

Clipston Endowed VC Primary School

Religious Education Policy



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Presented and adopted by Governors: March 2020

Proposed Review: Spring 2021

Signed

Miss Dewinder Birk - Chair of Governors

Aims of Clipston School

Clipston Endowed VC Primary School aims to provide every child with high quality teaching and learning. It is the school's philosophy to give our pupils a measure of independence, a high level of self-confidence, a deep sense of self-worth, and an understanding and deeper appreciation of our Christian heritage. To achieve this, we aim to:

- a) Enable all children to achieve their full potential, both academically, socially, personally, and morally in order that children expect the best of themselves.
- b) Promote spiritual development and the ability to grow and flourish as human beings.
- c) Support children in building relationships which reflect Christian values.
- d) Deliver a broad, relevant and challenging education which is of a high standard and appropriate to an individual child's needs.
- e) Promote high standards of behaviour based on mutual trust and respect, developing responsibility and fostering self-discipline.
- f) Promote good citizenship, thus enabling individuals to make valuable contributions to wider society.
- g) Ensure equal opportunities for all.
- h) Provide a welcoming and stimulating learning environment in which everyone feels safe, happy and secure.
- i) Develop a sense of pride in belonging to Clipston Endowed VC Primary School.

To achieve these aims staff and governors will work in partnership with parents, carers and the local community for the benefit of all our pupils.

Statutory Requirements

Schools, as set out in the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, are required to teach RE to all pupils, within the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The National Curriculum 2014 states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum.
- All state schools are also required to make provision for a daily act of collective worship and must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage and sex and relationship education to pupils in secondary education.

Withdrawal

Religious Education (RE) is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents do have the right to withdraw their child/ren from RE. Any parent considering this is asked to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss the matter and the alternative arrangements to be made. Clipston School does not support selective withdrawal from RE. We also recognise the right of individual staff to exempt themselves from teaching RE as legal entitlement.

What guides the RE curriculum at Clipston School?

The legal requirements for the curriculum and assessment in Religious Education are arrived at locally for Local Authority (LA) maintained schools and published by the LA as an “Agreed Syllabus for RE”.

Our aims of Religious Education are taken from the Agreed Syllabus for RE in Northamptonshire.

The aims of the syllabus are for pupils:

- 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.

Religions deal with some of the most profound and difficult questions in human life, questions such as:

- What is the purpose of life?
- How should people treat each other?
- How do we explain and cope with death and suffering?

Religions approach these issues in complex ways, in ways of life, culture and action, as well as ritual, tradition, story, symbol and belief. Religious Education must take account of this depth and complexity, helping pupils to an understanding appropriate to their age and aptitude.

To do this RE needs:

- to develop pupils' skills;
- to enable them to ask questions;
- to discover information, to approach new material with empathy;
- to reflect on their learning. Pupils should not only acquire knowledge but also be able to use their knowledge to understand their world, build community, and develop their personal position.

Throughout the RE curriculum pupils should be encouraged to **explore** religions, **engage** with their knowledge, and **reflect** on their learning and their lives.

Religious Literacy

Religious literacy is the knowledge of, and ability to understand, religion, beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views. It plays an important part in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Its importance is increasing as globalisation has created greater links and migration between societies of different faiths and cultures. Someone who is religiously literate is able to talk with fluency and understanding about religion and belief. It is firmly rooted within educational practice. A crucial aspect of religious literacy is through school RE.

The distinctive nature of Clipston School as a Church of England School in the Community

Clipston School is a Voluntary Controlled Endowed primary school located in the small village of Clipston. Since 1667 it has held an important role in the village life.

The school has close links with the local church (All Saints' Church). The incumbent is welcomed into school to lead School Assemblies and to be involved in supporting RE lessons.

The church building features in the life of the school. The children make many visits there, not only to find out more about the building itself but also to lead and take part in school services and celebrations.

The School also has close links with the community generally. Members of the local community come to school very regularly to help the children with various activities e.g. reading and sports clubs, and they in turn are invited to concerts and special events as part of our policy of broadening the depth of relationships between the School and its Community.

As part of our policy of broadening our children's horizons, representatives of other local churches in the area are invited to lead our assemblies and enrich the RE curriculum, as well as representatives of the wider community (e.g. National Children's Home, Children United, Barnados, Royal British Legion).

