



# Highbury Primary School

'Valued as Individuals, Inspired and Nurtured as Learners'

Respect, Resilience, Confidence, Kindness, Inclusive, Aspiration

## GOVERNORS POLICY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Highbury Primary and Nursery School's mission is:

- **To be an inclusive, safe and caring community where each member is equally valued and nurtured to develop their potential.**
- **To achieve academic excellence by ensuring each pupil performs to the best of their ability.**
- **To work together as a team with parents and carers within the community to promote rights, respect and responsibility for the benefit of all.**

At Highbury Primary School and Nursery we believe that Religious Education (RE) supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally (SMSC) and intellectually is reflected within the RE curriculum. The purpose of RE is to support the development of our children's own values as well as contribute to their own SMSC development. This enables children at Highbury Primary School to interpret and respond to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions and to their own and others' cultural and life experiences. This takes the form of encountering global issues, religious stories, festivals, artefacts, places of worship, rituals and beliefs within a mutually respected environment where the faith backgrounds of both the staff and the child's family is respected.

At Highbury the RE curriculum is mapped out across the school using The Living Difference IV Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton. This syllabus is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC), particularly Articles 8, 12, 14, 29 and 30. Teachers have a responsibility to enable children to make judgements carefully about different ways of living and also to discern and make choices about their own lives.

The process for teaching and making curriculum in The Living Difference IV is particularly helpful because children and young people are encouraged to question stereotypes and challenge assumptions. They are encouraged to work both collaboratively and independently to reach informed conclusions about, and discern the value of different religious and non-religious views and traditions.

### Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. It is our intention to respect the beliefs of children, their families and staff, while ensuring

that all pupils are provided with an understanding of collective worship in a safe and secure environment in which to grow and learn.

Whilst acts of collective worship are in the main of a 'broadly Christian character', they include as appropriate the chance to learn about other religions, beliefs and cultures since many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all faiths. Collective worship importantly concentrates on these, as well as those specific to Christianity.

Our respectful ethos and the Highbury school values (**Respect, Resilience, Confidence, Kindness, Inclusive, Aspiration**) which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, and culturally is reflected in our collective worship, as well as our PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. This is to ensure children develop a reflective approach to life, whilst helping them to understand their responsibilities as learners and in supporting themselves and others to be successful.

Through our weekly celebration assemblies, we aim to help our children to become increasingly aware of themselves as individual learners and groups within the school/ wider community by recognising these specific qualities. Each week, through a celebration assembly, one child per class is nominated for a Celebration of Learning Certificate in recognition of an achievement in their learning and demonstrating the School Value heroes.

#### **Aims of the RE curriculum:**

At Highbury the intention of the RE curriculum is to enable children to gain knowledge and an understanding of a range of religions. By the end of their primary education children will have been exposed to four of the main world religions (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism). In the RE curriculum, there are equal opportunities for all children to engage in new experiences, children from all backgrounds including disadvantaged should have the same opportunities using our school values to promote positive attitudes to learning and developing a growth mind set for all.

At Highbury the RE curriculum is mapped out across the whole school using The Living Difference IV Agreed Syllabus. The purpose of the RE curriculum is:

- To provide a wide range of encounters with religion which will help them form a view of the world that they can apply to their own experiences
- To help foster attitudes such as curiosity, open mindedness, tolerance, wonder, appreciation and respect through a process of enquiry into concepts, so pupils can develop an understanding for the wider community and world we live in.
- To provide a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of some of the principal world faiths practiced in Great Britain. These include Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam with the opportunity to extend their knowledge of other world faiths later in upper Key Stage 2 and as the children move on to secondary school.
- To study matters of global significance- recognising the diversity of religion and beliefs and its impact on world issues.
- To acknowledge the historic and cultural connections that may exist between religions, and that the community and space that someone lives in, is of central importance in helping to understand why a person thinks and acts in the way they do.
- To encourage and develop children's interest and opinions about simple concepts that are common to themselves and religions, and recognise and express their own values and beliefs.
- To enable children to consider the effects religion has on people's lives through conceptual enquiry.
- To provide opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief, and forge links with different groups in the local area.

- To develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions studied.
- To question stereotypes and challenge assumptions by being encouraged to work both collaboratively and independently to reach informed conclusions about values, religious and non-religious views and traditions.
- To consider the significance and effects of difference and engage in dialogue which contributes to their developing ability to formulate a balanced and fair-minded judgement. To enhance their own SMSC development by developing an awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences and how religious belief and practices can relate to them.
- Responding to these questions in the light of their experiences with reference to religious belief or practices studied.
- Expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and respectful way, as well as listening to others opinions with sensitivity to recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society in which we live, whilst making up their own minds. (UNCRC: Article 14).
- For R.E to develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their own, parents and other cultures and the environment. (UNCRC: Article 29).
- The legal position of RE within the school Religious Education is not a National Curriculum subject; however it must be taught to all pupils in accordance with the legal requirements of the Education Act.

