



## Religious Education Policy

## Our Vision

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident, happy citizens.

Our school aims are:-

- To provide a safe and stimulating school environment.
- To promote high standards of teaching and learning.
- To value and develop all members of the school community.

## Curriculum

The school's curriculum is designed to meet the needs of its pupils, and its major aims are to provide all children with an education which will help them to:

Enable all to achieve their potential, celebrating success within a caring environment.

- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best.
- Foster a love of learning.
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners, able to make informed choices.
- Develop an increasing responsibility in pupils for their own life-long learning.
- Foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others.
- Facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community.
- Ensure equal and inclusive opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs and belief.
- Value and respect all cultures.
- Provide a safe and happy work place.
- Promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment.

## Philosophy/Rationale

At Newfield Park we aim to inspire all children to achieve their full academic potential within a fully inclusive curriculum.

*Article 6 (life, survival and development) Article 28 (right to education)*

Religious Education holds an important place in the curriculum at school and contributes to the development of the whole child. We are currently following the Dudley Agreed Syllabus (2013)

which is due to be updated in 2020, and we also use the Discovery RE scheme of work. At Newfield Park we believe that the importance of RE is to:

- encourage pupils to learn about religion and so gain knowledge and understanding of the principal religious traditions and of other belief traditions. It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religious beliefs, teaching, practices and of the various forms of religious expression. It also encourages pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the influence religion has on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- encourage pupils to learn from different religions and beliefs. It does this by providing opportunities for personal reflection and by helping pupils to consider and express their views. Religious education encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions and the grounds upon which their beliefs and values are based. Religious education challenges pupils to reflect on, analyse and evaluate issues relating to belief, faith, beliefs about God, the purpose of life, ultimate meaning, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Pupils, through religious education, are encouraged to communicate their responses, to be challenged by the views of others and to rigorously explore the basis on which their views are founded so that their views are not based on unquestioned assumptions but have been looked into and thought about.
- enable pupils to flourish as individuals within the community as citizens of a pluralistic society and of a global community. Religious education has an important role in preparing pupils for lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others particularly for those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It seeks to promote discernment and to enable pupils to combat prejudice.

*Article 2 (non-discrimination)*

*Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)*

*Article 13 (freedom of expression)*

*Article 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion)*

*Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)*

*Article 28 (right to education)*

*Article 29 (goals of education)*

## Aims

At Newfield Park we recognise the importance of the two RE attainment targets outlined in the Dudley Syllabus (2013): 'Learning about religion' and 'Learning from religion'.

## Attainment target 1

Learning about religion is mainly concerned with pupils developing their knowledge and understanding of religion. It includes enquiry into the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings, sources, practices and ways of life. It includes not merely the acquisition of knowledge leading to a descriptive account of religion. It also includes applying skills like interpretation and analysis in order to arrive at an understanding of what belonging to a religion means from the point of view of a believer. *Learning about religion* also includes developing an understanding of how religions have responded to ultimate questions and to ethical issues.

At Newfield, the children also have an opportunity to discuss ethical issues as part of their PHSE learning. All children take part in regular global learning lessons to develop their awareness of issues which affect other people around the world. In addition, the children have also developed a greater awareness of the practises and cultures of others' due to our international links. We have supported Project Gambia and developed links with a school in Madiana. Furthermore, as a result of PHSE learning, regular assemblies and displays around school, the children are also aware of their own rights according to the rights of the UN convention and have been given the opportunity to express why these rights are important.

## Attainment target 2

Learning from religion is mainly concerned with pupils' personal development. It involves helping pupils to reflect on and articulate the beliefs and values which form the basis of their own personal search for meaning. The purpose of religious education in all maintained schools is clearly not about nurturing young people into a particular faith – this is the responsibility of the family and of faith communities. *Learning from religion* is however concerned with helping pupils, of whatever faith, or of no faith, to identify and express their own deeper thoughts, feelings and beliefs in response to religion and in response to life. It includes helping pupils to think about and evaluate how, if at all, religion may inform their views or may suggest ways in which religion may have application or insights which inform their own life.

In order to fulfil these aims, we follow the Discovery RE scheme of work.

## Organisation

At Newfield Park, we follow the Discovery RE scheme of work which has an enquiry based approach to teaching and learning. Christianity is taught in every year group, with Christmas and Easter given a specific focus each year, developing the learning in a progressive way. Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are also covered. The planning model used in Discovery RE is aligned to that recommended in most agreed syllabi, i.e. a 6-part planning process focusing

on a 4-step enquiry. Each enquiry has a learning objective which shows the learning over the enquiry and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development opportunities are mapped throughout.

The four step enquiry for each RE unit is as follows:

## Step 1 (usually 1 lesson)

**Engagement:** The human experience underpinning the key question is explored here within the children's own experience, whether that includes religion or not. If they can relate to the human experience they will be better able to understand the world of religion into which the enquiry takes them. This is Attainment Target 2 (personal). Their personal resonance with this underpinning human experience acts as the **BRIDGE** into ATI, the world of religion (which may be very much outside of their experience).

## Step 2 (usually the equivalent of 3 lessons)

**Investigation:** The teacher guides the children through the enquiry, studying Attainment Target 1 (Learning ABOUT) subject knowledge (the factual base about the religion), carefully selected to assist their thinking about the key question. Some of the enquiries have a lot of relevant content so teachers need to be selective and not try to cover too much. Depth is more important.

## Step 3 (usually 1 lesson)

**Evaluation:** This lesson draws together the children's learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry.

## Step 4 (usually 1 lesson)

**Expression:** Children are taken back to Step 1, their own experience, to reflect on how this enquiry might have influenced their own starting point/beliefs, etc.

