



LOCATION: CURRICULUM HANDBOOK, DOCUMENT 10

R.E. POLICY

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Reviewed By: Catherine Tricker

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Statement of Intent

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 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. RE develops their ability to make individual reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues which enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Religious Education is taught throughout the school and reflects the overall aims, values, and philosophy of the school. By the time pupils leave school we would expect pupils to have experienced a range of cultures and have a deeper understanding of themselves and others spiritually, morally, mentally and physically. Pupils will explore this through sensory and hands-on learning throughout their years at school.

I. 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.

The National Curriculum states that:

'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

'Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.'

'All state schools... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.'

(DfE National Curriculum Framework, July 2013)

Provision is made for parents to withdraw their children from RE (see Appendix 1) 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. The principle aim of which is:

...to enable pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of different religious and other world views along with the skills to appreciate and evaluate the varied world views and responses to ultimate questions, so as to be better able to develop and express their own informed worldview.

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.
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of ultimate (fundamental, deep or big) questions
- Become better able to clarify and develop their own informed worldviews and to express their own views on the matters and issues encountered.

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:-

- 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 on Foreign Culture and World Religions which offers an extension to their Medway Agreed Syllabus work and can be accredited through aspects of the ASDAN Award Scheme.

Coverage plans are in place to ensure continuity and progression within all Key Stages and there are Schemes of Work for each class which have been developed to ensure coverage of the Medway Agreed Syllabus are being implemented through exploration of a range of world religions. 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 Leadership 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
- Real-life experiences will be planned to support pupils to learn the theology, human and social aspects of RE.

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 (Appendix 1) 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 and Citizenship, Literacy, Science, Languages, History, Geography, Design and Technology, IT 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&C, although at Abbey Court it is recognised that large aspects of RE relate closely to the PSHE&E curriculum. For example, the development of respect, reflection and self-advocacy.

For example, in PSHCE 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 does not constitute RE).

There is a very close relationship between Religious Education and the SMSC teaching and learning that takes place at Abbey Court School. Through the RE Curriculum students have opportunities to develop social skills and moral values for life in the modern world as well as experiencing spiritual and cultural learning opportunities.

Abbey Court School is a Gold UNICEF Rights Respecting School. As such it upholds the 'UN Convention on the Rights of a Child' in all of its practices and values. A key part of this is to educate children about their rights and provide them with the skills to advocate for themselves and others in matters pertaining to those rights. A Rights Respecting ethos is closely linked to the teaching and learning of Religious Education at Abbey Court School.

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 abilities within each class group. Ideas for strategies for differentiation are provided by the coordinator 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 Cliffe Road and Rede Court Road school sites. There are boxes pertaining to different religions and more general resources.

Specific training for teaching and support staff is facilitated by the Senior Leadership Team advised by the RE subject leader 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 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: [The Medway Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018: Reflecting on Religion | Education Services Medway](#)
- 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 to integrate with other schools in order to enrich their 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 subject leader 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.

R.E. Policy: Appendix I

From 'Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010', Department for Children, Schools and Families

Managing the right of withdrawal

Schools should ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. They should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.

However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, 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. (See 'Legal framework, rights and responsibilities', p.10, for the legal requirements.)

The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.

Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated into the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra costs. Pupils will usually remain on school premises. Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made.