



R.E. POLICY

LOCATION: CURRICULUM HANDBOOK, DOCUMENT 10

Curriculum Intent for Religious Education at Abbey Court School

At Abbey Court Religious Education supports the specific needs of all pupils to acquire and develop the knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other key religions represented across the world, and to develop an array of skills that will enable them to make their own positive contribution to our global society; to appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape their lives, and their behaviour. In school we promote the importance of being responsible for their own behaviour and morals, through the ideas of e.g. The Commandments. It should develop their ability to make individual reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spirituality and its impact on pupil well-being is facilitated throughout the learning by providing the pupils we support with the skills required to feel calm and be 'peaceful' such as developing their wellbeing, practising Yoga and developing a safe space to say honestly how they are feeling. Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values, and philosophy of the school with a high level of differentiation, creativity and real life experiences. At Abbey Court, we not only promote respect for all religions, but give pupils the opportunity to communicate their own opinions and beliefs which can have a big impact on their future as they grow up, as well as into adulthood.

1. Introduction

The legal requirements for Religious Education is set out in legislation from 1944 to 1993 and consolidated in the 1996 and 1998 Education Acts.

Provision is made for parents to withdraw their children from RE and the rights of teachers who do not wish to participate are set out (ERA Section 9 (3b & c)).

The Act requires RE to be taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus and the New Medway Agreed Syllabus 2018 states the requirements for all maintained schools. Abbey Court School's RE policy is written with the requirements of the Medway Agreed Syllabus in mind.

2. Definition

RE at Abbey Court School develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of religions, promotes reasoned and informed judgements about spiritual, religious and moral issues and offers them opportunities to consider ways in which religious insights, values and traditions might enrich their lives. It provides the opportunity to explore issues of meaning and purpose in seeking to develop tolerance and respect in a culturally diverse society and provides opportunities to identify and develop questions of ethical issues. Abbey Court supports students to learn through religion as well as about religion.

3. Aims

Aims in RE are subject to Abbey Court School's Aims and Objectives, as outlined in the Curriculum Policy.

Pupils will be encouraged to: -

- Acquire a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- Appreciate the diversity of religious belief and practice in preparation for life in a plural society and respect the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own.
- Develop an awareness of the beauty of both the natural and manmade world, nurturing a sense of mystery, wonder and curiosity
- Explore meaning and purpose in their lives
- Learn the difference between right and wrong in as many contexts as appropriate
- Develop their spiritual and moral development and clarifying their own beliefs and values
- Develop skills of enquiry, analysis, response, reflection, interpretation, evaluation and application as appropriate.
- Develop their understanding of Local Religious communities and Religious traditions.

4. Objectives

In order to carry these aims forward, RE at Abbey Court will endeavour to develop an awareness and understanding of the necessary concepts and attitudes and also the acquisition of the relevant skills. Particular emphasis will be through the following contexts:

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- Origins and development – key figures, life and teaching; evidence for the origins of the religion; development and change, growth of diversity
- Beliefs – about God, the nature of the world, the creation; statements of belief; central concepts
- Moral Code – rules, laws and principles; attitudes and behaviour of believers; views about specific moral issues (marriage, family, men and women, etc.); moral teachings expressed in stories
- Worship and Ceremony – places of public worship; practices involved in public worship; private worship and worship at home; festivals and celebrations; rites of passage; sacred or special objects; dress, music, Pilgrimage
- Authorities – sacred writings; additional authorities and sources of guidance; tradition and change
- Community – understanding of the religious community; activities and influence in the wider community; organisation and leadership; influential figures
- Abbey Court RE, whilst taking into account the Medway Agreed Syllabus, offers further opportunities for identifying, enabling and celebrating the achievements of our pupils

5. Curriculum Planning

At Abbey Court, all pupils work within the Medway Agreed Syllabus. Students who attend the Further Education Unit follow a scheme of work which offers an extension to their Medway Agreed Syllabus work and can be accredited through aspects of the Asdan award scheme and AQA awards.

A Coverage Plan is in place that will ensure continuity and progression within all Key Stages (Appendix 1). Schemes of Work for each class have been developed to ensure coverage of

the Medway Agreed Syllabus are being implemented. Teaching staff are responsible for class timetables showing RE allocation (See Abbey Court School Curriculum Policy for subject time allocations). This is monitored by the Senior Management Team.

