Religious Education Policy

This policy was agreed and signed by the Governing Body and Head Teacher:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author /Contact:</th>
<th>Linda Smith / Esmie Gordon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved by:</td>
<td>Chair of Governors and Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Date:</td>
<td>Nov 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>Oct 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religious Education Policy

INTRODUCTION
This policy provides the rationale for delivery of our Religious Education Curriculum. It meets the individual needs of the pupils within the school.

The Primary Religious Education co-ordinator is Linda Smith. The Secondary co-ordinator is Esmie Gordon. The policy has been discussed with the Curriculum Working Party prior to presentation to Senior Management and Governors.

Claire Clinton, current RE Advisory Teacher, provided advice for this policy.

Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties attend Eleanor Smith School predominately on a part-time basis while at the primary site. When at the secondary site are mainly full time students. R.E. can make a powerful contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. They can develop an understanding of religious and life issues through discussion, use of artefacts, creative and written work. In Special Schools the law requires the Agreed Syllabus to be taught ‘as far as is practicable’ and quality teaching is tailored to the needs of our pupils.

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY
Eleanor Smith School endorses both the ‘Newham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education – Exploring Belief’s, Celebrating Diversity’ (2016), and the QCA non-statutory National Framework for RE (2010). The Newham Agreed Syllabus also follows the guidance that:

- secular philosophies and world-views should be part of the scope of RE programmes
- 50% of time in RE should be in the study of Christianity

It incorporates clear strategies for progression in learning and identifies levels of progress.

The key ideas surrounding this syllabus are the exploration of various religions and faith in order to develop an understanding of the world around them, building the skills to engage seriously and express their ideas.

In Newham, the important and necessary role that Religious Education plays in school and community life has long been recognised. In an increasingly multi-cultural community, religious education is important for children and young people to understand each other and to break down fear and prejudice.

Religious Education does not seek to urge religious or non-religious beliefs on children, or to promote one religion over another.
Religious Education Policy

Religious Education should be accessible to pupils and teachers of any religious stance or none.

R.E. consists of learning about and learning from religion and human experience.

This policy supports the aims of “Every Child Matters” and the Equal Opportunities of all pupils. The policy also encompasses Thrive and Resilience framework which is essential to the ethos of our school.

British values is another area that our policy promotes which is in line with the National curriculum

**CURRICULUM APPROACH**

**AIMS:**
The 2016 Newham Agreed Syllabus promotes R.E. as an educational subject at its core “to promote the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and intellectual development of pupils and of society by encouraging an exploration of and response to those aspects of religion and human experience which raise fundamental questions of belief and value.” Source: 2016, “Newham Agreed Syllabus

The RE curriculum has established links with the fundamental British Values of mutual respect, the rule of law, democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for other’s belief systems. Each support unit is linked with one or more of these values.

RE is a statutory subject within the National Curriculum (1988 Education Act) that should “reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking into account the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.”

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has interpreted the other principal religions as Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism.

The Agreed Syllabus outlines three main principles to guide children’s learning across all key stages:

1. Learning about religion and worldviews
2. Expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews
3. Gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews
Religious Education Policy

These principles of learning are embedded within the support units and individual lessons and form the basis for progress steps and assessment.

At Eleanor Smith we deliberately focus on Attainment Targets which emphasise personal and social development, social skills and awareness of, and empathy with, others. We are also constrained by the part-time placements and subsequent curriculum delivery issues.

KEY LEARNING EXPERIENCES PLANNED FOR THE PUPILS

RE specific strands/objectives
- to develop a spirit of enquiry into the beliefs of religious communities
- to learn about key figures in various religions
- to be aware of the significance of memorable and festive experiences from various religious traditions
- to be sensitive to the feelings, beliefs and actions of others
- to explore the idea that caring transcends personal interests
- to learn to understand some of the dimensions of failure: forgiveness, restoration and reconciliation
- to examine ideas of right or wrong
- to learn to see themselves as an equal, valued and valid part of a multi-faith community
- to develop a spirit of enquiry into beliefs of religious communities
- To promote British values

RE should make a significant contribution to spiritual development by:
- allowing pupils to reflect on their inner self and the world around them
- challenging assumptions about others and the world
- encouraging children in their personal search for meaning and purpose
- listening to the views and beliefs of others
Religious Education Policy

- developing an understanding of religious concepts
- imagining and expressing their ideas and thoughts through creative activities

RE should make a significant contribution to moral, social and cultural development by:

- experiencing thanking and being thanked, praising and being praised
- promoting their social development so they can give as well as receive
- learning what is said and done by us affects other people
- helping young people with the experiences of encountering change such as death, suffering, inequality, separation and conflict
- experiencing a sense of achievement
- discovering the importance of being able to relax
- helping produce caring young people
- encouraging in young people recognition of their own value and importance as individuals
- recognising expressions of cultural and religious identity e.g. dress, food
- encouraging respect for people of different backgrounds
- looking at similarities and differences between cultures
- Allowing pupils to understand British values

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Much of the above is central to our work in responding to our pupils’ particular emotional needs and links closely to our Behavioural Policy and Personal, Social Citizenship, Health and Educational Policy.

