

Little Sutton Church of England Primary School
Religious Education Statement

Intent

Little Sutton Church of England School follows the Cheshire West and Chester Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in accordance with Cheshire's 'Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education' (SACRE). In accordance with the agreed syllabus, Religious Education at our school:

- Is open and objective. It does not seek to urge religious beliefs on young people, nor compromise the integrity of their own religious position by promoting one tradition over another.
- Endeavours to promote a positive attitude toward people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own.
- Promotes the values and attitudes necessary for citizenship in a multi-faith and multi-racial society through developing understanding of, respect for, and dialogue with people of different beliefs, practices, races and cultures.
- Recognises similarities and differences in commitment, self-understanding and the search for truth. Respecting and valuing these for the common good.
- Is not the same as collective worship, which has its own place in the educational life of the school, contributing to an informed, reflective, compassionate and caring school community.
- Promotes community cohesion through linking with our local Church of St. Paul's Hooten and other local charities such as 'Claire House Hospice'.
- Recognises and celebrates the range of cultures and diversity of the school through workshops, assemblies and shared experiences of staff, children and people from the local community.

The RE curriculum at Little Sutton Church of England School is organised to support the development of children's knowledge of religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews, practices and ways of life and enable children to make links between these. It also develops children's knowledge and understanding of the different members of our community. Knowledge and skills are supported by first-hand experiences, including visits to local places of worship and visits from faith communities, as well as a 'Sunday School' held each week on school premises during school time. Knowledge and skills are mapped to support children's understanding of religion and faith. The RE curriculum is also designed to support positive attitudes and values, and encourage children to reflect and relate learning to their own experience. Children learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives, as part of its commitment to ensure mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths.

The syllabus recommends that any Christian themes or 'Big Questions' are explored by investigating and reflecting through use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. All the Cheshire West and Chester units therefore include a number of 'Free Choice' units in order to facilitate this exploration through a variety of curricular areas.

The syllabus has been created in a cyclical format to enable children to revisit and build on prior knowledge of the different beliefs and practices taught across the school. Cheshire West and Chester SACRE promote RE and Collective Worship in the Borough, develop the good teaching of Religious Education in schools and support community cohesion. At Little Sutton Church of England (Controlled) Primary School, we are committed to providing our children with an exciting and positive learning environment, in which they have

the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and also other world religions to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Implementation

RE is taught in a weekly topic block each half term (autumn one – summer two). Coverage is planned to link with key dates and religious festivals to provide opportunities to celebrate festivals and religions with greater consistency and contextual relevance. Work is recorded in topic books and is evidenced with a variety of outcomes, including written pieces, artwork and photographs.

As children progress through the programme of study, they are able to look deeper into spiritual, ethical, moral and social issues and with increasing breadth across Christianity and also other different religions and worldviews through time and around the world. Learning is planned and sequenced to support pupils in building an ever-increasing picture over time, constantly building their knowledge and understanding of key subject knowledge and specialist vocabulary around concepts focusing on Believing, Living and Thinking. This ensures that the investigation, exploration and reflection of their own and others' responses to 'Big Questions' can continuously increase in depth, breadth and complexity. As pupils move through the Religious Education curriculum, the expectations of pupils to explain 'what' the beliefs, practices and values are and the relationships between them, as well as explaining 'why' these are important and may make a difference to people, and 'how' they relate, change or impact on a wider world view also increases.

'Big Questions' relate to what people believe and do, how people respond to big questions and issues, and how beliefs and values make a difference to lives. Therefore, the enquiry learning continuously builds to enable achievement the stated skills end points for each year. These are based on the SACRE 'Religious Education Skills Spectrum' which itself reflects studies not only in pupils' development in mental capacity (including Bloom's Taxonomy and Maslow's "progression of needs") and also uses models for behavioural and moral development (C Graves), as well as research into spiritual development. Using these models, the skills end points can be divided into four key developmental stages, beginning with 'concrete' and 'fundamental' understanding, progressing to 'cognitive' and 'creative' thinking, moving towards 'critical' reflection and analysis and thinking with 'synergy'.

Cheshire West and Chester SACRE continues to work with teachers in improving the quality of teaching and learning of RE by providing training, and publishing updated schemes of work and materials and guidance to develop and support Assessment for Learning and effective teaching and learning strategies.