6. Styles of Teaching

RE is taught either as a discrete unit, as part of a cross curricular theme, or as a combination of both. Differentiation in teaching styles and strategies will ensure that awareness and understanding can be effectively supported for each pupil. Styles of Teaching in RE are subject to Abbey Court School's Curriculum Policy (Styles of Teaching).

7. Styles of Learning

- Pupils will be allowed the opportunity to respond to teaching in a variety of ways
- Pupils will be given regular feedback so that they are assisted to progress and are aware of the purpose of the session
- The focus for pupils with greater developmental delay will be in visual, auditory and tactile input in a multi-sensory approach right through to the development of reflection and the investigation of emotions and feelings
- Pupils will be working individually, in pairs, in small groups or in whole class activities
- The Schemes of Work for RE show specific skills in more detail

8. Assessment

- Pupil's experiences in RE are recorded in such a way as to show the range of activities provided by the teacher in the form of a Coverage Plan and Schemes of Work
- The storage of evidence of pupil achievement is detailed in Abbey Court School's Planning Assessment, Recording and Reporting policy
- Pupils' participation in RE is reported to parents both written and verbally as part of the Annual Review of Pupil Progress

9. Cross-Curricular links

RE has close links with PSHE, Literacy, Science, History, Geography, Food Technology, Computing and Mathematics. It also has close links with the expressive arts: Art, Drama and Music.

The personal and interpersonal skills that can be taught through Religious Education are taken from religious contexts and experiences in order to differentiate RE from PSHE, although at Abbey Court it is recognised that large aspects of RE relate closely to the PSHE curriculum. For example, the development of respect, reflection and self advocacy.

For example, in PSHE we may be attempting to teach the awareness and consideration of others including "giving" and saying "thank you". For RE we may be learning about Birthdays (including Christmas), the application of which would be "giving" and "thank you" (i.e. the teaching of these personal skills in isolation do not constitute RE).

10. SEN and Differentiation

Pupils are given access to experiences which meet their individual abilities (including those of higher achievers and pupils with PMLD) whilst ensuring full access to RE. A flexible approach to teaching RE is needed due to the wide range of ability within each class group. Ideas for strategies for differentiation are provided by the Co-ordinator through the Schemes of Work.

11. Staffing and Resources

All class teachers are responsible for the teaching of RE and the effective deployment of support staff. (Unless staff have an agreement with the Headteacher and Governors not to deliver RE due to personal beliefs.)

RE resources are on both the Primary and the Secondary sites. There are boxes pertaining to different religions and more general resources.

Specific training for teaching and support staff is facilitated by the Senior Management Team advised by the RE Co-ordinator and included in the School Development Plan.

12. Equal Opportunities

All pupils (except those withdrawn due to parental instruction) are given equal opportunity to access Religious Education. Please refer to Abbey Court School's Equal Opportunities policy.

13. Right to Withdraw

At Abbey Court School we wish to be an inclusive community but we do recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

- Medway SACRE Agreed Syllabus for the teaching of Religious education in Medway schools underpins the RE curriculum at Abbey Court School. This is available to view at:
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/schoolsandeducation/resourcesforschoolstaff/religiouseducationsacre.aspx>
- Specific Schemes of Work relating to individual classes or Key Stages are available to view on parents' request. These provide more detail about the topics and activities being covered across the year.

14. Health and Safety

Educational visits and the use, for example, of lighted candles are subject to Risk Assessment. Please see the Abbey Court Health and Safety and Off-site policies.

15. Integration including community links

Every opportunity is taken to make use of local places of interest to Religious Education.

Opportunities are taken for integrated with other schools that enrich RE experiences.

Visits from special people within the local community, such as a person from a particular religion, are used to support lessons and assemblies as appropriate (see Assembly and Collective Worship policy).

16. Evaluation and Review

The RE Co-ordinator will review this policy in line with the School Development Plan after monitoring and consultation with staff.

The RE policy will also be monitored in the light of any changes in legislation, the Medway Agreed Syllabus, OFSTED requirements, Health and Safety requirements or Abbey Court's School organisation.

Updated Helen Embley Summer 2003
Updated Vicki Huckstep Summer 2005
Updated Vicki Huckstep Summer 2007
Updated Vicki Huckstep Summer 2009
Updated Lindsay Harle Spring 2012
Reviewed/updated Lindsay Harle Autumn 2013
Reviewed/updated Lindsay Harle Autumn 2015/Spring 2016
Updated by Jacqueline Bright Autumn 2017
Updated by Jacqueline Bright Spring 2019 (Reflecting New Medway agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018 to be in place by November 2019)