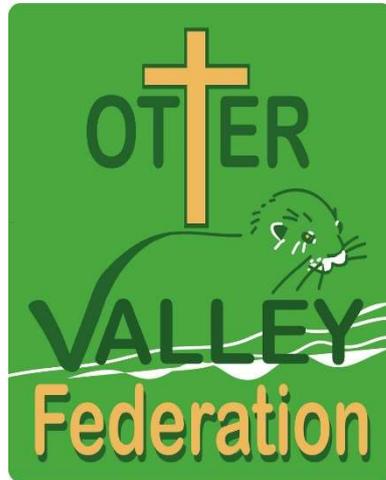


# **Believing and Achieving Together to be the Best We Can Be**



***We aim to reflect God's love, " I have come that  
they may have life, and have it to the full."  
John 10:10***

## **OTTER VALLEY FEDERATION**

### **Religious Education Policy**

**This policy has been adopted by the Full Governing Board of The  
Otter Valley Federation**

**This policy is reviewed by Parent and Christian Community Links  
Lead Portfolio Governors**

**Next Review Summer 2023**

## **Vision and Values**

We share the Church of England's vision for education that is deeply Christian and serves the common good. Our purpose is to enable the pupils and communities we serve to flourish as they experience education for wisdom, hope, community and dignity and discover life in all its fullness which Jesus offers.

Our federation's vision that 'we believe and achieve together to be the best we can be and 'live life to the full' (John 10:10) is realised through our school values. These values are embedded in our RE curriculum, wider curriculum and in our daily school life. They are very much an intrinsic part of what makes our federation, our federation!

## **Entitlement**

The Otter Valley Federation is made up of voluntary aided schools. This means that the teaching of RE is given significant importance. The governors have adopted the Exeter Agreed Local Syllabus and our RE curriculum reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement 2016.

In order to allow the children to have the opportunity to explore deeper questions about life and to learn about Christianity alongside a wide range of other faiths and cultures it is placed at the core of our curriculum. Further to this we allocate more than 5% of curriculum time to the subject, incorporating visits, visitors and special events. This time is distinct from the time allocated to collective worship.

Christianity is the majority study in RE. At least two thirds of study in RE is dedicated to the teaching of Christianity.

## **The Legal Position of R.E**

Our school curriculum for Religious Education meets the requirements of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) which stipulates that RE is compulsory for all children registered at the school. Parents are allowed to withdraw their child from RE lessons if they wish to do so, although this should only be done once the parents have had a discussion with the Head of School and then given written notice to the school governors. It is hoped that the aims of RE are understood by the whole school community, such that RE is seen as relevant and enriching for all pupils. The SSFA also allows teachers to refuse to teach RE, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors.

Our curriculum reflects 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.

## **Aims of R.E**

We seek to teach our pupils:

- a) To develop an awareness of their own unique value and that of others in the context of the school, their family and the community.
- b) To encourage an awareness of God and the significance of Jesus Christ.
- c) To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.

- d) To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- e) To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.
- f) To develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting the right to hold different religious beliefs and value systems from their own and to engage in dialogue with a range of religions and world views.
- g) To explore situations of injustice and inequality, opening pupils' horizons and giving them a concern for others and become advocates of change.

### **How We Approach the Teaching of R.E**

*'RE must have a very high profile within the school curriculum and learning activities should provide fully for the needs of all pupils. Pupils should be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of higher level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion on the world. Attainment should be high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religions and world views.'* (Church of England Statement of Entitlement 2016)

A scheme of work has been planned to take account of the ages and abilities of all pupils and to ensure there is progression between the Key Stages. The approach is creative, lively and experiential where possible. It is delivered through specific lessons and experiences that focus on bible stories and discussion of issues which highlight Christian values and encourage reconciliation, forgiveness and understanding of life and death. We use the resource Understanding Christianity to provide depth of learning about Christianity and a clear sense of biblical chronology.

The curriculum will teach an understanding of Christian festivals and of other religious festivals in a multi-faith society. The subject will be delivered through visits to places of worship and art galleries, visitors into school, music, art and drama and an exploration of the beauties of the natural world. Elements of RE will overlap with other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy, science and history. An emphasis on using child-centred key questions which will be based on pupils' experiences, building a bridge to the spiritual content.

The teaching of religious education will reflect the foundation of this Church of England Primary School whilst taking into account appropriate information about teaching practices of the principal religions represented in Britain. The six principal religions are Christianity, which will be covered in depth, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

In both key stages religious education will be based on three main concepts, through Understanding Christianity, and the Devon Syllabus published under RE Today:

#### **Making Sense of Belief**

- Engaging in core texts – for example, passages from the Bible or the Qu'ran
- Finding out about the key beliefs held by believers, or those without religious belief.

### **Understanding the Impact**

- Discovering and exploring religious and non-religious behaviours and practices which stem from the core texts and beliefs.