### **Promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development through religious education.**

We follow the recommended time allocation of 36 hours for RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 and 45 hours in Key Stage 2. For each key stage, there are pre-planned 'focus' traditions to be engaged with that work as building blocks in a process of enquiry across the school allowing children to deepen their conceptual knowledge as they progress through the school. In YR each unit is an enquiry into children's experiences of a concept linked strongly to the EYFS characteristics of learning.

At Key Stage 1 children are required to study Christianity and one other religion which is Hinduism. At Key Stage 2 children are required to study Christianity and two other religions. In Years 3 and 4 this will be Christianity and Judaism and in Years 5 and 6 children study Christianity and Islam.

Developing the skills of enquiry in children and young people is an important part of the work of The Living Difference IV approach of enquiry, which has five key steps for the cycle of learning for each concept and each unit taught: The steps of **Communicate, Apply, Inquire, Contextualise and Evaluate**, offer a secure process by which to enable pupils to progress in their ability to interpret religion in relation to human experience. Most importantly however, they provide opportunities for the children first to engage with their own experience of particular concepts, before enquiring into related religious as well as non-religious ways of living, represented in Great Britain and beyond.

### **Withdrawal from RE**

RE is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from parts of, or all, RE lessons. Pupils who are withdrawn are supervised and

provided with alternative activities, as agreed with parents. If children are withdrawn the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made by the parents if they wish to do so.

Parents/carers are not legally obliged to state their reasons for withdrawing their child.

### **Strategies for teaching RE**

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses in relation to the key concepts studied within a particular religion.

A cycle of enquiry takes place over several sessions. The whole movement around the cycle is driven by the skills of enquiry which the teacher facilitates. The teacher's role is to facilitate the children's enquiry through dialogue and through activities which generate dialogue. In this way there will be a gradual development of thinking and reasoning skills over time.

We use a number of strategies to cover all styles of learning within the teaching of Religious Education that should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own. These are:

- cross-curricular activities which are either blocked or fully integrated into the curriculum.
- links are made with the creative arts and RE such as drama, art, music, literacy and computing.
- through a mix of whole-class/group and individual approaches.
- mixed ability groups with tasks appropriate for children's ages and abilities.

Wherever possible we use first-hand experience as a stimulus for learning. We encourage children to question the stories, the practices and beliefs they encounter and form opinions about them in a respectful environment where the children recognise that their thoughts and opinions will be valued by all. In the RE curriculum, there are equal opportunities for all children to engage in new experiences, including disadvantaged and provision for SEND children to promote positive attitudes to learning.

### **Strategies for progression and continuity**

Long-term planning is provided by the RE leader and the medium-term plans follow the guidance as detailed in The Living Difference IV. Staff are responsible for their own short-term planning in order to tailor it to their class/ individual needs, with continued support from the RE subject leader if changes to planning or adaptations are needed.

Assessment procedures for RE are in line with the assessment and marking policy. Assessments are made to monitor attainment and progress in RE and to inform future planning. These will be related to the attainment targets as set out in the locally agreed syllabus Living Difference IV and more specifically to the each lesson by key learning questions as a focus for planning each step in the enquiry process (**Communicate, Apply, Inquire, Contextualise and Evaluate**). These ensure the appropriate level of skills are being taught in our RE lessons as well as to ensure the progression of skills and golden thread concepts of: community, belonging, special, love throughout the school.

## **Strategies for recording and reporting**

Attainment in RE is recorded by individual class teachers and reported to the RE co-ordinator. Children's work is assessed as a unit progresses, through a variety of methods, such as questioning, observation and analysis, but fundamentally evidence of achievement of the age related expectations and appropriate level descriptors for the stage of the enquiry process being assessed. On completion of one of the five key steps to be assessed within the teaching of the unit of work, class teachers will assess those children that are working as:

ARE - Age Related Expectations meaning they have achieved the expected age related outcomes.

WT - Working towards age related expectations meaning they are working towards the standard.

GD – Greater Depth meaning they have achieved above the expected outcomes.

## **Strategies for the use of resources**

A wide range of resources is available to enrich the RE curriculum, including posters, videos, (online resources) artefacts, books and websites that help enrich the teaching and learning experience into the enquiry of concepts, particularly at the contextualise stage when children explore the importance of the concept within a religion studied.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher and the Subject Leader who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation dictates by staff and governors.

Date Agreed by Staff and Governors: 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Review: October 2023