



Millbrook Junior School



Dream, Believe, Aspire, Achieve

Millbrook Junior School

Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

This policy was approved by the Governors/Trustees on 4th May 2023

Paul Davies

Chair of Governors/Trustees

Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

Religious Education is different in nature to both Worship and Assembly. The aims and objectives of RE are different and distinct from those of Collective Worship. RE is about developing skills, knowledge and understanding in order to make decisions about the important questions. Worship is about being given the opportunity to participate in an experience which can lead to a heightened sense of spiritual awareness.

Assembly can emphasise the more ritual and ceremonial aspects of worship and can be used as a springboard from which to launch a project or inspire a larger number of children at one time. Religious Education cannot be taught wholly through assemblies. The assembly context does not give the opportunity for the exercise of many skills; for example, research, which is a part of Religious Education for which a classroom context is essential. Assembly, Worship and Religious Education are distinctive activities which help the school deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.

Religious Education

We welcome all children at Millbrook Junior School, regardless of their faith. All children will be treated equally.

National and Legal Framework

RE at Millbrook Junior School will be provided in line with the legal requirements. The basic curriculum will include provision for Religious Education for all pupils on the school roll; the content of RE shall reflect the fact that religious traditions in The United Kingdom are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in The United Kingdom; the RE which is provided shall be in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus for Northamptonshire (SACRE 2018-2023).

Whole School Aims and Objectives

At Millbrook Junior School our Mission is to encourage every child to 'Dream, Believe, Aspire and Achieve'. RE has an important contribution to make towards this by providing a caring environment where children feel secure and able to express their views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others. Pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the school and of the wider community. Links are made with a variety of faith groups to help develop this aim.

Within the framework of the law and the Agreed Syllabus, our aims in RE are for pupils to:

- to develop religious literacy;
- to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and world views represented in the United Kingdom;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- to develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

Right of Withdrawal

In keeping with the law, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. The school will ensure that suitable supervision is provided. Please refer to the Subject Leader or Head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. Governors can request the number of pupils withdrawn from RE at a given point.

We note that teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching RE if they wish to do so but must give notice of their intention in writing to the Governing Body.

RE does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children or staff, or to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another. We hope that all parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the open Religious Education being taught at our school and we encourage the participation of all.

Time Allocation

RE is part of the Basic Curriculum and all schools are required to teach RE to all pupils on the school roll, except where parents exercise their right of withdrawal. The QCDA recommended and exemplified a minimum of 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two, a recommendation endorsed by the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus. The time allocated at Millbrook Junior School will be 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two. RE curriculum time does not include assembly or Collective Worship, even where the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work.

Scheme of Work

Our scheme of work has been developed in line with the Agreed Syllabus. RE will be based around termly themes. At Key Stage Two, pupils will learn about Christianity and will also have major learning opportunities with regard to the main world religions: Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism.

Teaching and Learning Styles

OFSTED reports suggest that the range of teaching and learning strategies in use in RE is often too narrow, in the over-use of stories and a limited range of drawing and written tasks.

Our policy is to aim to ensure that a variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted to allow access by all pupils. The 2018 syllabus recommends that all key stages use 'Enquiry' methods and when planning and delivering units of work. When planning units of work, a range of approaches to learning that match different types of enquiry should be used, for example:

- 'Big Questions' are used as the focus of an enquiry and explored through group and individual reflection
- use experiential and creative activities where pupils can develop their insight into the 'experience' of religion using such approaches as dramatic conventions; use of music and art; use of photos, posters, DVDs; artefact handling and multi - sensory approaches
- use reasoned argument and debate where pupils can explore controversial issues
- using investigative and interpretative skills where pupils need to gather, analyse and present information
- use of visits, visitors and online virtual tours.

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. We recognise the importance of teaching to the Attainment Targets of the Agreed Syllabus in a balanced way.

Resources

A wide range of resources are in place for each topic area within Religious Education. These are all individually boxed according to religion and a list of contents for each resource box is displayed on the front of each box.

Resources are stored in the RE cupboard within the year 5 shared area, and should be returned after use.

