

Burnside Primary School



Religious Education Policy

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Introduction

Religious Education is an essential part of our curriculum at Burnside and makes a vital contribution to the education of our children. It plays an important part in the provision of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which every child is entitled. Through RE, teachers are able to foster spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, physical and social development. Children are engaged in not only learning about religion, but also from religion.

The ethos of our school is further enhanced through the teaching of RE – skills of empathy, understanding, acceptance, consideration and respect are all developed through RE lessons.

RE contributes to personal and social development with pupils encouraged to reflect on their own spiritual and moral ideas whilst also exploring a range of world religions and developing understanding of other cultures and traditions. Skills for adult life, employment and lifelong learning are all explored through RE.

This policy document sets out the curriculum intent, implementation and how impact will be measured for RE.

“RE provokes challenging questions....develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding....offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development ... and encourages respect for all.” (Durham Agreed Syllabus 2012)

Intent

Our RE lessons are intended to offer a broad and rich RE curriculum to allow for coverage of the Durham Agreed Syllabus whilst equipping children with the knowledge and skills to help them answer challenging questions, explore religions, beliefs, values, traditions, their community, personal development and wellbeing. The lessons have an intention of providing a high quality, coherent and progressive experience of the subject, with scope for cross-curricular learning whilst engaging, inspiring, challenging and encouraging pupils. Through each unit, children will know about and understand a range of religions and world views. They will be able to identify, investigate and respond to a variety of issues. SMSC, personal growth and community cohesion are featured throughout our lessons and are there to ensure opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect on and relate their learning in RE to their own experiences. The intent is to make sure that children understand the relevance of RE in today’s modern world and how it affects our lives, promoting discernment and enabling pupils to combat prejudice, preparing them for adult life, employment and life-long learning. During their time at Burnside, we aim to give children the skills and understanding to develop respect for all and to develop their own sense of identity and belonging in our society.

EYFS

The Durham Agreed Syllabus is followed in the EYFS, however the statutory requirement does not extend to Nursery. Pupils begin to explore religion through thinking about special people, books, place and objects. These concepts should be linked to the Early Learning Goals.

KS1 and KS2

Burnside Primary has a long term plan in place which has been produced by the RE co-ordinator in conjunction with Durham County Council and this meets the needs of the Agreed Syllabus. All staff follow this plan when teaching RE. The long and medium term plans ensure progression across the school allowing children to build on knowledge learnt in previous years. Lessons will be planned to match the need within each class by providing differentiation and support where necessary.

RE is taught through Enquiry Based Learning and covers the three elements of Knowledge and Understanding, Critical Thinking and Personal Reflection.

The key focus of learning for pupils in each key stage is:

KS1 – Pupils are able to identify some beliefs and features of religions

Lower KS2 – Pupils can describe some of the beliefs and features of religions

Upper KS2 – Pupils will be able to demonstrate understanding of some of the beliefs and features of religion through RE concepts.

Implementation

At Burnside we use enquiry based learning. Each RE unit for each half term investigates a specific question. Our RE lessons are well-resourced, differentiated and engaging. They are designed to offer a broad range of study for children studying RE whilst developing – Knowledge and Understanding of Religion, Critical Thinking and Personal Reflection. Throughout the school, emphasis on personal growth and community cohesion is evident, allowing for personal development for the children.

Through the teaching of RE we try to:

-develop knowledge of Christianity and other world religions, whilst exploring how beliefs can impact on our lives and the lives of others.

-encourage children to ask and reflect on challenging questions they have about life, beliefs about God, morality and humanity.

-encourage children to respect the diversity of our world whilst acknowledging different faiths and beliefs of others.

- provide opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development where children can explore their own beliefs and identity.

To further enhance learning visits to places of worship will take place and we will welcome visitors from different faiths to talk to the children about their beliefs.

