



The Orchards Primary Academy

Where learning has no limits and personal growth is endless...

Our Approach to Religious Education

Intent

The role of Religious Education at The Orchards Primary Academy is to help prepare and equip all pupils for life in contemporary Britain by enabling them to acquire a good level of religious literacy. This means to gain an understanding of the diverse beliefs and religious practices of our faith communities, to understand the non-religious view held by a number of people in our society, and to respect the right of all people to make these very personal choices. The Discovery RE scheme that we follow uses an enquiry-based approach to learning. Using this enquiry-based model well, children's critical thinking skills can be developed, their motivation to learn increased, and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise, will be enhanced. This approach takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief. RE does not try to persuade but rather to inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place

Implementation

We follow the Discovery RE scheme of work which allows our children to explore, engage and reflect on principal religions and their practices. Lessons take an enquiry-based approach to teaching and learning through key questions. Each 'Discovery RE' unit begins with a 'Big Question' which the children can instantly engage with, regardless of their own beliefs and worldviews. Throughout the course of the unit, an enquiry takes place as a class to explore the 'Big Question', in which the children are co-travellers on the journey rather than followers. Each RE lesson will provide an opportunity to explore, build knowledge or understanding, and reflect on the subject of the enquiry. By the end of the unit, each child reflects on what they have learned throughout the enquiry to reach their own conclusion based on evidence.

Christianity is taught in every year group, with Christmas and Easter given new treatment each year, developing the learning in a progressive way. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are also covered. Humanist perspectives are added when appropriate in some enquiries.

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development

With the Ofsted inspection framework emphasising the opportunities children are offered for SMSC development, RE can be a key contributor. Therefore, SMSC opportunities are identified in each enquiry, and are mapped on the overview grid for each year group. Further support for SMSC can be found on www.janlevereducationconsultancy.com

British Values



Religious Education is a key player in engendering knowledge and understanding which can lead to tolerance and respect for others and their beliefs. It does not, however, teach children to passively accept, but rather encourages evaluation and critical thinking, equipping them to consider belief positions they encounter. Discovery RE contributes significantly to the British Values agenda and the mapping documents in the Overview section of the folder and at the beginning of each year group show how.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means cultivating a sense of awareness on purpose, in a non-judgemental way in the present moment. It is hoped that teachers will use mindfulness practices to build children's self-awareness and skills of reflection, thus supporting their RE learning as well as their personal spiritual development.

Impact

Assessment

There are three age-related expectation descriptors for each enquiry in each year group. These expectations (working AT, TOWARDS and BEYOND) give guidance for assessing each of the 3 aspects of learning involved and made explicit in Discovery RE.

The 3 aspects of learning are colour-coded:

Green: personal resonance with or reflection on... (formerly AT2 personal)

Blue: knowledge and understanding of... (formerly AT1)

Red: evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question (formerly AT2 impersonal).

AfL (assessment for learning) opportunities are offered throughout each step of each enquiry.

End of Key Stage Colour-coded descriptors in Discovery RE

"WORKING AT" expectation. Most children are expected to reach these expectations.	GREEN DESCRIPTORS Personal resonance with or reflection on The concept / belief underlying the subject matter of the enquiry Child's own thoughts, opinions, belief, empathy.	BLUE DESCRIPTORS Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of that enquiry (subject knowledge)	RED DESCRIPTORS Skills of evaluation and critical thinking in relation to the big enquiry question
End of Key Stage 1 (Year 2, Age 7, 'old' Level 2)	I can tell you / talk about what concepts like belonging, commitment, kindness, forgiveness mean to me in my world I can verbalise and / or express my own thoughts	I can recall facts about the religions / beliefs I have studied, begin to use the religious vocabulary and start to explain the significance and meaning of the facts, practices etc.	I can start to think through the enquiry question using some facts and am beginning to see there could be more than one answer.
End of LOWER key Stage 2 (Year 4, Age 9, 'old' Level 3)	I can tell you / talk about the concept / belief e.g. belonging and start to relate this to the people I am studying e.g. Jews. I can express my own opinions and start to support them with rationale.	I can recall facts about religions I have studied, select the facts that are most significant to the enquiry and start to explain their relevance / importance.	I can apply my knowledge to the enquiry question and give an answer supported by one or more facts.
End of Key Stage 2 (Year 6, Age 11, 'old' Level 4)	I can explain how the concept / belief e.g. forgiveness resonates in my own life and can also see this might be different for other people because of their religion/beliefs I can express my own thoughts etc having reflected on them in relation to other people's.	I can recall facts about religions and explain differences in practice and interpretation within and between religions / belief systems.	I can weigh up evidence and different arguments / aspects relevant to the enquiry question and express my answer, supported with evidence / rationale.

Our belief is that, using an enquiry-based model well, children's critical thinking skills will be developed, their motivation to learn increased, and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise, will be enhanced. Our children will have a better understanding of the religions that make up the UK landscape and how they can learn from and work alongside each other to create community cohesion. All children will be more informed about their position in the world, and the decisions they can make impacting their future. Our RE curriculum will promote inquisitive minds, respect, tolerance and understanding for all those around them including themselves. Our children will have a deep understanding of the main religions of the world, their community, and their future. They will understand the relevance of RE in today's modern world and how it affects our lives