Visits to Places of Worship

We are able to annually visit and have leaders from Christ the King church, in the immediate vicinity of the school, meet with children and be involved in RE. Children will also have the opportunity to visit, view virtual tours or have visitors from other places of religious worship during their time at Millbrook Junior School where appropriate.

The RE Subject Leader will support organisation of these educational visits.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

The whole school policy with regard to special educational needs, the gifted and talented and differentiation applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This, of course, may not relate to their general educational 'ability'.

RE and Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs will not always meet the same expectations in RE as other pupils and therefore appropriate assessment materials will need to be used. RE contributes towards the policy by ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties are able to:

- Develop their self-confidence and awareness;
- Understand the world they live in as individuals and as members of groups;
- Bring their own experiences and understanding of life into the classroom;
- Develop positive attitudes towards others, respecting their beliefs and experience;
- Reflect on and consider their own values and those of others;
- Deal with issues that form the basis for personal choices and behaviour.

Access to RE for pupils with learning difficulties can be improved by:

- using sensory materials and resources through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell, for example, music, tactile artefacts, plants in a sensory garden;
- giving pupils first hand experiences, for example, visitors to schools, visits to religious buildings, involvement in festivals;
- organising a range of activities to give personal experiences, for example, dance, drama, visits to a range of environments;
- helping pupils to understand and appreciate their world and its diversity;
- using a range of resources, for example, interactive/sensory stimuli, information and communication technology (ICT), to increase pupils' knowledge of religions and the elements in them;
- using specialist aids and equipment;
- providing support from adults or other pupils when necessary, while allowing pupils the space, time and freedom to develop skills for themselves;
- adapting tasks or environments and providing alternative activities where necessary, for example, tactile story books, puppets, role-play, music making, presenting work as a painting instead of writing.

- being aware of the pace at which pupils work and of the physical and mental effort required.
- balancing consistency and challenge, according to individual needs.

Gifted and Talented

Gifted in Religious Education is not the same as being religiously gifted. Gifted and talented pupils in RE are identified by teachers as those pupils who:

- show high levels of insight into and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary;
- make sense of and draw meaning from religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- are sensitive to, or aware of, the mysteries of life and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- to understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in Religious Education and into other religious and cultural contexts.

It is important that the full range and scope of Religious Education activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. For example, pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education should be appropriately challenged by:

- using a variety of challenging questioning strategies to explore religious phenomena;
- setting extension tasks to encourage greater depth of understanding;
- using authentic materials from a faith;
- focusing on interpretation of symbol, metaphor, text and story and the ways in which these stimulate reflection on meaning and discernment;
- challenging and developing use of spoken and written religious language with both sacred texts and general literature;
- teaching pupils correct terminology and language needed to handle sophisticated religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical questions ideas and materials;
- using questions and tasks from later key stages to stimulate responses through argument, analysis and prediction;
- encouraging pupils to make connections between their work in RE and other subjects.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

In line with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for RE, we make judgements about pupil progress and attainment. Pupils' work in RE is assessed by making informal judgements both by staff and the pupils themselves during lessons and at the end of a unit of work. These judgements are used by the teacher to decide "where next" within a lesson and within the unit, as well as the next time that particular skill, attitude or knowledge is encountered. In addition, a limited number of more formal assessments take place during the year where the pupils will be given a level of attainment.

All teachers at Millbrook Junior School use the end of year assessment statement descriptions as listed in the SACRE (2018 – 2023) scheme for end of unit evaluations and for reporting to children, parents and staff as appropriate. An annual report for RE informs parents of their child's progress and attainment, as required by law. We will make specific, individual, accurate comments on each child's progress in RE in this report, based on regular monitoring of work with regard to the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next two years and then be reviewed. To assist the subject leader in monitoring, the teacher responsible for planning the RE for the year group will make lesson planning available when requested.

The leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a "self-evaluation" of our RE work in readiness for inspection.

Self-Evaluation, RE and Inspection

The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, in line with OFSTED guidance about self - evaluation and review.

