

# Spires Federation

Digby Church of England, Dunston St Peter's Church of England & Nocton  
Community Primary Schools

Executive Headteacher: Mr G Boyall

## RE POLICY

*Our Core Values are: Friendship, Respect and Honesty*

### **Our Mission:**

The Spires Federation family of small schools is committed to excellence. We hope to inspire all of our pupils to enjoy learning, make outstanding progress and achieve their full potential.

### **Our Aims:**

- We will provide our pupils with a solid foundation of essential knowledge and skills.
- We will develop our pupils' social, spiritual, moral and cultural values to help them fulfil their potential.
- We will provide the widest possible range of experiences for all of our pupils.
- We will nurture and develop the strong relationships between the schools and their wider communities.
- At Digby and Dunston, as Church of England schools, we believe that every pupil is unique in the sight of God. We aim to provide a Christian environment for every pupil, including opportunities to worship together and with our local communities.

## **Our Vision for RE**

The RE taking place in our schools places emphasis on gaining a deeper awareness and understanding of belief. We are mindful of the essential role of education in equipping pupils with an understanding of religion which will support them as they engage with others, explore the world and develop their own beliefs. The provision of RE in our schools is underpinned by Article 26 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights:

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.”

In our schools we aim to instil in our pupils a knowledge and understanding of religions, the ability to reflect in the light of that learning, awareness and respect of the identities of others and the desire to explore their own identities.

## **Our Aims for RE**

RE at our schools will be provided in line with the legal requirements. These are that:

- the curriculum will include provision for Religious Education for all pupils on school roll;
- the content of RE shall reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain;
- the RE which is provided shall be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for Lincolnshire LA (published in 2012).
- The National Framework for RE (DFES 2004) recognises RE as a ‘core’ subject, required for all pupils. The Dearing Review of the Curriculum (1996) recommended a minimum of 36 hours per year for the teaching of RE at Key Stage One and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two, a recommendation endorsed by the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus, 2012. The time allocated at all schools is in line with this

guidance. RE curriculum time does not include assembly or collective worship, even when the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work.

Within the framework of the law and the Agreed Syllabus, our aims in RE are to:

- enable each child to explore our shared human experience and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from our experiences;
- enable pupils to know about and understand the beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Lincolnshire and in the UK. Among these religions, Christianity has a particular place, and is taught in each year of the primary phase;
- promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region and in the country;
- affirm in each child his/her own family tradition, religious or secular;
- provide children with opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- develop the ability of pupils to think about, and develop for themselves, beliefs and values by which they can live, through studying concepts like celebration, the sacred, authority, religious belief and lifestyle, and through exploring the fundamental questions of life.

## Objectives for RE

Adapted from a document produced by Somerset SACRE (<http://amvsomerset.org.uk/requirements/re-and-the-three-statutory-aims-of-the-curriculum/>)

RE helps pupils become **successful learners** by enabling them to:

- develop important skills, knowledge and understanding in RE;
- build progression through a spiral curriculum from simple skills such as naming recognising and recalling, to complex and demanding skills such as synthesis and critical evaluation;
- develop understanding of both learning about and from religion and belief;
- access well planned, lively, challenging and compelling learning experiences which stimulate their mental, emotional and social development;

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- engage with powerful and important questions of meaning and complex, demanding ethical issues;
- understand both conflict and collaboration, within and between religions, and the importance of inter-faith dialogue;
- reflect upon and evaluate the role of religion and belief in the world today;
- mature in their spiritual moral, social and cultural development;
- build effective links between their learning in RE and other subjects;
- know how well they are doing in RE and how to improve their learning.

RE helps pupils become **confident individuals** by enabling them to:

- develop important attitudes such as sensitivity, open-mindedness, self-esteem and appreciation / wonder;
- share their own views, ideas and experiences, in a supportive learning environment, without fear or embarrassment;
- develop the ability to produce reasoned, thoughtful arguments and well-substantiated conclusions, especially when engaging with questions of meaning and ethical issues;
- express their own ideas and responses in a variety of ways such as creative writing, oral work, the use of ICT, drama, story, open ended activities and music;
- experience their own views and ideas being treated with respect by those around them;
- engage with, and reflect upon, key beliefs and teachings in religion regarding the purpose, value and dignity of human beings.