As a school for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, R.E. intersects with the general ethos and commitment that we have to personal and social skills development.
Religious Education Policy

CURRICULUM DELIVERY

At Key Stage 1 and 2 RE is taught as a separate curriculum area in three half term blocks using the Schemes of Work set out in the Newham Agreed Syllabus for RE. These plans are adapted, where necessary, to meet the complex needs of our pupils.

For KS1-KS2 six support schemes of work will be available for each year group for the six principle religions [Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh]. However, 50% of time in RE should be in the study of Christianity.

In covering these areas of learning, the agreed syllabus has outlined Big Questions which form the overarching theme of each support unit and year group in Key Stage 1 & 2, supporting enquiry based learning.

Big questions for exploring in RE

Year 2 – ‘Can stories change people?’
Year 3 – ‘How are symbols and sayings important in religion?’
Year 4 – ‘What is special to me and the people in my community?’
Year 5 – ‘How do beliefs influence actions?’
Year 6 – ‘How important are the similarities and differences between and within religions?’

Secondary pupils in KS3 begin with an introductory unit which acts as a transition from primary to secondary school. The KS3 units of work also cover studies in Christianity, as well as other principle and minority religious traditions and secular world views.

Year 7 – Working to develop understanding of the meaning of religion
Exploring Christianity and other main religions

Year 8 - Working to develop understanding of Christianity and at least two
Other main religions

Year 9 - 11 This GCSE Religious Studies course involves a thematic study of some central questions and issues in human life and experience and explores the relevance of religious beliefs, practices, values and traditions to these questions and issues. The course relates to many contemporary issues that can be found throughout the media.
(WJEC examination board)
Religious Education Policy

In KS4, a course of study in Religious Education will be provided for both year groups which is either publicly accredited or planned by the school according to the syllabus requirements.

The RE Co-ordinator provides staff with plans for each unit and is available to advise staff on resources for each unit and its delivery. Class teachers adapt and annotate the plans to suit the needs of the pupils. The RE Co-ordinator gives feedback to class teachers and class teachers evaluate how successful and appropriate the lessons were and changes are made as and when necessary.

At the secondary provision the Foundation Co-ordinator is solely responsible for delivering the RE lessons. Key stage 4 pupils will take (WJEC) GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES SPECIFICATION B UNIT 1 RELIGION AND LIFE ISSUES with the new levelling system (9-1) as well as amendments to the examination offer.

PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY

The RE Co-ordinator attends curriculum planning meetings and monitors approaches and delivery of the subject. The primary co-ordinator has attended training on the Agreed Syllabus and given guidance to all teaching staff across the key stages.

The Agreed Syllabus of 2016 highlights the following in the appendices:
- **Appendix B** Progress steps in RE for 5-14 year olds
- **Appendix C** Aims in RE: A progression grid
- **Appendix D** P Scales - Performance descriptions across subjects.

SUBJECT RESOURCES

Subject resources are the responsibility of the R.E. co-ordinator, assisted by the whole school staff.

Following the introduction of the 2016 Newham Agreed Syllabus, new resources and artefacts have been purchased. These are stored in Willow classroom store cupboard. Resources and artefacts are grouped in the various religions for ease of use.

The RE Co-ordinator will be responsible for reviewing resources and, following consultation with class teachers, ordering materials.
MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The following are some of the ways that RE will be assessed in the school:

• Exemplary work put on display showing the level of attainment, skill, concept, or attitude developed

• Keeping a record of achievement of each pupil’s work across a Key Stage

• Specific assessment tasks, which are given a level

• Taking photographs of children’s work e.g. for progress files, portfolios, display

• A ‘wall of wisdom’ showing creative and perceptive thoughts

• Observing children in discussions, drama or practical activities

• Self-assessment e.g. thought bubble evaluations about the work they have done during a lesson or project

• Participation in ‘Visiting a Place of Worship Week’ and the follow-up work gained from this experience

WITHDRAWAL FROM RE

If a parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE in the school, then we shall, as a school, comply with this request.

The RE Co-ordinator and Deputy Head Teacher will discuss this with the parent in the first instance as on some occasions, it is through lack of understanding that withdrawal is requested. The RE Advisory Teacher is available to support if needed. A good starting point in a discussion with parents is to say what the children are learning in their RE lessons. Also, it is worth mentioning that Newham’s Agreed Syllabus for RE has been passed by the majority of faith groups in Newham.

When religious or spiritual matters come up in other areas of the curriculum – both planned and spontaneously – this does not constitute RE in the legal sense. Parents could not insist that their child be withdrawn every time such issues arise. These issues are helping the child in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this can be mentioned to parents.