Other School Policies linked to teaching Religious Education

Equal Opportunities

In keeping with the aims of the school policy for equal opportunities, the teaching of RE endeavours to ensure that all pupils receive equal access to educational opportunities regardless of their religious beliefs, gender, race, ability, social background or physical capacity. Care is taken in RE to avoid the reinforcement of negative or stereotypical images and aims to celebrate and appreciate cultural diversity through a variety of materials, tasks and experiences, in order to reflect the cultural diversities of our society.

ICT

ICT contributes towards the objectives of RE by the use a range of technology including: Interactive whiteboards; Internet; CDs/Video and other multimedia; Digital photography and PowerPoint presentations.

PSHE, Citizenship and Community Cohesion

Religious Education looks at moral codes and values that underpin people's behaviour. It promotes values and attitudes that develop respect and sensitivity for others and enables discussion of a range of views, opinions and beliefs which help to prepare children to become valuable citizens in a culturally diverse society.

We try to ensure that visitors from different Faith Communities and cultural backgrounds and visits to places of worship both within the immediate community and the wider community are planned into the RE Programme of Study where possible. This helps to develop community cohesion through Religious Education.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education plays a key role in pupils' spiritual and moral development, and makes a distinctive contribution to their social and cultural development. This is outlined in the Agreed Syllabus.

Literacy

RE embeds skills of literacy in a variety of ways. For example, speaking and listening skills, drama conventions, reading different texts and writing in different genres.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship is a statutory right of all pupils; it is for every pupil in the school, unless the parents exercise the right to withdraw their child, in writing, and records of this must be retained. Governors can request the number of pupils withdrawn from Collective Worship. Millbrook Junior School encourages as many staff as possible to be present and to actively participate in this shared experience, while respecting their right to withdraw. Collective Worship is an opportunity for the school to enhance the sense of community and all the school is encouraged to take part.

Collective worship is not part of the taught curriculum and is discounted from teaching time; it is a distinct activity that stands alone and may complement the wider curriculum of the school; worship is not learnt or taught but experienced.

The Education reform act 1988 states that: There must be a daily act of Collective Worship for every pupil. The term "collective" worship, repeated from the 1944 Act, is intended to distinguish school worship from the voluntary worship characteristic of a united body of believers. It implies that they are gathered together, but are not necessarily of one mind. Collective worship will therefore allow pupils, who may or may not have or share a religious faith, to respond individually and differently, and not necessarily in the way that a united body of believers responds. It will be collective but not corporate. It will thus present a stimulus, and offer time, atmosphere and opportunity for pupils to think, reflect, respond, or pray (if they wish) individually. Collective Worship must be educational; it can be at any time of the day; it can be with any normal school grouping of pupils.

By law, the majority of acts of Collective Worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character and should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. The law emphasizes however that Collective Worship should have regard to the family backgrounds of pupils and that it should be educational and the diversity and richness of spirituality, which is evident in our community and families, is celebrated and not ignored.

The following list of values provides a basis of broadly Christian concepts which shall be used at Millbrook Junior School during collective worship to reflect the principles of "love of God, self and others": compassion, self-sacrifice, trust, forgiveness, conviction, humility, mercy, self-knowledge, corporate responsibility, tolerance, self-reliance, perseverance, co-operation, respect, consideration and honesty.

In formulating our approach to Collective Worship, Millbrook Junior School has made the decision that aspects of other faiths such as special days and Holy Days will be included in our collective worship.

In line with SACRE guidance, the following elements will be present in acts of Collective Worship at Millbrook Junior School:

- responding to things of worth;
- an invitation to participation or observation;
- a recognition of and response to the spiritual dimension of human experience;
- music/singing;
- words/scripture;
- ritual;
- stillness and reflection/prayer.

It is not expected that all elements are present in every act of Collective Worship though over a period of time, pupils should have the opportunity to experience them all. It is expected that all acts of Collective Worship will have a clear time of stillness/reflection.

The daily act of Collective Worship should be acceptable to pupils of all faiths or those with none. It should be accessible to participating pupils of all ages and abilities and should aim to stimulate their interest. Acts of Collective Worship will be monitored and evaluated within the school's self-evaluation processes.