

Clee Hill Community Academy

Exploring Spirituality (Religious Education) Policy

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Aims and Objectives

At Clee Hill Community Academy we believe that Religious Education should be referred to as 'Exploring Spirituality' as this summarises our philosophy of self-exploration whilst preparing pupils for life in an increasing multi-cultural society. This is achieved by encouraging them to explore and respond to these aspects of spirituality and religion and draw upon their own experiences.

Our curriculum explores big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can make sense of religion, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Our aims and objectives in Exploring Spirituality are to:

- develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion through exploration of the beliefs and practices of the principal world faiths represented in locally (Shropshire), nationally (Great Britain) and internationally;
- enable children to reflect on what it means to have a faith whilst developing their own spiritual knowledge and understanding;
- address fundamental questions concerning the meaning of life and existence;
- prompt children to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society;
- encourage empathy, generosity and compassion;
- develop respect, sensitivity, tolerance and consideration for the beliefs and traditions of others;
- combat prejudice and negative discrimination;
- develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- nurture children's respect for different faiths and cultures as part of our British values.

The National Legal Framework for RE

Our Exploring Spirituality Policy is informed by current RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 and should be read in conjunction with the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus 2014 created by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Exploring Spirituality).

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) stipulates that RE is compulsory for all pupils attending a maintained school. ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other main religions. We expect all children to take part in RE lessons, however, the ERA allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from Exploring Spirituality if they so wish.

Exploring Spirituality: Curriculum Planning

The school follows a scheme of work, written by RE today, which works alongside the Key Questions from the RE Shropshire Agreed Syllabus 2014.

The curriculum ensure that:

- Christianity is taught in more depth;
- two other religions (Judaism and Hinduism) are taught in more depth;
- other religions taught provide pupils with enrichment experiences
- there is evidence of attention being given to those faiths represented in the community;
- show how religious belief can be applied to life;
- there is continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment in both attainment targets;
- there are a range of teaching and learning activities to ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest;
- RE is taught either as a discrete subject or as part of a cross curricular approach where appropriate;
- there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills, knowledge and attitudes in each unit;
- the progression planned into the unit of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school;
- visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship;

Key Skills in Exploring Spirituality

We strongly believe that Exploring Spirituality is more than just developing children's knowledge and understanding. We seek to develop children's skills in investigation, enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis, reflection and evaluation. These are important life skills for children to develop and use in their daily lives.

In our Exploring Spirituality planning, key questions form the basic of the lesson and teachers are encouraged to pose open ended questions which may cause lessons to take a different direction to the original plan. This child-led approach to Exploring Spirituality allows pupils the opportunity to pose questions, debate, ponder and 'be wowed' (see long term planning below):

		R.E. Curriculum Map				
		Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
Autumn	Cycle A	Farming Fun <i>Special Times</i> RQ1: Who am I? <i>St Peter's Church: Harvest</i>	Food, Glorious Food <i>Our wonderful world</i> RQ6: How do we relate to others and the natural world? <i>St Peter's Church: Harvest</i>	Towers, tunnels and turrets What do people believe about God? RQ2: How do people express beliefs through worship and celebrations? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	Chocolate Christianity in our community RQ5: Where do I belong? <i>Reverend Sian Harris</i>	Vikings Places of worship RQ13: Where do people's beliefs come from? <i>York Minster</i>
Spring	Cycle A	Bricks and Mortar <i>Special Places</i> RQ5: Where do I belong? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	House & Homes Sacred places RQ10: How is belief expressed through symbols and actions? <i>St Peter's Church: Easter</i>	Cavemen <i>Prayers and Faith</i> RQ13: Where do people's beliefs come from? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	Explorers The Easter Experience RQ10: How is belief expressed through symbols and actions? <i>St Laurence's: Easter Experience</i>	Carnival Inspiring us to care RQ6: How do we relate to others and the natural world? <i>Open the Book</i>
Summer	Cycle A	Heroes who help us <i>Special stories</i> RQ9: What do people believe about God? <i>Open the book: my favourite stories</i>	Out and about <i>An introduction to Islam</i> RQ3: Who is my neighbour? <i>Iman, Craven Arms</i>	Revolting Romans Judaism RQ3: Who is my neighbour? <i>Open the Book</i>	Treasure Hunters The Bible RQ11: How do people express their belief about truth? <i>Kevin Bryant</i>	Italian Inspiration How should I lead my life? RQ4: How should I lead my life? <i>St Peter's Church</i>
Autumn	Cycle B	Me, me, me <i>Special People</i> RQ1: Who am I? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	An Island Home Christianity RQ1: Who am I? <i>Reverend Sian Harris</i>	Location, location, location <i>Hinduism</i> RQ2: How do people express beliefs through worship and celebrations? <i>Shri Venkateswara (Balaji) Temple</i>	World at War Making the right decisions RQ7: How do people make sense of hardship and suffering? <i>Singer's Hill Synagogue</i>	It's all Greek to me Islamic Faith RQ11: How do people express their belief about truth? <i>Muslim Experience: Birmingham</i>
Spring	Cycle B	Animal Fair <i>Where do we belong?</i> RQ5: Where do I belong? <i>Reverend Sian Harris</i>	Magic Kingdom <i>Celebrating Easter and Passover</i> RQ4: How should I lead my life? <i>St Peter's Church: Easter</i>	Tomb Raiders <i>Sacred books</i> RQ13: Where do people's beliefs come from? <i>Open the book</i>	Bon Voyage Life and death RQ12: How do people make sense of life and death? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	One is not amused Who is God? RQ9: What do people believe about God? <i>Reverend Sian Harris</i>
Summer	Cycle B	Beach Combers <i>A very special world</i> RQ6: How do we relate to others and the natural world? <i>Forest Schools</i>	The Great fire of London <i>God and our community</i> RQ9: What do people believe about God? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	The Lion King <i>The circle of life: a journey</i> RQ12: How do people make sense of life and death? <i>Open the Book</i>	One Planet Exploring spirituality with art RQ6: How do we relate to others and the natural world? <i>St Peter's Church</i>	Road trip USA Christian Values RQ8: Has Science got all the answers?? <i>St Peter's Church</i>

