

RE Curriculum Statement

Intent

At Alverton School, we follow the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and we share their belief that pupils should have their full entitlement to religious education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. RE has a key role in helping pupils develop positive attitudes and values and in the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which benefits them as individuals and others within their communities and we encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging.

As the world appears to become ever more complex and challenging, it is important that pupils can be prepared for the world they will enter when they leave school and our RE curriculum values local customs and beliefs at the same time as considering national and global aspects of RE. We want our pupils to have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of different religions and to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives. We are very conscious that we are situated in an area which is not culturally diverse and we place great importance on enabling pupils to develop respect for, and sensitivity to, those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

Implementation

In line with the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus, our RE curriculum provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Working together, teachers identify the key knowledge and skills required to ensure progression across topics and through each phase in the school and the curriculum has been planned and mapped to ensure children develop a broad, coherent and progressive understanding.

At Alverton, we have developed our own exciting schemes of work, based around umbrella topics such as Disaster or Other Cultures. Often, RE is intrinsically linked within this, enabling links between the RE curriculum and other areas of learning to further deepen understanding. At other times, RE stands alone. RE may be taught in weekly sessions or it may be "blocked". The syllabus enables children to revisit and build on their prior knowledge of the different beliefs and practices taught across the school. Work is recorded in a variety of ways to best suit the learning.

We develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity in all year groups. Key Stage 1 children also learn about Buddhism whilst Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. RE offers opportunities for reflection and enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression as well as the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures. Our curriculum encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and challenges them to reflect on, consider and analyse issues of truth, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses, developing an awareness and understanding of others' beliefs and a tolerance and empathy based on this.

In the EYFS, the seasons and the calendar provide the curriculum coverage. From celebrating Easter to finding out about Chinese New Year, children are encouraged to look at similarities and differences between themselves and others, talk about their own experiences and ask questions to find out more. Through planned activities such as cooking, dancing and singing children are able to experience different cultures, religions and beliefs.

The rich culture of our local area is fully utilised, with opportunities for learning outside the classroom and at local places of worship embedded in our practice and we welcome visits to the school from members of the local community.

We try to make RE memorable and engaging for our pupils. Some examples of this would be:

Upper Key Stage 2 Holi Celebrations

As the culmination of their learning about Hinduism, the children cooked their own feast, learned traditional Indian dances and took part in a festival of colour.

EYFS Diwali Celebration

The children enjoyed exploring a different culture, making Rangoli patterns, diya pots and tasting different foods.

Christmas Celebrations

Our EYFS and Key Stage 1 children perform nativity plays for the school and their parents while Key Stage 2 retell the Christmas story through song and readings at their annual Carol Concert at a local church.

Key Stage 1

A lovely topic about Christianity in Cornwall saw the children making many cross-curricular links, visiting churches and religious sites and exploring the meaning of stained glass windows before making their own.

Key Stage 2 - Methodist Revival Day

In this whole key stage project, the children met John Wesley, learned a Methodist hymn, played traditional games and learned dances children used to enjoy, finishing off with a tea treat bun picnic.

Lower Key Stage 2

Linking with Shelterbox and learning all about charities and how and why they help, the children raised money through an auction of upcycled and recycled things they had made to fundraise for the charity.

Year 6 St Piran's Day Dance

This annual local community event celebrates St Piran's Day (the patron saint of Cornwall) and sees children from all local primary schools dance through the town before enjoying a traditional Cornish saffron bun. We also have our own school song about St Piran.

Whole School – Remembrance Day Service

This annual, and very moving, event includes children from the Nursery to Year 6 who come together to remember all those who have lost their lives in the service of their country. Every child contributes to this, for example by each making a poppy which is “planted” on the field.

Teaching in RE is open and objective; it does not seek to urge religious beliefs on young people, nor compromise the integrity of their own religious position by promoting one tradition over another. We simply want children to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning and we promote a positive attitude towards everyone, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from our own.

Collective Worship, alongside RE, contributes to our informed, reflective, compassionate and caring ethos. Assemblies are held across Key Stages 1 and 2 which provide pupils with opportunities for reflection. Regular assemblies are led by the local Open the Book team who perform stories from the Bible and we welcome visitors to lead special events such as our Harvest Festival or to our Advent Service.

Impact

At Alverton School, we strive to ensure that all pupils in our school are given ample opportunities to develop their own spiritual awareness, sense of self and awareness of others. Our pupils will have developed respect for, and sensitivity to, those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own and we strive to create a tolerance and understanding of other religions. Our children should be able to better understand themselves and others and begin to understand the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing, multicultural world.

RE offers our children the means by which to understand how other people choose to live, to understand why they choose to live in that way and to develop an understanding of other people’s cultures and ways of life. The children enjoying learning about other religions and, through their RE learning, are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. They have extended their knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs and developed an increasing religious vocabulary. They will have learned to reflect on questions of meaning, offering their own thoughtful and informed views. Outcomes in topic and literacy books and on displays evidence a broad and balanced RE curriculum and demonstrate the children’s acquisition of identified key knowledge.