

CLIFFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND
INFANT SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

To be Reviewed: February 2018*

Reviewed by: S. Preston

(Incorporating the foundations for such values as Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities and Personal and Social Education).

Religious Education must encompass many aspects of the world in which we live. Fundamentally it is the teaching of belief, in this instance, as a Church of England School, that of the Christian faith. However, this is not a subject taught in isolation, nor indeed is Christianity an isolated religion. It is related to many other beliefs, eg. Judaism and Islam.

Neither is Religious Education concerned only with beliefs and the history of these beliefs. It must also give the children an appreciation and awareness of the world in which they live. Religious Education should help lay the foundation of respect and concern for others.

Religious Education in the school endeavours to nurture:-

1. An appreciation of the world in which we live. Everyday sights and sounds such as a rainbow, the dawn chorus, or the growth of plants and flowers are magical to this age group. This sense of awe and wonder is to be encouraged.
2. The children's own individuality and independence. The children are growing rapidly both physically and mentally during this period and it is important that they get emotional satisfaction from their endeavours. They must begin to appreciate moral standards by which to live and to acquire a sense of responsibility.
3. Personal qualities. Perhaps the most important of these are love, kindness, caring, gratitude and generosity; taught through stories, factual accounts, the Church's teaching and hopefully by example.

4. The ability to be part of a group. Showing concern for and interest in others in an ever increasing circle of acquaintances.
5. A respect for the world in which we live. The development of care and respect for personal property to extend to collective property and gradually to the natural world
6. An understanding of the history and teaching of the Bible. To study at a simple level both the Old and New Testaments, and to relate that teaching to the world in which the children will mature. In addition to celebrate special Christian festivals and to look at the Church and its role in the development of the child. Finally to look at the spread of Christianity both in the past and by people of special renown today.
7. An awareness of the beliefs of others. It is important that the children learn to respect other faiths and the traditions thus created. Through a calendar of relevant festivals and bearing in mind particularly the children of other origins and faiths in the School at any one time, it is hoped to foster acceptance, tolerance and understanding.

Religious Education is both a specific and cross-curricular subject. It incorporates many techniques and approaches; listening, reading, writing, oral work, the use of radio, television, video and visits to relevant places of interest. Music, drama and movement are also essential ingredients of this subject, plus that which is specific to this subject alone - corporate worship.

Assemblies are held on a daily basis in school and regularly in St. Andrew's Psalter Lane Church, a joint Anglican/Methodist ministry. A member of the church also visits school once a week to conduct an assembly. St. Andrew's Psalter Lane Church is often the venue for special services at Christmas, Easter and Harvest.

Aims

1. To keep open a door to the possibility of religious understanding and experience.

2. To introduce children to the reality of a Christian framework of understanding of themselves and the world which will be expressed in prayer and worship, in thought, reading and discussion and in Christian living.
3. So, to provide as far as possible a full foundation of awareness of Christianity, of knowledge and sympathetic understanding, on which understanding and commitment can be built.

Objectives

1. To help children to a deepening understanding of Jesus Christ's life and work.
2. To give an awareness that religion (Christianity) is concerned with present day living; that there is a practical, moral side to the religious life.
3. To offer children the chance to ask questions and receive serious informed answers, while helping them to some appreciation of the sense of mystery at the heart of being. There are no glib answers to "Who am I?", "Why are we here?", "Why are things the way they are?", "Is there a meaning to it all?" etc.
4. To open up some of the Biblical literature in its background and its varieties, stressing that it is about life, about real people in real situations; it is not fairy tales.
5. To make children aware of Christianity as a world-wide modern religion, multi-racial and multi-cultural, in its widely varied forms.
6. To give children the beginnings at least of the vocabulary they will need to talk about their religious/spiritual concerns.
7. To offer an introduction to the practice of worship.
8. To give some acquaintance with materials from other faiths outside the Biblical tradition, Judaism and Islam.

R.E. Syllabus

The R.E. programme starts from Christianity and an experience and understanding of the Christian faith. "Usually there is little respect for beliefs of others by those who do not value their own religious heritage". (3rd May 1988 Times - Rabbi Jonathan Romain). This programme of study for Reception and Years 1 and 2 is mainly Christian based, but other religions such as Islam and Judaism will also be explored.

Pupils should be able to be working towards:-

1. Identifying features.
2. Explaining hidden meanings or importance.
3. Demonstrating the relationship between belief and practice.
4. Accounting for diversity.
5. Analyse critical evidence.
6. Evaluate reasons or arguments.

Wherever possible there will be cross-curricular links in R.E., but where this is not possible then specific R.E. topics will be taught.

Each year the school celebrates the major festivals of the Church and care is taken so that topics are not presented in the same way year after year.

The RE and Assembly syllabus was redesigned in 2013.

[*NB: This policy will be reviewed by D Gage & S Preston after the completion of the Diocesan led 'Understanding Christianity' course]