Preparing our pupils for Life in Modern Britain

At present, pupils at Clipston School are predominantly from a White British background. From time to time, we have children on roll from other ethnic groups and all children are very well integrated. The rural location of the school means that we are a considerable distance away from other faith communities and places of worship. As a result, our children's everyday experience of the increasingly pluralistic nature of British society is limited. To compensate for this, we invite specialists from a range of faith communities to share their understanding and experience of a range of religious and cultural celebrations such as Sukkot and Diwali. We also have long-established links with a culturally diverse school in the city of Leicester; the children enjoy reciprocal visits to Sparkenhoe Primary School. We have rolling programme for RE to ensure that children have opportunities to visit other places of worship, such as a mosque in Northampton, the central mosque in Leicester and a Synagogue in Leicester, and to welcome visitors from other major world faiths to our school.

Our Objectives

At Clipston we consciously strive to achieve a positive, caring ethos as reflected by the distinctive ethos statement of our school:

"Where our Christian Ethos Values all Children and Promotes Success"

Recognising its historic foundation, Clipston Primary School aims to serve its community by providing a rounded, connected and coherent education of the highest quality. We endeavour to preserve and develop our distinct religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. The school promotes its Christian virtues - Kindness, Justice, Love, Forgiveness,

Responsibility and Courage – and all those essential human values, which are common to good, kind and tolerant people of all faiths and none, through the experiences it offers to all its pupils.

The school's aim, through its Christian ethos, is the creation of a safe, happy learning environment, which supports all children on their journey towards becoming:

- Successful engaged learners, who enjoy learning, who are knowledgeable and skilled, and who make progress and achieve;
- Confident, articulate individuals who can lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives in the communities in which they live now and in the future;
- Responsible, happy citizens of the world who have the capacity to make positive contributions to society.

“Do to others as you would have them do unto you” Luke 6:31

We consider RE to be a vehicle through which we support pupils in developing their own identity, beliefs and values, as well as growing in knowledge and understanding of the subject as they explore, engage and reflect on their learning. Religious Education is regarded as fundamental in fulfilling our school's Aims.

RE and the wider school curriculum

A holistic approach to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC), British Values, and Community Cohesion focuses on preparing pupils for life in the 21st century, engaging pupils in a contemporary and relevant context. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and secular world views, and explores their responses to life's challenges.

Frequent reference is made to those who live out their beliefs, insights and values in their daily lives and within their own communities. This gives pupils the knowledge and skills to flourish both within their own community and as members of a diverse and global society.

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for their future, for employment and lifelong learning. It enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Although RE contributes to other subjects, it is not defined by or confined to them. Similarly, although RE and Collective Worship can enrich each other, RE cannot be replaced by or delivered through Collective Worship.

The Organisation of the Curriculum

RE plays an integrated role within the school's curriculum plans. The nature of the Agreed Syllabus means that most aspects are taught discretely. Thus RE is taught with integrity and is not compromised in order to fit in with a topic/theme. The school takes account of the mixed-age classes through careful planning to ensure that the children are encouraged to engage with, explore and reflect upon a wide variety of religions during KS1 and KS2.

RE is taught mainly during specific timetabled sessions each week. For example, the whole school will usually be focusing on a particular religion for a particular year, as part of a rolling programme for the main religions. Distinctively Christian elements are usually explored annually, as we move through the church year.

The Understanding Christianity resource is key to the Christianity aspect of RE. We currently have two teachers who have undertaken the full, accredited Understanding Christianity training. We also use Discovery RE - an enquiry-based approach to the teaching of RE - as a resource to support the delivery of the RE Syllabus.

Planning for RE will reflect the two Attainment Targets:

- 1) Learning about Religion and Belief
- 2) Learning from Religion and Belief

Our Big Picture for RE document (available on our website information page) shows in detail how the RE curriculum is organised at Clipston School.

RE Management and Leadership

The Leader for RE at Clipston is Mrs Emma Mercer. This role requires her to:

- Work with the Governors and the external Diocesan Schools' Consultant to review the RE Policy
- Oversee the organization of the RE syllabus and resources
- Ensure that teachers make judgements about pupil attainment at the end of each year and report this to parents.

Continuity, Liaison, Progression and Coherence

The schemes of work set out in the Agreed Syllabus and the use of Attainment Descriptors lend themselves to continuity and progression. They are developmental and progressive, and by planning as a school and working together, we aim to ensure that the issues of continuity and progression are addressed, so that as the children move through the school, their understanding and appreciation develops as their maturity allows them to reflect and question their own beliefs and values.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The school assesses the pupils' attainment against the Descriptions in the Agreed Syllabus and the National Curriculum statements. The Understanding Christianity assessment statements are used for this aspect of RE. These assessment components combine to provide an overall attainment which is reported to parents at the end of each academic year. At Clipston, assessment results are also reported to the LA and thus the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), when requested.

Training and Development

Clipston School subscribes to the Diocesan Service Level Agreement. The Head Teacher, staff and Governors attend a variety of training events.