

# Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

*We are a caring Christian Community built on  
Compassion, Trust, Friendship and Hope*

## Religious Education Policy

Date of Policy: January 2009

Date of Review: January 2011

Adopted by Governing Body: February 2009

Signed by Chairman of Governors: Melvyn Price

## 1 Introduction

Spalding Parish Church of England Day School believes that as a Church School, Religious Education is at the heart of all that we do. This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of Religious Education at Spalding Parish Church of England Day School. It reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and has the support and agreement of the Governing Body.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all members of staff.

## 2 Aims and objectives

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 society today.
- develop investigative and research skills and enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues.
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.
- develop a sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a pluralistic society.
- reflect, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate them to others.
- consider questions of meaning and purpose of life.

## 3 The legal position of religious education

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 Foundation Stage 2 classes who are less than five years old.

The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from studying religious education if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors through the Head Teacher. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors.

The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school Religious Education curriculum is based on the Lincolnshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the Religious Education 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.

#### 4 Learning and Teaching

We base our teaching of Religious Education on the key principle that good teaching in Religious Education 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 Religious Education curriculum.

Our teaching styles in Religious Education enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences of religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Passover, for example to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups into Spalding Parish Church of England Day School.

Children research religious topics, studying particular religious faiths and comparing the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage and festivals.

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, by, for example:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- setting tasks of differentiated difficulty, both for individual and group work.
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

## 5 Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Lincolnshire LA's 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, outlined in the agreed Lincolnshire LA's syllabus, offers the children increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Curriculum planning in religious education is carried out 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 Religious Education subject leader works in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to create the long-term plan, disseminating the material to teaching colleagues.

Medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term.

The class teacher writes the short-term plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and success criteria for that lesson.

## 6 Foundation Stage

Religious education is taught to all children in the school, including those in the Foundation Stage. Religious education is an integral part of topic work covered during the year in Foundation Stage classes. The religious education aspects of the children's work are related to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage documentation.

## 7 Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

### English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English at Spalding Parish Church of England Day School by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy have religious themes or content which encourages discussion.

### Information and communication technology (ICT)

ICT is and where appropriate, in religious education together with videos/DVDs and as a research tool.

### Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE)

Through religious education lessons, children are taught about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour, for example, discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education are undertaken. Values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy are promoted by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. By promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

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

Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life, developing spiritual awareness. Children are helped to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. Social development is enhanced by allowing children 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.

### **8 Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs**

When teaching Religious Education, learning opportunities are provided to match to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are taken into account.

### **9 Assessment and recording**

Children's work in religious education is assessed by making informal judgements via observations. Work is marked once it has been completed and appropriate targeted comments are made. At the end of each academic year a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the 8 levels of attainment set out in the Lincolnshire Religious Education syllabus is made. To ensure progression this is passed onto the child's next teacher.

### **10 Resources**

Suitable resources are purchased to ensure the religious Education modules can be taught. Resources for religious education are stored centrally in a box of equipment for each religion for each Key Stage. A set of bibles for each Key Stage, and a collection of religious artefacts which are used to enrich teaching in religious education are also available. The school library has a good supply of Religious Education topic books, and catalogues are available for staff to choose other resources. Computer software has been installed to support the teaching of Religious Education.

## 11 Monitoring and review

The Religious Education subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the learning and teaching in religious education.

S/he is also responsible for:

- supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education.
- for being informed about current developments in the subject.
- for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

The Religious Education subject leader should present the governing body with a report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement annually. The Head Teacher, Governors and staff are fully committed to continuing professional development.

It is the role of the subject leader to undertake lesson observations, listen to the pupil voice and scrutinize work and planning.