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# Marlborough St Mary's CE Primary School



MARLBOROUGH  
ST MARY'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Religious Education Policy

*Together we believe, learn and achieve*

# Marlborough St Mary's CE Primary School

## Religious Education Policy

In an ethos of close support, encouragement and challenge, at Marlborough St Mary's Primary School we aim to:

- Embed Christian values of Fairness, Love, Friendship, Respect, Perseverance and Courage.
- Deliver a challenging, stimulating curriculum in which children develop a sense of awe and wonder.
- Develop skills for life and a love of learning to help everyone to be the best they can.
- Empower children to appreciate others and to express themselves freely knowing they are valued and part of a wider community.
- Provide a calm and caring environment where everyone is happy and secure.

In Religious Education at Marlborough St Mary's Primary School we aim that Religious Education will:

- Provoke challenging questions
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others
- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others
- Encourage empathy, generosity and compassion
- Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity
- Encourage pupils to learn from different religions
- Promote opportunities to share, explore and value religious beliefs
- Encourage pupils to develop the ability to be still, to think, and to reflect
- Develop in pupils a sense of awe, wonder and mystery
- Develop the skills of investigation, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, application and communication.
- Have an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

RE in Marlborough St Mary's Primary School makes a significant contribution to other areas of the curriculum including:

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

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'.

Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to

achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

### **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 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, diocesan advice and schools, 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.

### **Delivery of Religious Education**

We use as a basis for planning the 'Understanding Christianity' and 'Discovery' RE schemes of work.

RE is taught in discrete lessons but is also included in our broader topic planning e.g. work on different cultures e.g. India and China.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that KS 1 pupils study Christianity, Judaism and Islam. KS 2 pupils study Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.

### **Assessment, Recording and Monitoring**

It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils at the end of each taught unit. The level achieved will be used by the Subject Leaders 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 Subject Leaders will use analysis of this assessment data and a range of strategies eg, work scrutiny, lesson observation, learning walk to monitor standards of RE within the school.

The Subject Leaders will be responsible for contributing to the school self- evaluation.

### **Responsibilities for RE within the school, Head Teacher and Governors**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher 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 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 of the duty to promote community cohesion
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils 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.

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

At Marlborough St Mary's Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community. We 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 others 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 Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Marlborough St Mary's CE Primary 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 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 the 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.