

# **Religious Education and World Views in Cheshire West and Chester**

## **Guidance**

### **Intent of the RE Curriculum in Cheshire West and Chester**

Through the teaching of Religious Education (RE), children learn the essential knowledge of other religions and worldviews, as well as skills and attitudes such as critical thinking and empathy. This understanding of others' worldviews is an essential first step to enabling each pupil to understand, reflect on and develop their own personal worldview, which is one of the core tasks of education.

### **Impact of the RE Curriculum in Cheshire West and Chester**

It is essential that the key knowledge, skills and attitudes that pupils are taught are monitored and tracked as they move through school. We know that children have gained the expected knowledge and understanding of other religions and worldviews through various types of formative and summative assessment, which is undertaken on a regular basis. Encouraging pupils to reflect on their own learning, as well as their own developing worldviews, is done through peer and self-assessment.

### **Essential Knowledge and Terms**

Cheshire West and Chester SACRE request that all primary schools who are required to follow the Agreed Syllabus refer to the Essential Knowledge and Terms document as a statutory requirement. This is the minimum basis required for your RE Curriculum for Key Stage One and Two. It also includes the terms which we expect children to be accessing and applying with increasing confidence.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Religion and World Views in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) should wherever possible begin with the child and allow opportunities to explore their personal experiences and questions which they have about the world around them. The RE curriculum provided should include opportunities for play, child initiated and adult initiated opportunities. During the year the child will encounter Religion and World Views through stories, using specific words, special books, places, objects, events and where possible visiting places of worship and meeting believers. Events of a religious nature which are being celebrated in school will also provide opportunities for learning back in the classroom. There should be opportunities to develop a sense of wonder, to nurture curiosity, to let imaginations grow, have a sense of personal identity and an awareness and empathy for the world around them.

Through this syllabus we are asking Early Years Practitioners to design their own opportunities for Religious Education, taking into account the faith views your families hold. Whilst your content should be majority Christianity, we would also like you to mark events and festivals celebrated by the children in your class, look at links with your local community and international partnership schools, encounter

beliefs which are different to those held by children in your class and promote uniqueness and diversity.

There is a Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&C) EYFS Guidance Pack which is part of this syllabus.

### **Promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values through RE**

Religious Education provides opportunities to promote *spiritual development* through:

- finding meaning and purpose when looking at the world; discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, beliefs about God and values such as justice, honesty and truth.
- puzzling over 'ultimate questions of the meaning of life' e.g. life and death;
- considering how religions and other world views perceive the value of human beings, and their relationships with one another, with the natural world and with God.
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging and self-awareness.
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.
- learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and world views.
- considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts.
- reflecting on personal beliefs and values which form a perspective of life with respect to different religions and world views.

Religious Education RE provides opportunities to promote *moral development* through:

- enhancing the values identified within the National Curriculum, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust.
- exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious leaders and world views.
- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice and in so doing understanding and appreciating the viewpoints of others.
- studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious tolerance and personal integrity and in so doing respect the civil and criminal law of England
- gaining an understanding of and respect for the range of religious and world views and developing an opinion.

Religious Education provides opportunities to promote *social development* through:

- considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns.
- investigating social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions and other world views as well as the common ground between them.
- developing the skills and personal qualities necessary for living and working together as part of a wider community, for example through discussion around key beliefs and ideas from religious and other world views.
- articulating pupils' own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues.
- acceptance and engagement with the British values of democracy; rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect and tolerance in relation to those of different faiths and beliefs.

Religious Education provides opportunities to promote *cultural development* through:

- promoting a sense of enjoyment and fascination when encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures including their own and those of others.
- considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices.
- celebrating diversity by promoting racial and interfaith harmony and respect for all; combating prejudice and discrimination; contributing positively to community cohesion and promoting awareness of how interfaith cooperation can support the pursuit of the common good.

Religious Education provides opportunities to promote *British values* through:

- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and respected and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- encouraging tolerance, mutual respect and positive attitudes towards diversity.
- exploring different religious codes for human life and comparing these with the rule of British law, e.g. how the Decalogue was the basis for British law.
- develop an understanding of the importance of individual liberty (which is protected in law) to choose and hold a religious or non-religious world view.
- understanding religious teachings on the rights and value of the individual and exploring the importance of fairness and democracy; the rule of law and justice.