### **Making Connections**

- Consider how the concepts and ideas raised can impact on children's own lives and thinking.
- Consider how similar ideas can link between religious and non-religious world views and how these ideas and ideals can affect a larger community or country.
- Begin to evaluate and justify own opinions and responses to learning.

In the planning of the schemes of work it will be recognised that many pupils will have value systems which are not based on religious belief.

Units of work will be planned so that pupils will acquire knowledge and understanding of the focused faiths whilst taking into account the Church of England foundation of the school.

### **Skills and Attitudes**

The expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate when they leave our schools and as a minimum pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.
- Have the opportunity to explore situations of injustice and inequality, opening pupils' horizons and giving them a concern for others and become advocates of change.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC)**

As a Church of England Federation the context of SMSC lies in our Christian vision and values and in British values.

The schools take an active approach in the development of SMSC aspects of our pupils' education which is reinforced by many of our policies, particularly those concerned with behaviour, equal opportunities, personal, social and health education.

All people who come in to our schools are valued as individuals. They should set and be entitled to expect from others, good standards of behaviour, marked by respect and responsibility. The role model standards will be practiced by all staff in order to set an effective example for the pupils.

Through RE pupils will be introduced to a broad spectrum of beliefs. They will be encouraged to value other people's opinions and develop a questioning mind across a wide area of the curriculum.

**Spiritual Development:** we define spirituality as something we cannot see. It is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions and being aware of something bigger, outside of ourselves. In R.E we explore the spiritual aspects of human experience including the arts, the environment and personal relationships

**Moral Development:** this can be defined as personal development relating to human behaviour, especially the distinction between good/bad, right/wrong.

**Social Development:** this can be defined as personal development concerned with living and learning in a community rather than alone.

**Cultural Development:** this can be defined as the total of inherited beliefs, ideas, values and knowledge of a particular community and the engagement of people to build on and improve their shared culture through social action as well as pupils gaining experience of people and places associated with different religious traditions.

### **Equality of Opportunity and Meeting Individual Needs**

a) Equality and justice for all people form a central concern for all religious education.

b) Based on Christ's teaching, all the religious education in this school will ensure an understanding of the following principles that:

- people have different lifestyles, beliefs and values but share a common humanity and are independent
- all people have a right to their own beliefs
- respect should be shown to those of faith and those of no faith
- the diversity of the roles of both women and men in religion should be explored
- no-one should be discriminated against because of a code of dress, diet or religious observances
- a global perspective is necessary as the experiences of a faith community in Britain may be different from those of the same faith elsewhere
- faith and culture are not one and the same and should be explored as separate concepts
- that within any faith community there are different traditions, customs and practices
- stereotypes should be challenged and material explored for bias
- the language used is not sexist or racist
- good practice in religious education will challenge discrimination and prejudice.

### **Assessment, Recording & Reporting**

The assessment, recording, reporting and monitoring of pupils' progress in RE will be conducted in a way which is consistent with the Federation's policy. It will recognise that whilst knowledge can be assessed, there will be aspects of pupils' work that it would not be appropriate to assess. Pupils should never be pressurised into disclosing personal or private information and no assessment of judgement should be made of their willingness or unwillingness to do so.

Assessment, recording and reporting of R.E. will:

- a. help pupils to recognise the degree of progress which they have made in R.E.
- b. enable pupils to identify ways of improving their work
- c. provide information which is useful for others in language appropriate for the reader
- d. ensure that pupils are actively involved in reviewing their own work
- e. be manageable in the time available, make reasonable and realistic demands on teachers and minimise the amount of unnecessary duplication
- f. be conducted in the kind of positive, supportive and constructive climate which recognises the needs and anxieties of pupils
- g. be based on the range of types of assessment tasks which help pupils to continue to develop their understanding of the key elements of the R.E. programmes of study
- h. be based on shared understanding of the criteria which are being applied and the significance of any marks, grades or symbols which are awarded
- i. facilitate the provision of summative information which meets any statutory requirements and the needs of transfer institutions.

Formative and summative assessments will take place in each block of work to inform teachers' planning and to indicate where progress has been made. This information will inform the end of year report to parents and will be passed on to the next class teacher.

### **Monitoring of RE**

Subject Leaders will conduct regular lesson observations to highlight strengths and areas for further support in teaching and learning. It is further monitored through the strategic monitoring and evaluating process of the Governing Board where it is reviewed in the school's self-evaluation.

### **Management, Coordination and Planning**

All members of the teaching team are involved in the school's RE development. The subject leader for RE in each school has the support of the SMT and lead governors and is able to liaise with the subject leader at partner schools to moderate standards and discuss issues. The two subject leaders attend regular RE training and Sacre meetings and disseminate information to governors and staff. They report to governors annually and meet with lead governors termly. The Governing Board take responsibility for the development of wider work around values, Christian distinctiveness and leadership and management.