

Elmwood Infant and Nursery School



Religious Education Policy

Updated Spring 2020

Article 13: Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive information of any kind as long as it is within the law.

Article 14: Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.



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Date Policy Reviewed **Spring 2020**

Review Date: **Spring 2023**

What is Religious Education?

Religious education teaches children about the nature of religious beliefs and practices. It also teaches children about the importance and influence these religions have. The RE curriculum helps with the development of a child's spiritual, moral and cultural development. It enables children to learn about some of the major religions; festivals, special books, beliefs and practises as well as encourage children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Elmwood Infants we help children to learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

Intent

At Elmwood Infant School we believe the content of Religious Education should mirror the diverse community of our school. We encourage children to reflect on and compare their own religious beliefs, values and traditions with those of others. We want all children to develop a rigorous understanding of different world faiths to enable them to not only become respecting and open-minded individuals but also to help develop their own sense of identity and belonging through self-awareness and reflection. Our Religious Education curriculum is linked closely with the Rights Respecting approach we have adopted as a school.

Aims

- To develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences.
- To develop a knowledge of all major world religions.
- To be able to reflect on own experiences and to develop a personal approach to questions which may be posed.
- To develop an understanding of a range of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in today's world.
- To promote the rights of children to understand that they have the right to practise their religion and have their own say.
- To respect other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society.
- To help children develop personal, moral and cultural values.

- To develop children's awareness of the festivals, books, religious beliefs and practise of all major religions.

Objectives

- To be aware of religious and cultural festivals.
- To share beliefs, ideas and knowledge using appropriate language, stories, drawings, photographs, artefacts and role play.
- To observe, explore and ask questions about events, beliefs and religious artefacts.
- To evaluate evidence and understand that people have the right to express different views and opinions, according to their own beliefs.

Roles and responsibility

Class teachers

- Need to ensure the planning, delivery and assessment of the RE curriculum is in line with the school's policy.

The RE co-ordinator

- To act as a consultant by keeping up to date with the latest documents, learning methods and to go on any courses available.
- Teachers and staff may approach the RE co-ordinator for advise and support.
- The role of the RE co-ordinator is to provide advice and support to colleagues and to ensure the RE policy and guidelines of RE within the school are regularly reviewed and updated.

Implementation

Each termly RE topic at Elmwood Infants is taught in a cross faith way in order to promote comparison between religions. We use the 2018 Croydon Agreed Syllabus which puts an emphasis on enquiry-based learning. The principle aims are to learn about religion but also to learn from religion and human experience. Termly topics are carefully planned out to ensure progression from Foundation Stage through to the end of KS1. Pupils learning is enhanced by handling artefacts, exploring sacred texts, visiting places of worship and meeting visitors from local religious communities.

Legal requirements

RE is required to be taught alongside the National Curriculum which all maintained schools must provide for their pupils. The special status of RE as part of the curriculum, but not the National Curriculum is important. It ensures RE has an equal standing in relation to National Curriculum subjects within a school, but is not subject to statutory prescribed national targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements. (Education Reform Act 1988)

The curriculum provided must promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Teaching and learning styles

- Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:
 1. Learning *about* Religions
 2. Learning *from* Religions
- We take a comparative approach to the RE syllabus learning through topics that compare major world religions rather than learning about one religion at a time.
- Teaching and learning will develop from children's own experiences and then be extended and enriched through the teaching and reflection about major world religions.
- We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the Croydon LEA's agreed syllabus. We ensure through planning, that the topics studied are building upon prior learning.
- Through RE, children are able to extend their own sense of values and promote their spiritual and moralistic growth and development.
- Through RE lessons, children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising.
- Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects.
- In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, ICT, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and through reflection.
- Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

Inclusion

All children are given every opportunity to achieve their best. All pupils should have equal rights to access RE. When planning RE, teachers should create opportunities for differentiation and consider the needs of children with special education needs, children who have English as an additional language as well as children who are more able or less able. We take every opportunity to celebrate the cultural and religious diversity of our school's community. Religious education teaches children about the values of religions but does not enforce any religious beliefs upon them. We remind children they have the right to share their beliefs, practise their religions and to have a say.

Withdrawal

Parents of pupils at a maintained school may personally request that their child may be excused from religious education and/or attendance of collective worship. If a parent does request for their child to be withdrawn, it would be helpful if teachers and the RE coordinator meet with the parents to discuss the matter. This will enable the school to clarify any specific religious issues which the parents object to and discuss the practical implications of their child being withdrawn. Teachers should refer parents to the head teacher if they wish to process with their right of withdrawal.

Assessment

- There are some areas important to RE which may not be appropriate to assess objectively, for example, a pupil's own personal beliefs.
- Teachers will assess children's knowledge and understanding of the subject through discussions, open ended questions or recorded work.
- Achievements in RE will be celebrated in the school report to parents.

Monitoring

Learning is monitored both during lessons by the teacher and across the school by the RE coordinator. The RE coordinator monitors learning and progression through book looks; observation of teaching and discussion with teaching staff.

Impact

Our children are always willing to discuss their home religion when given the opportunity and this is reflected in school through displays and various events which we celebrate. The high quality engagement in these events are evidence of the diverse yet, tolerant community that we foster.