*(Based on 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools' DfE, Nov 2014, pp.5-6 and Ofsted's definition School Inspection Handbook September 2015)*

## **RE and Prevent**

The Prevent duty within schools is to protect children from the risk of radicalisation. Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) and British Values, along with RE, are key to every school's implementation of the Prevent duty.

RE enables children to develop an understanding of different faith's core beliefs and practices. This understanding, and the tolerance and mutual respect it engenders, is an integral part of every school's Prevent duty.

## **Controversial Issues and Responding to Media Events**

Within RE teaching, issues that are controversial may arise. These may be linked to religious and other belief-based extremism. It is important that these issues, and the concerns and misunderstandings that may arise from them, are addressed in an environment that fosters debate, dialogue and the development of respect and understanding. Through its engagement with controversial issues, RE offers effective opportunities to develop pupils' critical thinking skills.

The following website provides advice and resources that will help support teachers in addressing contentious issues, particularly those sometimes linked with violent extremism.

[www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resilience-teaching-controversial-topics/](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resilience-teaching-controversial-topics/)

## **Comparison between religions**

It is advised that children have a secure knowledge of the basic precepts of a faith prior to engaging in comparisons between religions. It is to be encouraged in an atmosphere of respectful enquiry.

## **Assessment Guidance**

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.

## **Progression Maps**

The Agreed Syllabus working party have created a document which may be useful for when you are planning a unit of study including steps of progressive questions.

## **Religious Education within an integrated curriculum**

Religious Education provides wide opportunities for Cross Curricular study using concepts and processes from two or more subjects. This enables opportunities to engage in challenging exploration and coherent curriculum coverage. It is vital that the essential knowledge, vocabulary, skills and attitudes are identified at the beginning.

Thematic study that looks at a specific concept and how different beliefs respond to it, e.g. World Poverty,

Examples for teaching RE through Design Technology are below.

**Design Technology - KS 1 -design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and other users based on design criteria.** Judaism -exploring the Mezuzah and Shema in KS1 There is an opportunity to use this purposeful product as a stimulus to design a container which can hold a piece of text. Mezuzah – literally ‘doorpost’ is a piece of parchment (Klaf) inscribed with the 713 Hebrew words including The Shema - "Hear, O Israel, the Lord (is) our God, the Lord is One.” It is attached to doorposts, and contained in a Mezuzah case. These cases are very varied and beautifully designed. Sacred Texts, Bible, Quran, Torah – KS2 Designing covers for Books or Mantels for Scroll in fabric or scroll cases E.G Quran Cases- for travelling with Scroll sections can be made using recycled snack tubes- cut in half vertically -2 spindles secured at top and bottom to facilitate the scroll roll. Design models of Places of Worship after visiting them, Baha’i – The nine point star, the box with mirror to reflect, creating hangings

**Design Technology -KS2- apply their understanding of how to strengthen, stiffen and reinforce more complex structures.** The history of the development of printing – could lead to an exploration of the effect of the translation of the Bible – William Tyndale translation from Latin to English– Reformation. Also other Sacred Texts translated into world languages

**KS 2 Evaluate understand how key events and individuals in design and technology have helped shape the world.** Explore the elements and symbolism, make the foods and suggest alternatives that could be used whilst still being appropriate, for example Judaism - Sedar Plate, Sikhism -Parshad, Christianity - Hot Cross Buns, Simnel Cake, Bread and Wine, Hinduism- Food plays an important role in worship. Compare diets of different faith and explore reasoning behind choices.

### **Guidance for visits and visitors.**

Visiting places of worship and having visitors from a variety of faith groups in school provide invaluable learning opportunities and greatly enhance the R.E. curriculum. Pupils can gain a greater understanding of a religion by putting what has been learnt in the classroom into a vibrant and real life context. They provide opportunities for children to learn about belief from a believer.

National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) offers a checklist for planning a visit and welcoming visitors into schools in the following document:

*'natre.org.uk guidance on RE resources visits and visitors'*

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-re/guidance-on-resources/visits-and-visitors/>

CW&C SACRE also recommend <http://pof.reonline.org.uk/> where you can safely email a believer providing children with the opportunity to email questions to people of different faith groups.

### **Where to find support**

There are two teacher advisers in CW&C for RE, Tim Lee at Hartford High School and Naomi Anstice at Frodsham Manor House. Both are available for support. There are also three local cross phrase groups who meet throughout the year after school providing teacher lead CPD who meet around Northwich, Chester and Ellesmere Port areas to which all are welcome There is also an "RE in Cheshire West and Chester" Facebook group where everyone is kept updated.

*With thanks to the CWAC Primary Syllabus Working Group*

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