Impact

We believe that the impact of our RE curriculum will be for children to have a better knowledge and understanding of the religions that make up the UK landscape and how they can learn from and work alongside each other to create community cohesion. All children will be more informed about their position in the world and the decisions they can make impacting their future. All children in school will be able to talk confidently about their wellbeing, moral and cultural development for the society in which they live. The RE curriculum will promote inquisitive minds, wonder, respect, open-mindedness, appreciation, tolerance, self-awareness and understanding for all those around them including themselves. Lessons enable high quality work to be produced and evidenced, showcasing a deep understanding of the main religions of the world, their community and their future. This evidence will be seen through using the correct vocabulary, explanations and respectful opinions, as well as cross-curricular evidence, for example religious and cultural art work, drama, craft and presentations. Impact will be seen by all teachers and children enjoying the experience of teaching and learning RE and understanding how it can help them in their future. We want our children to leave Burnside with the skills to cope in a diverse, multi-cultural and ever-changing world.

The legal position of RE

The Education Reform Act 1988 sets out the legal requirements for the teaching of Religious Education and states that all pupils aged 5-18, must be taught Religious Education.

Burnside Primary school follows the Durham Agreed Syllabus 2012, which is a statutory order. This syllabus, in accordance with The Education Act 1996, reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of teachings and practices of other principal world religions represented in Great Britain. At Burnside Primary, the children in Key Stage 1 focus on Christianity and Buddhism, whilst at Key Stage 2, there is a focus on Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Elements of other faiths may also be included. The Foundation Stage also explore some aspects of world religions. The Agreed Syllabus must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge particular religion or religious belief on pupils. At Burnside, we treat all belief systems with respect and encourage our pupils to do the same.

The importance of Religious Education

The main aims of Religious Education at Burnside Primary are summarised in the Durham Agreed Syllabus as follows:

- to provoke **challenging questions** about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- to develop pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and world views that offer answers to questions.
- to offer opportunities for **personal reflection and spiritual development**, encouraging pupils to explore their own beliefs, examine religious issues and consider their own response. RE enables pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging whilst encouraging empathy.
- To promote **mutual respect and tolerance** in order that pupils understand and appreciate the diverse society, helping to challenge prejudice, discrimination and racism. Both personal development and community cohesion are thus promoted through religious education.

Withdrawal

Under the terms of the 1988 Education Reform Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Religious Education.

It is the responsibility of the school to make adequate alternative provision for children withdrawn from Religious Education.

Burnside Primary respects the rights of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, however, the Head teacher would be very happy to meet with parents who have any concerns to discuss religious education in the school and consider arrangements.

Organisation and Management of RE

RE lessons take place in a variety of ways depending upon the religion and class topic.

The school has an RE co-ordinator who prepares the Action Plan and reviews, monitors and evaluates provision and practice of Religious Education.

Governors will be informed of any developments and changes to provision in RE and amendments to school policy are made available for discussion and approval.

Class teachers will report verbally to parents at parents evening and they will additionally present a written report to parents once a year.

Assessment

Each lesson has a learning objective and assessment is carried out by marking pupils work against this objective.

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education is open to all children at Burnside Primary School regardless of religion, race, culture, gender and ability. Through the teaching of religious education, children learn to:

- become aware that Britain is multi-religious and multi-cultural
- challenge inequalities and discrimination based on race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic groups
- respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others.

Lessons are planned with equality in mind and learning will be inclusive and respectful to all.

Inclusion

All children, regardless of ability, special needs or physical disabilities will access the RE curriculum. Lessons and resources will be differentiated while the learning environment, activities and desired outcomes will cater for different learning styles

Role of the subject leader

The RE subject leader will:

- monitor planning and progression by collecting a sample of books with feedback given to staff
- make staff aware of any new developments in RE with regard to the Durham Agreed Syllabus
- help to plan visits
- keep up to date on current developments in RE and feedback relevant information to staff
- organise, maintain and purchase RE resources.

As part of the RE curriculum and to further enrich the pupils experiences, we invite visitors from other faith communities into our school to meet with the children and

talk about their faith. The children will also visit religious buildings linked to the RE topic they are studying.

Parents/carers

Parents will be kept informed of any developments in relation to Religious Education and the school RE policy is available for parents to view. If they wish to discuss any other issues about RE they can contact their child's teacher directly.

Parents will be invited into school to join staff and children in celebrating Christmas.