Exploring Spirituality in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Activities children engage in during their nursery years are experiences which provide the building blocks for later development. Starting with things which are familiar to the children and providing lots of hands-on activities and learning are an important part of pupils' learning at this stage. Some ideas for Religious Education in the nursery can include:

- Creative play, make-believe, role play, dance and drama
- Dressing up and acting out scenes from stories, celebrations or festivals
- Making and eating festival food
- Talking and listening to each other; hearing and discussing stories of all kinds, including religious and secular stories with themes such as goodness, difference, the inner world of thoughts and feelings, and imagination
- Exploring authentic religious artefacts, including those designed for small children such as 'soft toy' artefacts or story books

- Seeing pictures, books and videos of places of worship and meeting believers in class
- Listening to religious music
- Starting to introduce religious terminology
- Work on nature, growing and life cycles or harvest
- Seizing opportunities spontaneously or linking with topical, local events such as celebrations, festivals, the birth of a new baby, weddings or the death of a pet
- Starting to talk about the different ways in which people believe and behave, and encouraging children to ask questions.

Children in EYFS should encounter religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories. Children can be introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

Key Attitudes in Exploring Spirituality

As with skills, Exploring Spirituality has a number of key attitudes it seeks to promote.

These include:

- Self-esteem (so that every child feels valued and significant).
- Respect (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others).
- Open-mindedness and tolerance (being willing to learn and gain new understanding).
- Appreciation and wonder (developing children' imagination and curiosity).

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Through our RE, PSHE and assemblies, we teach the pupils about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable pupils to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society. Refer to our [PSHE Policy](#) for more information.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through teaching RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual reflection and opportunities for spiritual development. Pupils consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Pupils explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. Refer to our [SMSC Policy](#) for more information.

Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting

Clear learning outcomes, specific high level questioning to assess understanding, evaluative marking and observations of children at work underpin the assessment process. Children's standards and achievements in RE are assessed in line with our [Assessment Policy](#). Assessment is based upon the child's ability in understanding various ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour.

Assessment in RE takes place through on-going Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices within class and group sessions, including the sharing of and reference being made to Learning Objective and Success Criteria and self and peer assessments of understanding, outcomes and progress.

We also recognise that some of the most important learning in RE (eg how RE contributes to spiritual development) cannot be formally assessed, so we assess the pupil's using informal judgements and formative assessment throughout lessons to ensure pupils are challenged. Thus ensuring that barriers to learning are eliminated and pupils reach their full potential. We assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons and through marking diagnostically. Children are involved in self-assessment, and can record their own progress. Learning objectives are clear, enabling children to assess if they have met the learning criteria.

Progression of skills and Knowledge

The teaching and learning of exploring spirituality should enable pupils to:

	A. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.	B. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.	C. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.
KS1 Outcomes	A1. Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.	B1. Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make.	C1. Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.
	A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come. A3. Recognise some	B2. Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.	C2. Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different.
	different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.	B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.	C3. Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.
KS2 Outcomes	A1. Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their significance.	B1. Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.	C1. Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry.
	A2. Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities	B2. Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.	C2. Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the wellbeing of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.
	A3. Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning	B3. Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews.	C3. Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.

Evidence of RE Implementation and Coverage

At Clee Hill Community Academy evidence is collected from whole class Spirituality books, teachers' planning, wall displays and photographic records which show implementation of coverage. There is no expectation that written work should be on a regular basis or be kept in RE books. Our Exploring Spirituality planning on the website shows our coverage across the Academy with a focus on Christianity and Judaism in KS1 and Hinduism as an additional focus in KS2.

Reading opportunities in Exploring Spirituality

At Clee Hill Community Academy, reading is at the heart of all of our lessons. Children are encouraged to share text through shared and independent reading. This may be through reading text, poems or letters or reading instructions or tasks for the lesson. The majority of Exploring Spirituality lessons rely on reflection and discussion however topic areas often include elements of reading within the lesson. Key text books, such as Badger's *Passing Gifts* when looking at bereavement or poems which inspire awe and wonder are key elements of our ES scheme.

Equal Opportunities

RE is a fundamental way of supporting the ethos of the school. All children have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of their gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. Staff promote equal opportunities and enable pupils to challenge discrimination and stereotyping.

Inclusion

The RE Syllabus can be modified, where necessary, to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. This should provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work. The three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive RE Syllabus include:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Subject Monitoring and Review

The RE subject leader, subject link TA and link governor are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in RE. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing direction for the subject in the school.