RE helps pupils become **responsible citizens** by enabling them to:

- develop both respect and sensitivity to other people's beliefs and values;
- learn about, and from, the contribution of religion and belief to Community Cohesion through engaging with school, local, British and global communities;
- actively contribute to RE lessons through group and class discussions;
- learn about, and from, the diversity of faith and beliefs in their local, wider, British and global communities;
- begin to analyse how, and why, religion and belief are portrayed in the media;

- begin to critically evaluate the role and place of religion in the world;
- enrich their learning through visits and visitors;
- investigate and reflect upon their rights and responsibilities;
- develop the key attitude of open mindedness, sustaining their own views, agreeing and disagreeing respectfully and listening carefully to others.

## **Principles of Teaching and Learning**

The planning of RE is based upon the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus 2012 and follows the themes outlined in the long-term curriculum plan. The Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus 2012 provides schemes of work which can be used to support planning and ensure pupils access to a broad and balanced RE curriculum which broadens their knowledge and understanding through a careful balance of 'learning about' and 'learning from'. When planning RE teachers consider the use of 'big questions' to enable pupils to enquire and think creatively and plan opportunities for reflection to build the ability of pupils to develop their own thinking and personal response. Planning will also aim to link the coverage in RE with pupils' own lives and experiences, with national and global situations where appropriate and moral and ethical issues linked with the ideas explored. Teachers give pupils opportunities to learn using artefacts, visits, visitors and visual materials. Through these teaching strategies active learning is promoted and pupils' interest and engagement in the subject is optimised.

Teachers within the schools will teach RE with the awareness of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. Teachers therefore remain sensitive to, and respectful of, the differing experiences of the pupils within our schools and value this diversity highly. Teachers recognise that links from RE can be made within many other curriculum areas such as English, music, art and history and where these can be made they will enhance the learning across the curriculum. While teachers are encouraged to show enthusiasm and interest in religion, perhaps sharing their perspective, they should ensure that they offer balanced teaching which does not influence pupils towards a particular faith or belief and avoid teaching being influenced by stereotypes. Teachers are aware that RE can link with sensitive issues and know that, where pupils are involved in

discussion connected with these sensitive issues, they are able to ask questions, give responses and be respectful of each other.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment forms an essential part of RE teaching. The awareness of each pupil's knowledge and understanding through assessment enables teachers to plan next steps and learning progression. Assessment grids are used throughout the school to document the progress of pupils from the Foundation Stage, KS1, KS2 (lower) and KS2 (upper). This assessment is the responsibility of the class teacher but may be contributed to by others involved in the RE learning in the classroom. Pupils in the Foundation Stage may have their learning documented within their learning journey profile. All parents receive an annual written report including a section covering their child's learning in Religious Education over the year.

## **Subject Leadership**

The subject leader is an advocate for the effective provision of RE within the schools. The high level of knowledge of the subject and related effective teaching strategies will enable the subject leader to support and advise other members of staff. The advisory role across a federation of schools includes support through e-mail, conversations, working alongside teaching staff, monitoring activities and leading training. Where the subject leader accesses training through courses or cluster meetings, this will be shared in the most appropriate way. Where resource needs are identified, the subject leader will include these in the strategic plans for the development of the subject and make the necessary arrangements. Should staff require support in borrowing resources from another school, or those available from the Diocese, the subject leader will assist in the facilitation of this.

The subject leader holds responsibility for the strategic development of the subject by ensuring they are aware of relevant changes, legislation and updates in relation to the teaching of RE and any changes in the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus. The creation of an action plan each year is essential to ensure that actions taken allow the development of

the subject optimally in each school. This action plan, and any other updates, will be shared with the headteacher, governors and staff members in order to ensure all are working towards the targets which will enable us to realise our vision for RE.

### **Matching Learning to Pupils' Needs**

As with all policies, we will have regard to children who have any additional needs and we will personalise and differentiate accordingly. Teachers should be aware that some children have special and deep experiences of religion through family practice or their own faith community and should seek to extend these learners in light of their experience.

### **Access to RE**

We note the rights of parents/carers to withdraw their children from RE and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Please refer to the subject leader or headteacher regarding any questions from parents/carers about withdrawals.

**Signed:**

**Mr A Mitchell**  
**Chair of Governors of the Spires Federation Governing Body**

**Date:**