



*Placing children's rights at the heart of all we undertake.*  
respect integrity humility equality care towards all



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**Dosthill Primary Academy**

# Religious Education Policy

Reviewed by: Samantha Murphy

Approved by: Governing Body

Next review due: June 2020

Date: June 2019

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019

# Aims and Values

Our core moral purpose is encapsulated in the vision statement for the school: Striving for excellence in an inspirational climate where learning is nurtured and secured. Our core values permeate our every breath at Dosthill Primary Academy where everyone is selflessly committed to:

- Promising Academic Achievement.
- Crafting Character Skills for Life.
- Ensuring Excellence for All.
- Inspiring Each other/Achieving Together.

Our aim is that everyone in our Dosthill Family grows in confidence to achieve their ambitions and dreams with courage and kindness. We promise to provide a caring ethos where all children have the confidence to explore, dream and discover so that every valuable second of the day is a learning adventure.

## Rights Respecting School

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In 2013 Dosthill School obtained the Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA). This award recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. As a rights-respecting school we not only teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all of the relationships: between teachers/adults and learners, between adults and between learners.

Learning and Teaching in RE particularly lends itself to the following Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

**Article 14** (freedom of thought, belief and religion) Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children guidance about this right.

**Article 30** (children of minorities) Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

**Article 12** (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

## Equality Duty

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We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public-Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## Rationale and principles

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Dosthill Primary Academy is committed to the teaching of Religious Education as an important subject in its own right and because of the contribution it makes to other aspects of the school's curriculum and ethos. All pupils on the school roll will receive RE as their entitlement in accordance with legal requirements.

The purpose of Religious Education is to ensure that pupils are exposed to a wide range of cultural, spiritual and religious experiences. Our aim is to meet the intellectual, social, physical, emotional, spiritual and moral needs of all children. We aim to develop children's respect for a diverse and multicultural society through development of children's interest in religion. Religious Education provides a key context for children and young people to develop their understanding and appreciation of diversity through the study of religious and non-religious beliefs. It helps to promote shared values, respect for all, and to challenge racism and discrimination. Religious Education must be taught at every key stage and the school uses the Staffordshire agreed syllabus for Religious Education. This syllabus was updated in 2016 and this policy has been updated to reflect any changes that the new syllabus required. The activities that we provide will promote positive attitudes to religion, celebrate diversities and provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of our community.

## Approaches to Learning and Teaching

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In line with Teaching and Learning Policy at Dosthill Primary Academy teachers consistently:

- Encourage children to enjoy being challenged, to take risks and not be afraid of making mistakes.
- Use children's specific interests, prior knowledge assessments, questions to guide learning and teaching.
- Use a range of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles in order to meet but also develop children's less preferred learning style.
- Provide children with a range of learning outcomes (where appropriate offer a choice), such as debates, role-plays and oral presentations; investigation and problem solving; research and self-discovery, designing and making things, not always written outcomes.
- Introduce learning in the most effective way for the objective using a flexible, imaginative, creative and inspiring teaching style.
- Where appropriate provide all learners with specific challenge/extension tasks and encourage/motivate children to reach their challenge in order to motivate and extend children's learning potential.
- Use time targets and minimum expectations so that all learners are productive.
- Use oral and written feedback to motivate, guide and challenge all learners.
- Plan for and encourage children to extend their learning at home, valuing and sharing children's contributions and home learning.
- Use other adults, including visitors from the local and wider community, within the classroom effectively to share their experience and expertise.
- Use focused displays to motivate, support and enhance learning in classrooms and around school, checking with children that displays are accessible for all levels of ability.
- Use Building Learning Power to support pupils' understanding of Religious Education learning objectives, and their role within a multicultural society.
- Use a multi-sensory approach to learning (E.g.: Film clips, music, sounds, ICT, the environment, artefacts, and interesting items).
- Identify and gather appropriate resources for the lesson, modify materials and organization to accommodate pupils' specific needs and abilities.
- Provide and encourage children to independently use a range of resources to maximize their learning.
- Use educational visits and visitors to enhance learning e.g. Church visits including special ceremonies e.g. wedding, baptism, Ministers from local churches, Specialist teaching.
- Undertake regular collective worship to promote spiritual, moral, emotional and cultural development of pupils.
- Make children aware of their role and responsibilities as global citizens in a multicultural society through fund raising, school based activities such as harvest festival and links with schools in other countries.

## Planning

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A religiously educated person should have a mature knowledge and understanding of beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views. They can identify and empathise with others' views and beliefs as well as being able to articulate their own. There are four key processes that planning at Dosthill Academy School should follow to help its pupils become religiously educated:

- Exploring the issue or concept, setting the context, asking the questions and finding out what pupils already know.
- Establishing new knowledge, getting to grips with the content, finding out about the what, when, where and how of particular religious traditions and of religious or philosophical responses to the issues (Engage)
- Investigating the impact of beliefs and practices on lifestyles, attitudes and action and considering the ways in which beliefs, spiritual insights and ideas are expressed, understanding why people respond to life as they do.
- Reflecting on the concept, on the responses from religious and philosophical traditions and setting this in the context of personal views and experiences.
- Explicit links should be made to the 'Rights Respecting School' Articles.
- Links are also made to British Values.

The long-term plan for RE has been revised in line with the whole school connected curriculum. The medium-term planning highlights the generic skills that will be taught throughout, as well as, skills that are subject specific. RE is either taught through weekly learning episodes or may be taught in a 'block' of learning episodes. Themes and topics are also addressed through assembly themes. Units of learning will include an intriguing question and will provide a range of opportunities for the question to be explored as well as making links to other subject areas wherever possible; in particular ICT is used to enhance pupil understanding.

