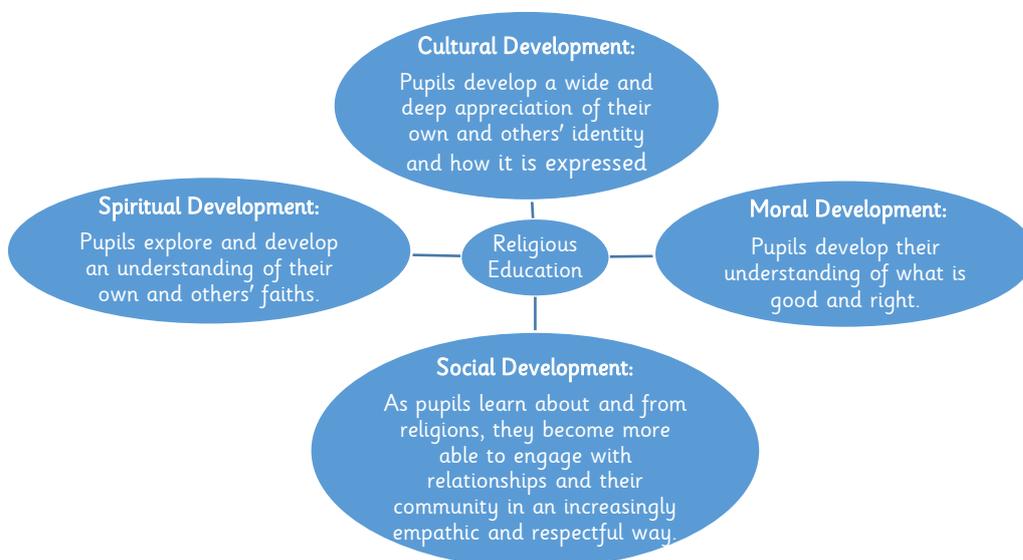
Religious Education (R.E.) and the development of our pupils' Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education (SMSC) are both integral parts of Clophill St. Mary's CofE Lower School curriculum. Religious Education impacts directly on our SMSC which helps children develop personal qualities which are valued in society; for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, compassion, independence and respect for self, others and the environment. At Clophill St. Mary's CofE Lower School we seek to teach these qualities across the curriculum and throughout school life. SMSC is also embedded in our School vision statement. Within specific Religious Education lessons, we believe we have to help children to understand the beliefs and values of others so that they can readily relate to those they meet. Religious Education is also crucial in helping each individual to examine and develop their own spirituality and beliefs.

Rationale:

We believe that Religious Education has a vital part to play in the education of children. The subject is concerned with:

- Developing knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and other principal religions
- Fostering a sense of awe, wonder and mystery
- Encouraging respect for those holding different beliefs
- Promoting social, moral, spiritual and cultural development

Religious Education is considered as the fourth core subject at Clophill St. Mary's VA CofE Lower School. It can make a substantial contribution to social, moral, spiritual and cultural development as shown below.



Within school we teach from the Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus. We endorse the view of Religious Education in the Agreed Syllabus and the principal aim of Religious Education, which is to, “explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.”

Religious Education and Collective Worship are legally distinct and are not to be confused as the same. Religious Education is an educational process, learning from and about religions. Worship is an opportunity to take part in the affirmation and celebration of certain Christian values. While recognising the separate nature of the two activities, teachers will, on occasion, draw upon work in Religious Education as part of worship, and vice versa.

Aims:

The threefold aim of R.E. from the Agreed Syllabus, elaborates on the principal aim and puts the purpose of the subject into action. The curriculum for R.E. aims to ensure that all pupils can do the following:

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:
 - a. identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
 - b. explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
 - c. recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation

2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:
 - a. examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
 - b. recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
 - c. appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning

3. Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:
 - a. evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
 - b. challenge the ideas they study, and consider how these ideas might challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
 - c. discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

The Religious Education curriculum also aims to equip pupils with:

- A safe enquiry space
- Encouragement and reflection on “big questions”
- Opportunities for critical thinking and evaluation skills
- Opportunities for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- An understanding of a world of diversity

In this, as in all other subjects, pupils are entitled to a variety of learning experiences which enhance their religious understanding and SMSC development. This variety will include an emphasis on:

- Understanding religious concepts such as spirituality, mystery, values and commitment
- Developing general study skills such as observation, analysis and investigation

- Imaginative activities such as story telling, drama and art
- Individualised and collaborative learning
- Developing sound attitudes such as sensitivity, empathy, reflection and response
- Making use of visits and visitors from faith communities

Withdrawal:

Whilst parents can choose to withdraw their pupils from Religious Education and worship we encourage all parents to reflect on the SMSC developmental opportunities offered within the learning as pictured earlier. Parents wishing to exercise the right for removal from Religious Education should inform the Headteacher in writing.