Impact

Alongside a whole school approach to celebrating different religious and cultural celebrations, the RE curriculum provides the means to promote positive images of people in the wider community, including their beliefs, traditions, culture, language and history. It ensures that children develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally to promote and realise a better understanding of themselves and others and to equip with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing, multicultural world.

Religious Education in the Early Years

From an early age, pupils at Little Sutton Church of England School learn to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, and learn how to form positive and respectful relationships.

Pupils in the Early Years explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about religious stories, for example, the Christian nativity story during Christmas and the Hindu story of Rama and Sita during Diwali. They are introduced to religious words where appropriate and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. In the Early Years, the children ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imaginations and curiosity to develop their appreciation of, and wonder at, the world in which they live.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the curriculum is divided up into seven areas of learning. RE sits very firmly within the areas of Personal, Social and Emotional development, Communication and Language, and Understanding of the World. By the end of Reception, children are expected to:

- explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers;
- participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.

Religious Education in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two

As pupils move into Key Stage One and beyond, learning becomes more formalised. RE is delivered as an individual subject once a week using the Cheshire West and Chester Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. In both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, RE lessons are taught in mixed ability groups and there is a heavy emphasis on speaking and listening skills, with teachers encouraging civilised debate and reasoned argument. RE provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It is vital therefore that our pupils are given a safe and supportive space to explore these ideas with one another.

As in the Early Years, children in Key Stage One and Two have the opportunity to visit many different places of worship. To further deepen learning, religious visitors are organised to talk to the children about their faith, festivals and beliefs. These visits provide the children with opportunities to ask questions and have hands on experiences such as: making Christingles and Diwali lights and singing Christmas carols. These trips and visitors are organised termly, focusing on the topics that the children are studying.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Through the school's REACH acronym, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of

social class, gender, culture, race, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive attitudes towards others. Support specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how greater depth and further challenge can be provided and demonstrated by children who require further challenge. All pupils are entitled to access the **Religious Education** curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.

To ensure inclusion, teachers use a range of strategies in line with the school's inclusion planning key. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also well-adapted to ensure full accessibility and reasonable adjustments are made when needed, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different group of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential. Through the use of **'What Do I Know Now?'**, teaching takes account of children's own interests to ensure topic relevance to all individual learners.

Assessment

At Little Sutton Church of England Primary School, assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning in RE and enables teachers to:

- make meaningful judgements about pupil knowledge and learning through the programme of study, (both formative and summative.)
- monitor and track pupil progress over time e.g. three times per year.
- involve pupils in the learning and enquiring process through the sharing of key questions and learning objectives and through methods of self- assessment and peer assessment.
- report annually on pupil performance in RE to parents.

Each unit covered states clearly the skills to be achieved. Teachers design independent assessment tasks to assess the children using the school's established assessment system for other core subjects. Children are assessed as being emerging, expected, or exceeding. Children's attainment is then recorded using the school's online assessment system 'Insight.'

British Values

Teachers actively promote the British values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to British values. RE lessons offer a structured and safe space during curriculum time for reflection, discussion, dialogue and debate. The teaching of RE will enable pupils to learn to think for themselves about British values. In RE pupils learn the skills and develop attitudes that help protect themselves and others from harm throughout their lives.

The RE classroom is a democratic classroom, where all pupils have an equal right to be heard and democracy is modelled by the teacher and expected of every pupil. In RE pupils examine different codes for living and consider the value of the rule of law where all people are equal before the law. They consider questions about identity and belonging. Religion is a good case study of the balance between individual liberty and the greater good. RE can challenge pupils

to be increasingly respectful and to celebrate diversity of different cultures, faiths and beliefs.

Christian Distinctiveness

Church Schools are different, not because they are exclusive, but because they are distinctive. In Little Sutton Church of England Primary School, we set out to live by our values. These values are values that are evident in many schools, but in our church school the values are always underpinned by the lessons we learn from the Bible.

R.E is taught as a core subject and the curriculum is varied and interesting including teaching and learning from the Diocese Curriculum and The Cheshire West and Chester agreed syllabus for Education.

Collective Worship is part of all our assemblies and children have an active part in our assemblies.

We aim to develop links with the school, the church and the community. The children are proud of our school as a church school and can articulate difference between church schools and community schools.

We aim for everything we do to be rooted in Christian values. The attitudes to teaching and learning and the excellent behaviour seen around the school are evident that our safe, community environment, is a welcoming, safe and enjoyable place to be every day.

The Curriculum Leader for Religious Education is:

Miss Diana Boycott