

# Leven Valley CE Primary School

## Religious Education Policy

At Leven Valley School our Christian values and ethos form the bedrock of our daily lives. We are a Voluntary Aided Primary School with a Christian foundation, as such Christian values form the basis for all relationships and teaching in the school.

Our vision is to provide a distinctive Christian community where children are happy and motivated to learn through Christian values. The school will be inclusive, creative, imaginative and enquiry lead so that children attain their very best education.

### **The aims of this policy are to:**

- establish a clear and workable framework for the learning and teaching of Religious Education at Leven Valley;
- inform and reflect a common purpose and understanding amongst staff, children, parents and Governors.

### **Introduction**

Religious Education at Leven Valley School is based upon the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Education Scheme of Work alongside the Cumbria agreed Syllabus. The scheme provides a continuous and progressive outline for the development of Religious Education through the school from Reception to Year 6. Within this framework the teaching of Religious Education is delivered through whole school termly or half termly themes.

Religious education (RE) provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

RE at Leven Valley C of E Primary School develops children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Consideration is also given to other non-religious perspectives such as humanism. RE offers children opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It considers the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

The Cumbria agreed syllabus has two central attainment targets( AT).

AT1 Informed: skills and attitudes to know and understand.

Learning about Religion

AT2 Reflective: ability to express, reflect and respond.

Learning from Religion

AT1 In Learning about Religion children learn about different beliefs and teachings, practices and ways of life and how religions express themselves in different ways.

AT1 is split in to three areas of enquiry:

1. Beliefs, teachings and sources
2. Practices and ways of life
3. Forms of expressing meaning

AT2 In Learning from Religion children reflect on and consider important questions of identity and belonging (e.g. who and what matters to me?) questions of meaning (e.g. what do people believe about how life began?) and values and commitments (e.g. who and what do I value?).

AT2 is split in to three areas:

1. Identity, diversity and belonging
2. Meaning, purpose and truth
3. Values and commitments

### **Key Skills in RE**

RE is more than just developing children's knowledge and understanding. It seeks to develop children's skills in investigation/enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis and evaluation. These are important skills for children to develop and include:

- Investigation/enquiry (finding out what people believe, how their beliefs affect the way they live and the different ways people express their beliefs).
- Expression (sharing ideas, viewpoints and understanding about own beliefs, the beliefs of others, moral or religious issues in a lively, informed way including different styles of writing, oral contributions and the use of ICT).
- Interpretation (recognising and talking about religious symbols, stories and sacred texts).
- Analysis and evaluation (developing their own views and ideas, recognising the views of others).
- Reflection (the ability to think reflectively about feelings, experience, relationships, beliefs and practices).
- Empathy (the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs and viewpoints of others.)
- Application and synthesis (making associations between religions and different strands of life,)

### **Key Attitudes in RE**

As with skills RE has a number of key attitudes it seeks to promote. These include:

- Self-awareness (every child feels confident about their own uniqueness, valued and significant),
- Respect for all (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others),
- Open-mindedness (being willing to learn and gain new understanding, appreciation and wonder and developing children's imagination and curiosity).

### **Learning and Teaching**

In our school Religious Education is taught weekly as a discreet, timetabled subject. Children are enabled to explore the Christian faith and their thoughts and feelings through a range of practical and creative opportunities, such as drama, art, music, discussion or godly play. However, the principle knowledge, concepts or moral messages being explored at any one time permeate the children's daily life in school. A variety of opportunities are made available for all children to access, revisit and explore concepts, beliefs and feelings using different learning styles and perspectives.

RE is an exciting curriculum subject so we employ a variety of teaching methods. These include:-

- Visiting local places of worship and receiving visitors from faith communities
- Using art, music, dance, drama, Godly play, conscience alley methodology and individual and group research;
- Children experiencing times of quiet reflection to develop their own thoughts and ideas;
- Using story, pictures and photographs;
- Using artefacts to help children develop their understanding of religious beliefs and forms of expression;
- Discussing religious and philosophical questions giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others;
- Developing the use of ICT (the internet and occasionally DVD's) in helping children's awareness of religions and beliefs.

### **Expectation in RE**

By the end of Key Stage 1 most children will be working at their expected level and this is in line with other subjects. In RE this means that they can use religious words to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They show awareness of similarities in religions and can identify how religion is expressed in different ways. They ask and respond sensitively to questions about their own and others experiences and feelings. They recognise their own values and those of others and are aware that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer.

By the end of Key Stage 2 most children will be working at their expected level and this is in line with other subjects. In RE this means children can describe both similarities and differences within and between religions. They make links between different aspects of religions and can describe the impact of religion on peoples' lives. They suggest answers to questions of identity and meaning. They apply their ideas to their own and others' lives. They can also describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.

The class teacher uses assessment strategies throughout the theme to encourage children to recognise their own learning and to ascertain the children's understanding and learning and modify future sessions to ensure progress is made by all. Through careful open ended questioning children are encouraged to express their thoughts and beliefs, explore what puzzles them and discuss moral issues. Some learning is recorded in the form of words and pictures or photographs and artefacts. At the end of each theme, the children are encouraged to reflect upon and assess what they have learned both for themselves and for the class.

### **Inclusion**

We live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society and encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We intend to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another so that all may be included, regardless of race & culture. We believe that all children irrespective of race, ability and gender should have equal access to the RE curriculum. Children with special educational needs will work on the same content but there will be differentiation in accordance with the Inclusion policy.

### **Study of other faiths at Leven Valley.**

Although the scheme of work is mainly Christian, we believe that it is important for all children to learn about a range of different faiths. At Leven Valley we explore the religions of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism in addition to Christianity since these are major world religions.

The content will be based on the idea of developing an awareness of other faiths and cultures in the community in which we live and encouraging interfaith dialogue.

#### **The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader**

- To show by example good RE practice.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the planned and delivered curriculum specifically in RE and Collective Worship.
- To guide and support teachers in this subject, and to provide, where necessary, appropriate training and development.
- To audit and monitor the quality of RE resources, including online and other web-based technologies, to ensure effective learning and teaching across the school.
- To work closely with the link Governor, the Incumbent or any representative of the church in her absence.

#### **The Role of the RE link Governor**

- To be a critical friend to both the RE co-ordinator and the senior management team, to ensure high quality RE provision.
- To liaise closely with the RE co-ordinator, and the Incumbent of Leven Valley C of E School
- To attend appropriate training linked to RE.
- To feedback to Governors, keeping them informed of RE across the school.

#### **Right to Withdrawal**

The recent Education Acts establish the parent's right to withdraw their children from Religious Education if they wish. However, by the fact that the parents have opted to send their children to a church school it is hoped that this will not be necessary.

Policy reviewed and revised: September 2015

Ratified by Governors: September 2015

To be reviewed: September 2018

Signed: *S. Lawler*

Chair of Governors