



All Angels' Federation

Religious Education (R.E.) and Collective Worship

All Angels' Federation Religious Education (R.E.) Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At All Angels' Federation we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, such as Judaism in KS1 and those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

1.2 The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

2 The legal position of religious education

2.1 Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. As All Angels' Federation is a Voluntary Aided church school, teachers are not permitted to refuse to teach religious education. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the **Norfolk** LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

3.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences

at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

3.3 Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious' faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. All units are based on a 'big question.' Children may prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school community and beyond.

3.4 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- developing enquiries which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- exploring concepts in depth enabling a range of approaches;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- where possible, using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

4 Curriculum planning in religious education

4.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the **Norfolk** LEA's 2012 Revised Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leaders work out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group across the Federation. Some of our medium-term (termly) topics have a particular historical focus. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of religious themes and topics.

4.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

4.4 The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leaders.

5 Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

5.1 English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in English have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

5.2 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education in upper KS2. We also promote the values

and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

5.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

6 Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

6.1 At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.

6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

6.3 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to Walsingham or Bowthorpe Church, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

7 Assessment and recording

7.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil. We set new goals and pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

7.2 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

8 Resources

8.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of bibles and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research. In addition, Espresso, Request and REOnline are used to provide stimulating, up to date film clips and other resources. Understanding Christianity and Discovery RE are used to support planning and assessment.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 The RE subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject leaders present the Head Teacher with an annual report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. They have specially-allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Collective Worship

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship at All Angels' Federation are:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God,
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues,
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs,
- To encourage participation and response,
- To develop a sense of identity and responsibility towards each other, the wider community and the local church.
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes,
- To teach children how to worship.
- To explore different ways of Christian worship.

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves the school or class coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

St. Michael's V.A. Junior School (which together with Clover Hill V.A. Infant & Nursery now form the Federation) was initially established as part of a Local Ecumenical Project, bringing all churches together. Our practices tend to be similar, though not wholly Church of England denomination. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school, bearing in mind that, across the Federation, there is a considerable minority of pupils of other faiths as well as those from families with no Christian beliefs.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Organisation of collective worship

We hold a daily act of worship in our school. This forms part of each afternoon assembly, which is organised on a rota – weekly whole school, but sometimes year group, lower / upper school or class assemblies.

We conduct assemblies in a calm and dignified way. We tell children that the collective worship is a time of thoughtful, quiet reflection. The children are expected to behave in an appropriate way and participate in the prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere with music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We plan a rotation of staff leading collective worship, but sometimes local clergy or representatives from other local religious groups are invited to lead the assembly instead.

We plan our assemblies using 'values for life', together with festivals and events of the Christian calendar, plus the Leicester Diocese 'Together in Worship' guidance.

Some of our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children: assembly times provide opportunities to celebrate success. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues discussed in their class or the School Council. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They provide an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during this time. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. A record is kept of children who withdraw from collective worship.

Monitoring and review

It is the role of the named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the Head Teacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

This policy was reviewed and updated in February 2018 and approved by Governors in March 2018, and will be reviewed annually.