

## **Religious Education Policy**

### **Aims**

At New Islington Free School we believe pupils should be taught RE in order to help them to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people regardless of their gender, race or religion.
- Understand that there are more similarities than differences between people.
- Develop the skills to live harmoniously within a diverse society.
- Respect the right of people to hold beliefs which are different from own.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious and moral issues.
- Develop subject learning goals involving spiritual and moral values.

### **The Legal Requirement**

The Education Reform Act 1988 requires that RE should be taught:

- To all pupils in full-time education except for those withdrawn at the request of their parents.
- As part of the curriculum, and should promote the 'spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils'.
- As an agreed syllabus which reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of teachings and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

### **The Agreed Syllabus**

The Education Act 1944 requires that an agreed syllabus 'must not be designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion belief on pupils'.

Throughout the syllabus, examples are given for the six major world religions; Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Although Humanism is not a religion, some examples are given for this belief system.

### **Attainment Targets**

There are two aspects to the teaching of RE:

#### *Learning about Religions*

This includes the ability to:

- Identify, name, describe and give accounts in order to build a coherent picture of each religion.

- Explain the meaning of religious language, stories and symbolism.
- Explain the similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

### *Learning from Religions*

This includes the ability to:

- Give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues.
- Reflect on what might be learnt from religions in the light of one's own beliefs and experience.
- Identify and respond to questions of meaning within religions.

### **Curriculum**

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN and EAL are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of RE we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. Important festivals are celebrated from different religions within the school and wider community. Classes lead assemblies and parents are invited to attend. Visits and visitors organised throughout the year naturally enrich the RE curriculum.

### **Planning and Assessment**

Teachers write detailed plans for RE which outline objectives and activities. Pupils are guided about what they have done well, what they need to improve and ways in which they might make that improvement.

Assessment of children's RE capability is achieved by planning appropriate curriculum activities in line with the school's general policy for assessment and reporting. Teachers are encouraged to complete assessments at the end of each unit of work. These assessments should indicate what students know and understand.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development in Religious Education**

RE plays a key role in pupils' spiritual and moral development as part of the subject learning goals, and makes a distinctive contribution to social and cultural development.

In RE lessons, as well as PSHE and our Collective Worship policy, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider community, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

### **Coordinator Role**

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE curriculum coordinator, in close collaboration with Headteacher. RE Planning is collected for monitoring and a sample of books looked at regularly throughout the year. The scheme of work is evaluated annually. A selection of lessons will be observed.

The RE coordinator and the Headteacher keep a record of any children who withdraw from Collective Worship or RE lessons.