## Role of the RE Co-ordinator

The role of the RE co-ordinator is to monitor the teaching and assessment of Religious Education. This is to ensure that all children at Newfield Park, regardless of background or ability, make progress within RE. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of work within books, the coverage of lessons and the knowledge of the children. Advice is also given to staff to support them with planning, lessons and resources.

## Assessment

Class teachers complete half-termly assessments based on the current RE targets within each year group. Teachers record whether each child is working below, working at or working above the expected level for RE. In addition, class teachers also provide individual feedback to children, both verbally and through a range of marking strategies. This ensures all children are aware of the progress they have made each lesson, as well as their next steps.

## Inclusion in R.E:

At Newfield Park we believe every child has an equal right to a rounded education that allows them to achieve their full potential. All pupils, regardless of ability or background, should have the opportunity to fully develop their capabilities. We recognise that some of our children may have more than one area of significant need and that teaching and learning will need to be skilfully adapted to meet those needs. This may be accomplished by:

- Planning lessons to ensure that all tasks can be appropriately scaffolded or differentiated to accommodate children with SEND, ensuring that children with SEND can access the same, or similar, tasks as the rest of the class, in line with the curriculum.
- Using a wide range of Wave 1 teaching strategies – this may involve the use of additional equipment, thinking time, pre-teaching, using a study buddy, providing writing frames, using coloured overlays/print, breaking instructions down into chunks, visual timetables, setting clear goals or building relationships.
- Making reasonable adjustments so that pupils with physical difficulties can access all learning activities.
- Translating instructions and tasks as appropriate to accommodate children who have English as an additional language.
- Accounting for the needs of more able and gifted children by making tasks more challenging, appealing to their problem solving, reasoning and critical thinking skills and creating appropriate extension activities.

## Pupil Premium:

Newfield Park is committed to addressing the additional needs of children who may come from disadvantaged backgrounds or who receive additional Pupil Premium funding. Staff understand the importance of quality teaching for all, identifying potential barriers for learning and exploring varied teaching methods and interventions to achieve the best outcomes.

Staff regularly use data to track and monitor progress and seek to engage parents in all areas of their child's learning. Strategies at the core of our practice include collaborative learning, high quality feedback, metacognition techniques, raising aspiration and the use of digital technologies.

## Safeguarding:

Newfield Park is committed to providing an environment where all stakeholders feel safe. Children are encouraged at all times to share any worries and concerns that they may have and know who to approach if they feel unsafe. Through varied teaching and learning experiences children learn how to keep themselves safe as part of our broad and balanced curriculum. Any field work, trips or residential undergo thorough Risk Assessments to ensure that all experiences are safe for our children.

If, during the course of a lesson, the teacher becomes aware of any child protection concern, or a child makes a disclosure of such a concern, they will immediately log this on the CPOMS system and follow the school's wider safeguarding policy.

Any visitors should be welcomed to add valuable first-hand accounts to children's learning. If these visitors are from companies they should have DBS certification.

## Health and Safety:

All fieldwork will be planned with reference to the School's Health and Safety Policy. Risk assessments will be made of trips and activities as necessary. Staff are advised to visit any new sites for trips. When attending visits to places of worship, teaching staff complete group and individual risk assessments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children.

When using ICT in R.E staff will ensure children adhere to the rules and expectations as outlined in the E-Safety policy.

## Cross reference to other policies:

PHSE and Citizenship, Behaviour and Attitude to Learning, Child Protection, Health and Safety.

## The legal position according to the Dudley Agreed Syllabus

Religious education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools. This includes all 'registered pupils' in reception and all students in post 16 education in maintained schools. Religious education is part of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools.

Each LA must convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to produce a syllabus. Once adopted by the LA the programme of study of the agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The attainment levels set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages. The Education Act 1996 states that an agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. The law does not define what the principal religions represented in Great Britain are but this agreed syllabus defines 'the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' as being – Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

## Time Allocation

At Newfield Park, we take account of the recommended guidelines in the Dudley Agreed Syllabus (2013), which are as follows:

Early Years Foundation stage approximately 5% of total curriculum time

Key stage 1: 36 hours per year

Key stage 2: 45 hours per year

## SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development

Through the Discovery RE scheme, as well as a wide range of opportunities offered at Newfield Park, all children are able to advance their SMSC development. SMSC opportunities are identified in each enquiry, and are mapped on the overview grid for each year group.

Children also have the opportunity to develop these skills during assemblies. Assembly rotas at Newfield Park provide a breakdown of SMSC and detail how each assembly enables the children to develop their skills.

## Cultural Capital

At Newfield Park, we recognise that to be successful with their learning, and to be successful in the wider areas of their lives, all children need to be given opportunities to develop their cultural capital. At Newfield Park, we provide a varied curriculum as well as rich opportunities for children to advance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.



## Right of Withdrawal (Dudley Agreed Syllabus, 2013)

The 1944 Education Act, reaffirmed in the 1988 Act, gives parents the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE.

The use of the right of withdrawal should be at the instigation of parents (or students themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and should be in writing. It should make it clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. Where pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Though not legally required, it is good practice for a head teacher to invite parents who wish to exercise their right of withdrawal to discuss their request with the school. Schools may ensure that parents who wish to withdraw their child from RE are aware of the educational objectives of RE, the importance of RE, what is being covered in the RE curriculum and that they are given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.

Whilst parents or carers have a right to withdraw their children from the subject of RE, they should note that children may also encounter religions and beliefs in other parts of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal. Every school has a duty to promote community cohesion and this includes helping pupils understand ideas about identity and diversity.

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# Newfield Park Primary School

