



# Religious Education Guidance

Homerswood Primary and  
Nursery School

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## Religious Education Guidance

### Aims of the guidance

- To establish an agreed approach to what constitutes quality teaching and learning in RE
- To enable staff to identify key features of effective teaching and learning and help ensure they match the abilities, attainments, interests and experiences of pupils
- To provide an agreed focus for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE
- To instil a love of learning and the ability to make connections
- To incorporate other aspects of the curriculum as outlined in the school's curriculum overview document.

### Underlying Principles

The following principles form the basis of this document:

- The needs and progress of the learner are central to planning, delivery and assessment of the curriculum
- Learning promotes sustained progress and achievement for all pupils, including those with SEND, disadvantaged and most able pupils.

### Intent

At Homerswood, we have recently changed from the Discovery RE scheme to the RE Today Primary RE Curriculum scheme of learning. This is used alongside the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus and all of the Homerswood tracks which include British Values, communication, self-exploration, debates and writing across the curriculum. The aim at Homerswood School is for the children to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and five other principle religions: Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as incorporating a non-religious worldviews approach. This explores understanding, experiences and responses to the world around them, of nature and their own place in the world. RE Today Primary RE Curriculum and the Hertfordshire agreed syllabus guidance brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Each unit and key question is linked to one or more of the eight key areas outlined within the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus. These are 'Beliefs and practices', 'Sources of wisdom', 'Symbols and actions', 'Prayer, worship and reflection', 'Identity and belonging', 'Ultimate questions', 'Human responsibilities and values' and 'Justice and fairness'. These aim to enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses. Our school membership of NATRE (National Association for Teachers of RE) also gives us access to many teaching and learning resources.

Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation with inclusivity in mind. Each unit and question starts from the children's own life experiences, using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion or non-religious worldview being studied. Learning is assessed and children have the opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. Teachers will tailor each unit to meet the needs of the children in their classes. At Homerswood we value the religious backgrounds of all children, staff and members of the school community.

## **Implementation**

By following the RE Today RE Primary Curriculum at Homerswood school, in conjunction with the Hertfordshire agreed syllabus for RE, we intend that Religious Education will:-

- adopt an enquiry- based approach beginning with the children's own life experience and what they already know before moving into learning about and from religion.
- be taught from EYFS to Year 6 for one hour each week, focusing on one big question each half term, comprising of six lessons - focusing on an in-depth study of Christianity or a breadth study of another religion or non-religious worldview.
- check on the children's existing, prior knowledge, revisit key concepts and key vocabulary regularly.
- use sticky knowledge quizzes within each unit to support revisiting learning, embedding knowledge and deepening understanding.
- provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- promote British values, ensuring children are aware of their rights and responsibilities as UK citizens.
- develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery through questions, religious visits and high quality resources boxes including: books, CD's, sacred texts, psalms, hymns, prayers, poems, letters, paintings, art work and artefacts.

- nurture children's own spiritual development.
- attend key celebrations such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter at our local Church, St John's, to extend the children's Christianity knowledge and understanding as well as in year 2 participating in the Christingle Service and year 6 The Stations of the Cross. Along their journey, they will also visit or hear from people from various beliefs first hand such as a Mosque and Gurdwara.
- The resource boxes also aid with children identifying artefacts or texts from the religion as well as photos and annotated texts with visuals to support learning for all.

## **Impact**

Teachers will have a clear overview of each lesson and specific elements of what they are working towards. Individual lesson plans detail the learning aims and intentions of the lesson, ensuring teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Each unit has built-in assessment resources which is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in assessing whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it. Conversations with the children will demonstrate their engagement and curiosity with the subject, display methods or aspects of learning they have enjoyed and retained, as well as any gaps or misconceptions. The children will be inspired to continue their learning into the future to find out more about each religion. Children are assessed over three aspects of learning:

- a personal resonance with or reflection on the material/religion being studied to answer the unit question.
- knowledge and understanding of the material/religion being studied to answer the unit question.
- evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the unit question

These are tracked throughout the planning stage so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly to support or challenge the children. The information will be recorded by the subject leader and analysed on a termly basis. The subject leader can use the data to inform any trends or gaps in attainment; individual success will be celebrated, work displayed and shared with other classes.

## **Safeguarding Links**

At Homerswood, we ensure we establish a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike. To enable this, it is important that respect for each

others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions.

### **Consultation**

This guidance was written in conjunction with support from the NATRE and RE Today website and advisers, and also with advice from the RE Community group SARETT (St. Albans RE teachers together). The views of the teaching staff were taken into account when choosing which RE curriculum to use.

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