Religious Education Policy

Religious Education at Ellison teaches children about the nature of religious beliefs and practices and the importance and influence of these in the lives of believers. At Ellison, it is part of a broad and balanced curriculum and makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. We aim to promote a caring and stimulating environment in which the children are encouraged to develop a respect for themselves and others.

Intent

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Ellison, we aim to develop the children's understanding of the major world faiths thus enabling them to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children to learn from religion as well as about religion.

Our Religious Education teaching aims to help children to:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences
- develop knowledge and understanding of major world religions and value systems found in Britain, this will include the teaching of British Values
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today
- develop and promote a tolerant understanding of and a respect for religious believers in a multicultural society
- develop investigative and research skills to enable them to make reasoned judgements
- have respect for other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society

Implementation

Our school curriculum for Religious Education meets the requirements of the 1988 and 2002 Education Reform Acts. These acts stipulate that Religious Education is compulsory for all children. The Religious Education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Our curriculum is based on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The pupils receive a balanced Religious Education curriculum, studying Christianity and at least two other major faiths represented in our local area. Pupils will also be made aware of broad perspectives of other religions. Where a request to withdraw pupils from Religious Education is received; we will ensure that discussions take place and appropriate action is agreed.

Here at Ellison, our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual development. Children are encouraged and free to ask questions and seek answers for themselves, with guidance from teachers. Our lessons enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge of religious festivals using their experiences of festivals such as Easter, Eid and Diwali to develop their religious thinking.

To ensure high standards of teaching and learning, we implement a curriculum that is progressive throughout the whole school. We ensure that key concepts covered in lessons build upon prior learning. We ensure that planned progression offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. In addition, we return to key concepts throughout school to enable children to commit their learning to their long-term memory and make links between units of study to further deepen their understanding. (Please see the concept overview document.) Religious Education follows six units of study to be covered across the academic year. The requirement for teaching time is 36 hours per year in Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year in Key Stage 2. This time may partially be made up by collective worship i.e. class or key stage assemblies.

The school uses a variety of teaching and learning methods in Religious Education lessons. We combine whole class teaching methods with enquiry-based research activities, providing children with the chance to use artefacts and secondary sources to discover more. Children will also engage with visitors and visit local places of worship where appropriate to enhance their understanding. Learning is not always recorded in a formal written way. Children are given the opportunity to use discussion, drama and role play, music and art to interpret and present their understanding in different ways.

We recognise the fact that children have differing needs in class and therefore provide suitable learning opportunities for all children to have appropriate challenge and achieve.

The implementation of our curriculum will enable children to develop the following key characteristics taken from the Chris Quigley Essentials curriculum:

• An outstanding level of religious understanding and knowledge.

• A thorough engagement with a range of ultimate questions about the meaning and significance of existence.

• The ability to ask significant and highly reflective questions about religion and demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues related to the nature, truth and value of religion.

• A strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together.

• Exceptional independence; the ability to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out investigations, evaluating ideas and working constructively with others.

• Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity, which are shown in their responses to their learning in RE.

• The ability to link the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose.

• A wide knowledge and deep understanding across a wide range of religions and beliefs.

Assessment will take a variety of forms and will be linked to key questions that children have addressed throughout the unit. These will be a variety of debatable, conceptual and factual questions allowing children to deepen their understanding. Carefully planned entry maps and exit tasks will help staff to assess learning and give children the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and how their understanding has developed. Children will be assessed against the Chris Quigley milestones and the National Curriculum.

Impact

The impact of our Religious Education curriculum at Ellison Primary Academy will be that children are equipped for life in an ever-changing and ever-shrinking world. Children will possess an understanding of the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. Our pupils will become well-rounded citizens by developing an understanding of the need for respect for others and a sense of personal responsibility. Our children will appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society. They will recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of ethical questions. The curriculum will enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Through their R.E. learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world.