



#### Our Vision and Values

"We all play our part to achieve excellence in everything."

The Christian values of love and compassion for others, kindness, tolerance and respect are at the heart of our learning journey together as the Pilgrim Federation.

We believe that learning should be creative, innovative, inspiring and irresistible.

Staff, parents, governors, children and the local community all play their part in our learning and in achieving excellence in everything we do.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

#### RE Policy Statement

The Pilgrim Federation of Church Schools comprises the Church of England Primary Schools of Blakeney (VA); Hindringham (VC); Kelling (VA) and Walsingham (VA).

Religious Education is unique in the Federation curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

The Federation Governors in consultation with the Executive Headteacher have decided, following advice from the Diocese of Norwich, to adopt the Norfolk Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and supplement this with material from the Diocese.

#### Aims

**The broad aims of religious education are set out within the local agreed syllabus and the National Society Statement of Entitlement. The primary aim of religious education is to promote religious literacy.**

In the Pilgrim Federation of Schools we aim for Religious Education to enable pupils to:-

- encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history and on the lives of their adherents
- develop an understanding of religious faith as a search for and expression of truth
- provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.
- explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn; developing their own spiritual/philosophical convictions and enriching their own beliefs
- examine moral and ethical issues relating to religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; building resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.

- develop their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society.

### **The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to community cohesion**

#### *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

#### *Personal development and well-being*

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

#### *Community cohesion*

RE makes an important contribution to the Federation's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

**The Federation community** - RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

**The community within which each school of the Federation is located** - RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

**The UK community** - a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

**The global community** - RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognizing the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive Federation ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

### **Teaching RE**

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all

pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus, guidance from the Diocese and taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

Religious Education in the Pilgrim Federation of Schools uses an enquiry based approach to learning. This is based on the best practice framework in the Norfolk 2012 agreed syllabus. This approach enables pupils to focus on an enquiry question which explores theological and philosophical concepts within religion and belief. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories.

We recognize that as small rural and isolated communities there is a special need, where possible, to give our pupils opportunities to encounter faith communities through visits to other places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

### **Curriculum**

Religious Education across the Pilgrim Federation is carefully planned around key questions and the systematic study of religion and belief to ensure depth of understanding.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

At KS 1 pupils study primarily Christianity and Judaism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews.

At KS 2 pupils study primarily Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldview.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work. Assessment is based on the pupils' mastery of knowledge and understanding related to the key enquiry question for each topic. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion and personal reflection.

In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The Federation's RE coordinator will monitor RE provision and standards across the schools through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The RE coordinator is responsible for contributing to the Federation's self-evaluation process.

The Federation Governing Body (through its delegation to the Vision, Values and Ethos Committee) monitors the role of religious education and its contribution to the Christian ethos of the Federation.

### **Responsibilities for RE within the Pilgrim Federation, (Executive Headteacher and Governors)**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the Pilgrim Federation Governing Body and Executive Headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD

- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the Federation can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

### **The Right of Withdrawal From RE**

In the Pilgrim Federation of Schools we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Executive Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the Pilgrim Federation

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- The Federation will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The Federation may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the Federation, although the Federation should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the Federation will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, the Federation has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on their particular school's premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive.

### **Role of the Federation RE Coordinator**

- To keep the RE policy under regular review.
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement
- To maintain and build priorities set by the Federation.
- To contribute to the Federation's self-evaluation
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese.
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate.
- To liaise with parents to ensure full participation in the programme.

**Entitlement and Inclusion - EAL, SEN, More Able**

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers should include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child should be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

**Resources**

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of RE across the Federation.

**Parental and Community Involvement**

As with other areas of the curriculum, parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE. Parents are invited into their child's school regularly to look at their children's work, and a report on their child's progress is given out to parents termly. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of RE e.g. through the engagement of the local parish priest; the Year for God Team at Walsingham; the Deanery of Holt's Children Youth & Family Missioner;

**Professional Development**

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through each school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal. It is the Pilgrim Federation's aspiration for each school to achieve the RE Quality Mark and professional development supports this aim.

**Monitoring & Review**

The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the Federation's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

**Links to Other Policies**

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Collective Worship
- Curriculum Policy