Implementation:

The Religious Education Long Term Plan at Clophill St. Mary's CofE Lower School follows the locally Agreed Syllabus 'Identities, Meanings, Values' for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton and is as follows:

Foundation Stage:	
R.E. makes an active contribution to all six areas of the Early Learning Goals. Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths as part of their growing sense of self and their place within their wider community. It makes a significant contribution to the four areas of personal, social and emotional development; communication language and literacy; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.	
Within our school we aim to provide the six units of the Agreed Syllabus for Reception which are:	
Why is the word "God" so important to Christians?	
Why is Christmas special for Christians?	
Why is Easter special for Christians?	
Being special: where do we belong? Learn from at least two religions	
Which places are specially valued and why? Learn from at least two religions	
Which stories are specially valued and why? Learn from at least two religions	

Key Stage 1:			
Year 1:		Year 2:	
Autumn	What do Christians believe about God? Why does Christmas matter to Christians? How and why do we celebrate special times?	Autumn	What can we learn from sacred books and stories? How and why do we celebrate significant times? What makes some celebrations sacred to believers?
Spring	What makes some places significant? What makes some places sacred to believers? Why does Easter matter to Christians?	Spring	How do we show we care for others? Why does it matter? How do we show we care for the Earth? Why does it matter?
Summer	Who is Muslim? What do they believe and how do they live?	Summer	Who is an inspiring person? What stories inspire Christian, Muslim/Jewish people? What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings?

Key Stage 2:			
Cycle 1:		Cycle 2:	
Autumn	What kind of world did Jesus want? How is faith expressed in Sikh communities and traditions?	Autumn	How and why do people try to make the world a better place? Where, how and why do people worship?
Spring	How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people? How is faith expressed in the Hindu communities and traditions?	Spring	What are the deeper meanings of the festivals? Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?
Summer	What is the Trinity and why is it important to Christians? Why do some people think life is like a journey? How and why do people mark the significant events of life?	Summer	For Christians, what was the impact of Pentecost? How do festivals and worship show what matters to Muslims?

Each topic will begin and end with a Knowledge Harvest. Pupils will be asked about what they already know, what they want to find out and, at the end of the topic, they key aspects they have learnt.

Teachers will seek to deliver some cross-curricular themes through the subject. Religious Education has a particularly important part to play in subjects such as Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education.

It is expected that pupils will be given the opportunity to visit local churches and other places of worship during their time at school. The conduct of these trips will be in compliance with LA guidelines and our Educational Trips and Visits Policy. It is also expected that relevant visitors will be invited into school to support with the topics. When welcoming visitors into the school we will ensure compliance with our Safeguarding policy and arrangements.

Statements of attainment on pupil end of year reports will comment on the key knowledge, skills and attitudes achieved over the year, not on pupils' own religious beliefs or their spiritual development.

Marking and feedback of written work, in addition to termly assessment, should seek to raise standards of achievement in the subject through:

- Providing teachers with information on individual strengths and areas for development in the subject
- Informing the planning of future work
- Involving pupils, as they get older, in the assessment of their own work.

Where appropriate, staff will use the "end-of-phase" outcomes from the Agreed Syllabus to support assessment.

Resources:

The school has a varied range of resources for Religious Education which are held centrally. These include information books, religious artefacts, appropriate editions of biblical stories and children's Bibles.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

All members of staff share responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Standards in R.E. will be monitored through lesson observations, book scrutinies and pupil conferencing activities. Termly attainment and progress will also be scrutinised and reported in terms of whole class and vulnerable group data to individual class teachers and, anonymously, to Governors.

Monitoring of the policy will be carried out by the subject leader at least annually as part of monitoring and evaluation of all subject areas. The policy will be shared with the R.E. subject link governors and implementation will be reported to the Governing Body Curriculum and Personnel Committee.