Short term planning comes from the medium-term plans, which include the key objectives and the suggested activities to meet these objectives. Short term planning is discussed within year groups, to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to meet the same objectives.

In the Foundation stage both the Early Learning Goals and Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus are integrated into the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Medium-term and weekly planning reflects the celebration of festivals and moral and spiritual aspects of learning. These are often taught through story.

## Meeting the needs of all learners

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At Dosthill Academy Primary School teachers consistently:

- Differentiate and adapt their planning in order to meet the needs of all the learners in their class, regularly annotating plans to ensure that specific needs are considered.
- Use questioning throughout a lesson to assess and review learning in order to challenge and support to all learners. If necessary, adapt a lesson to meet all learners' needs (E.g.: if an activity is too easy/hard, adapt it for specific children there and then).
- Use and value children's own self/peer assessments in order to assist planning and future differentiation.
- Judge the pupils' understanding with accuracy and use this to inform future learning opportunities/planning: through the above mentioned used of success criteria, self and peer assessment, questioning, prior knowledge assessments as well as subject specific assessment procedures.
- Be able to identify where a pupil is and provide necessary stimulus to ensure that pupils recognise and accept the next stage of learning.
- Have high expectations to motivate all learners to achieve to their full potential.
- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity towards religious, racial and sexual issues and adapt planning and structure of lessons accordingly (refer also to the Equal Opportunities/Race Equality Policy).

In accordance with the law, where a parental request to withdraw a pupil from RE is received; the school will ensure that discussions take place and appropriate action is agreed.

## Assessment, Recording and Reporting

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Currently Religious Education is not formally tracked or assessed, however those staff teaching RE monitor pupils' contributions and appreciation, in order to comment accurately on pupil understanding in the end of year school report.

[See Appendix 1 for Age related aspects for the RE framework]

## Roles and responsibilities

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*Religious Education leader* – supports staff with their subject delivery and to be up to date with current initiatives in order to cascade information to the staff as a whole overseen by the Curriculum leader.

*Headteacher* – To ensure staff are fully able to deliver the subject appropriate and that pupils are receiving their entitlement.

*Teachers and Teaching Support Staff* - Responsibility to ensure appropriate delivery of the subject

*Governors* - Agree and review the Religious Education policy on a regular basis. Question the Head teacher and others to ensure that the policy is implemented and impacts positively on learning and teaching.

*Pupils* -Take an active part in their learning responding positively. Be an active participant in personalizing and extending their own learning at school and at home.

*Other adults including parents* - Realize that learning constantly takes place, not only within the classroom but in all environments. Value and recognize their role in shaping children's attitudes and lifelong learning experiences. Create positive relationships with all children e.g. active participation with children to celebrate religious festivals within school where possible. Recognize their impact on children's self-esteem.

## Learning Environment and Resources

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A central resource of books, games, artefacts and practical activities are located in topic boxes within the PPA room, which is available to all staff members.

Visits and visitors are encouraged to support delivery of the subject e.g. Indian Art, Music and Dance from other faiths and cultures.

## Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy

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- **Annual review of Policy.**
- **In-depth review of Policy** for approval by Governors **three yearly.**

## Dissemination

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*Disseminated to staff and governors through teams.*

## References

*The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus*

*The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum*

## Appendices

Age related expectations for the RE Framework (amended in line with new Staffordshire agreed syllabus 2016)

## Appendix 1: Age Related Expectations for the RE Framework

Each statement refers to one of the three aims underpinning the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus;

**Exploring; Engaging and Reflecting.**

For each statement a pupil can be assessed as; **working towards the expected standard (WTS)**, **working at the expected standard (EXS)**, or **working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS)**

### ***By the end of Reception***

Pupils talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They talk about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things including faith buildings e.g. the church.

Pupils can talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another and what makes them special.

Pupils can talk about how other children do not always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They can talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

### ***By the end of year 1***

Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice valued by believers.

They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression which have meaning for believers. Pupils can talk about their experience of the world around them and in particular what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.

Pupils can demonstrate awareness that there is more than one religious tradition or faith community.

### ***By the end of Year 2***

Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions, including key questions raised by believers. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.

Pupils can recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. They are able to share ideas about right and wrong.

Pupils are able to name more than one religious tradition or faith community, and can talk about some of the distinctive features of each such religious tradition/faith community.

### ***By the end of year 3***

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs, practices and sources, including

religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.

Pupils ask important questions about values, commitments and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses, attitudes and behaviour.

Pupils can identify and distinguish between the faiths being explored and can express some awareness of their identity within or outside these faiths. They understand the importance and reality of existing in a plural context.

#### ***By the end of year 4***

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They explore and explain meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.

Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, recognising the implications and consequences of making moral choices.

They apply their ideas about identity and commitment in a diverse world to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others, especially their commitments, values and choices. They are able to recognise in themselves and others some reactions to living alongside others who have a different faith or stance.

#### ***By the end of year 5***

Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They show a developing insight into why people belong to religions. They demonstrate that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ethical issues.

Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives and making clear connections between personal viewpoints and action.

Pupils explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the opportunities and challenges of commitment in a diverse world. They identify the consequences for themselves and for others of holding particular beliefs and values.

#### ***By the end of year 6***

Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Pupils use reasoning and examples to explore the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on fundamental questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth.

Focusing on values and commitments, pupils consider their own responses to the opportunities and challenges of living in a diverse world whilst taking account of the views and experiences of others. They are able to talk about examples of religious cooperation, and why this is sometimes difficult.