

**Staploe Education Trust**

*Excellence through partnership*



# **Kennett and The Shade** **Primary Schools**

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

<b>Policy owned by Kennett and The Shade Advisory Body</b>	
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Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’

Kennett and The Shade Primary Schools deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus 2013 ‘Together we Learn’ (Cambridgeshire).

## **Rationale/Aims for teaching RE**

In Religious Education at Kennett and The Shade Primary Schools we aim for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the UK
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs (both religious and secular) values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own; living in a society of diverse religions
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Cambridgeshire and the UK
- Encourage openness to ask questions and search for answers of meaning and purpose for themselves
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
  - developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
  - responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
  - reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

## **The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to community cohesion**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Cambridgeshire enables the teaching of RE to make a distinctive and significant contribution to these four aspects of pupils’ development. While schools provide for these aspects of personal development in many ways, and through many subjects of the curriculum, RE may often focus on spiritual and moral education within the curriculum, and makes a distinctive contribution to understanding cultural diversity through developing understanding of religions and beliefs. These opportunities for personal development contribute to high standards and aspirations for each pupil.

### **Personal development and well-being**

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident



individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

## **Community cohesion**

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

**The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

**The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

**The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

**The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. RE is an important subject in contribution to the schools development as a Rights Respecting School.

## **Approaches to teaching RE.**

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through locally agreed syllabuses and taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

We use as a basis for our planning the 'Together we Learn' Cambridgeshire Programmes of Study. As a source of ideas and teaching strategies we also gain support from the Diocesan Adviser (from the Diocesan Board in Ely).



Religious Education at Kennett and The Shade Primary Schools is delivered through a ‘community of enquiry’. The Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus supports the outcomes of the Ofsted Long Report 2010 ‘Transforming Religious Education’, in which it is recommended the use of enquiry-based learning in all phases of teaching religious education.

There is a key question to each unit of work, with a series of smaller questions that unpick the main question. The support material accompanying this syllabus has more details for each scheme of work.

RE flourishes where teachers don’t merely transmit knowledge but enable pupils to be active, thoughtful, reflective and expressive in their handling of questions about beliefs, religion, spirituality and values. This means that pupils are actively engaged in exploration, reflection and expression, making learning personalised and effective.

## **RE Organisation.**

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that Key Religions to be studied are:

- Early Years Foundation Stage/Reception: Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community
- Key Stage 1 Christianity and Sikhism
- Key Stage 2 Christianity, Judaism, Islam & Hinduism

## **Assessment and Recording of RE**

In line with the school policies on assessment and recording.

Using an eight-level scale and Performance Descriptors (P Scales) staff can assess pupils’ progress and establish expectations. It is expected that each teacher delivering RE will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set.

## **Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE**

Assessments will be used by the RE Leader to track pupil progress through the school and will be used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging. The RE Leader will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data and monitoring of lessons and planning.

## **Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Members of the Advisory Body)**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the members of the advisory body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD



- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE. In these circumstances, head teachers might wish to seek advice from their LA or SACRE.

### **The right of Withdrawal from RE**

At Kennett and The Shade Primary Schools, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.



- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.