

## **Policy for Religious Education**



### **Introduction**

At Bridgewater our policies are regularly reviewed. This reflects current practice within school and all related government guidance and statutory requirements.

This policy has been adopted by the governors in consultation with the headteacher, subject leader and teaching staff.

### **Legal Requirements**

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Religious Education at Bridgewater Primary School is provided in line with and meets statutory requirements, which are that:

- the curriculum for every maintained school shall comprise a basic curriculum which includes provision for religious education for all pupils registered at the school
- the religious education programme must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain
- the religious education provided shall be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for Newcastle upon Tyne

### **Aims of Religious Education**

Within the framework of statutory requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus, our aims in RE are:

- to enable each pupil to explore our shared human experience and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from our experiences
- to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion through exploration of the beliefs and practices of the principal world faiths represented in Newcastle and Great Britain
- to affirm each pupil in her/his own family tradition, religious or non-faith, and through that to promote awareness, respect and sensitivity for the traditions of other people

- to provide opportunities for the cultivation of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- to support pupils in reflecting and thinking about fundamental human beliefs and values so that they develop a personal framework by which they can live

### **School Context**

Bridgewater school serves children between the ages of 0 – 11 within the Scotswood area of Newcastle upon Tyne.

We work to the Newcastle LA Agreed Syllabus for RE. The agreed syllabus follows SACRE which is reviewed annually and recognise the variety of religious and non-religious families from which our pupils come. We welcome and celebrate this diversity, are sensitive to the home background of each child and work to ensure that all pupils feel and are included in our RE programme. We are pleased to have the support of members of all local faith communities, we enjoy good relationships with them and encourage them to make positive contributions to the school and RE when appropriate.

We recognise the importance of pupils' all-round personal development and the leading role that RE plays in contributing to the spiritual, moral social and cultural elements in particular. We affirm the equality of importance of the twin aims of RE as expressed in the agreed syllabus and teach to these in a balanced way, ensuring that the 'affective' dimension of RE is addressed.

### **School specific information**

- The Religious Education Coordinator is responsible for leading, managing and monitoring all aspects of the subject to secure high standards of attainment and achievement in RE.
- The subject leader is also responsible for supporting all colleagues who teach RE, for example, through provision of advice and guidance on teaching and learning strategies. She also has oversight of their continuing professional development, particularly with regard to the acquisition of the necessary subject knowledge and understanding to teach the subject effectively.
- A detailed scheme of work, based on the agreed syllabus and supplemented by the QCA national framework and guidance for RE (2004), is available for teachers and for scrutiny by interested parties.
- In Key Stage 1 Christianity and Judaism are the major religions studied while Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Christianity throughout the key stage and also have the opportunity to study two other world faiths in depth; Hinduism in years 3 and 4 and Islam in years 5 and 6.
- Time allocation follows the recommendations of the Agreed Syllabus, which recommend a minimum of 36 hours for RE at Key Stage 1 and a minimum of 45 hours at Key Stage 2.
- Our policy and practice is to use a breadth and variety of teaching and learning styles in RE to engage pupils positively and actively with the subject content. Thus we aim to increase the use of, for example, art, drama, ICT, speaking and listening activities, audio-visual materials, posters, photographs, display work and visitors/visits to/from faith

communities. RE is expected to comply with the whole school policy on teaching and learning and to contribute to cross-curricular work in an appropriate way.

- The agreed syllabus provides descriptions of levels of attainment which are used to assess pupils' standards and monitor their progress. We report on pupils' progress and attainment in RE to parents at the end of each key stage. We undertake to make individual and accurate comments on each pupil's progress in RE to parents, based on regular monitoring of work using the Agreed Syllabus. Information of this nature will transfer with pupils to their new school(s) when they leave.
- Portfolios of pupils' work designed to help teachers make judgements about achievement, attainment and progress over time are kept and are available for interested parties. Teachers add to the portfolio examples of assessments and pupils' work which show clear evidence of progress and achievement. This approach supports exemplification of standards in RE and clarifies our understanding of what makes for quality learning in the subject.
- Resources – books and artefacts are stored in the Humanities cupboard.
- Visits to local faith communities – Bridgewater has established links with the local Christian church St Margaret's, Scotswood. The co-ordinator has contacts for other places of worship including the mosque in Elswick and the Hindu temple on the West Road which can be arranged upon request of the class teacher.

We intend that this policy will operate for the next three years when it will be subject to a full review led by the subject leader and involving the headteacher, teaching staff and governors, to ensure that the policy is embedded in practice.

### **Withdrawal**

We acknowledge the rights of parents to withdraw their child(ren) from RE and those of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We aim to provide an open and inclusive curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all teachers. We do not, therefore, anticipate any requests for withdrawal. We do, however, have a procedure in place to deal with any questions or concerns from parents about RE or withdrawals which, should in the first instance, be raised with the subject leader, then referred to the Headteacher. We politely request that parents put their intention to withdraw their child(ren) in writing to the Headteacher and Governors.

**Subject leader:** Claire Sharratt

**Approved:** 2017

**Review Date:** 2020