

Religious Education (R.E) Policy

All members of our school community are important and each has a valued contribution to make. At Barker's Lane Community School we see RE as part of a broader process of education enabling children to make sense of life, the world around them and their role within it. We encourage pupils to question and develop the skills that will enable them to investigate religion, the world and human experience for themselves. Time is provided to enable pupils to reflect on Bible and moral stories and absorb their meaning. Prayers, stories, poetry and role play are used as a means of helping children to express and develop their personal beliefs.

RE plays an important part in promoting pupils spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development and in preparing them for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. (See Appendix 1)

Links between requirements of the Wrexham LA Agreed Syllabus and the Foundation Phase have been made for Early Phase children (R.E is non-statutory for 3-4 year olds). All other children throughout the school follow the Agreed Syllabus for R.E. We have also taken account of the Foundation Phase guidance in relation to Personal and Social Development, Wellbeing & Cultural Diversity and Knowledge & Understanding of the World 'People, Beliefs & Questions'.

Aims and objectives

By experiencing the familiar world through investigating the indoor and outdoor environment, learning becomes meaningful and effective. Children are inquisitive and naturally ask questions about life and the world around them. At Barker's Lane Community School we ensure experiences are relevant and develop a fascination which relates directly to children's spiritual, moral and cultural development.

Religious education in the twenty-first century encourages pupils to explore a range of philosophical, theological, ethical, and spiritual questions in a reflective, analytical, balanced way that stimulates questioning and debate. It also focuses on understanding humanity's quest for meaning, the positive aspects of multi-faith/multicultural understanding and pupils' own understanding and responses to life and religion.

At Barker's Lane Community School we aim to:

- stimulate pupils curiosity, interest and enjoyment in R.E, developing a sense of awe and wonder about the world;
- encourage a positive, enthusiastic attitude towards R.E;
- acquire knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices in the main area of Christianity, some aspects of Hinduism, Judaism and other principal religions represented in Wales;
- appreciate the religious and moral perspective on questions, issues and concerns and human experience, the world and aspects of religion;
- make informed judgements and develop beliefs, values and patterns of behaviour which will further meaning of purpose to life;
- respond personally and express their responses in a variety of ways to religious and moral questions;
- enable pupils to develop a range of desirable personal qualities such as politeness, perseverance, initiative and independence, also care, concern and responsibility for living things and the natural world;
- enable pupils to be able to work both independently and co-operatively;
- encourage respect and empathy for other peoples' views;
- develop knowledge and understanding of right and wrong;
- promote racial and cultural harmony;
- develop pupil understanding of charities and good causes.

Rights of Withdrawal

Under the Education Acts, parents have rights of withdrawal. Parents of a pupil at any maintained school may personally request that their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education given in the school in accordance with the basic curriculum.

Religious education in the twenty-first century consists of an open, objective, exploratory approach but parents continue to have the legal right to withdraw their children.

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from R.E are requested to write to the headteacher who will discuss the implications of this, including the potential issues which can arise with thematic approaches to learning.

Teaching and learning style

We believe children should acquire and absorb Religious Education through a holistic approach to learning. Our principle aim is to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding through a structured developmental and progressive continuum, taking account of their learning needs and allowing for spontaneous developmental opportunities when they arise. We aim to ensure learning is exciting, challenging and creative, and that learners understand what they need to do to improve and how they can do this.

By engaging in practical integrated activities children can learn more about themselves, other people and the world around them. They can develop an understanding of their rich cultural and religious heritage in Wales and its place in the wider world, which in turn will help them understand more about themselves and develop understanding and respect for the viewpoints of others. This will also help to develop tolerance and attitudes of responsibility.

Through play and structured activities children will have opportunities to develop their ideas, opinions and feelings with imagination, creativity and sensitivity which can help inform their view of the world, their hopes and their dreams.

We recognise all children are different and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the activity to the needs / ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies taking account of all learning styles, extending children's thinking skills and through the organisation of the learning environment. We encourage children to learn collaboratively and take some ownership for their own learning with adults facilitating this, willing to learn alongside.

Early on the learning continuum children are introduced to religious stories and artefacts. They learn about themselves, familiar people, places and objects through their play and daily routines.

They role play and talk about special feelings, buildings, festivals and celebrations.

As their skills, knowledge and understanding progress along the learning continuum children begin to respond to open questions, offer ideas and make connections. They handle and explore artefacts from different religions through play and on visits. They are introduced to places of worship and have opportunities to visit the local church.

As children progress at Key Stage 2, R.E fosters learners' interest and wonder in the world and human experience. This stimulates them into raising and investigating deep questions that relate to their personal experiences, religion and life in general, thus building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the Foundation Phase. Through practical stimulating activities and exploration of religion in their locality in Wales, in Britain and the wider world learners will develop skills and gather information that will help them think creatively about fundamental religious and moral questions and share ideas through discussion. Knowledge of religion(s) and a recognition of the importance that religion plays in people's lives will help to develop tolerance and respect, and should foster responsible attitudes in local and global society. Through active participation learners will explore the spiritual and moral dimensions in order to inform their own search for meaning and purpose. Learners will express their own feelings and opinions, identify how their actions may

affect others, recognise that other people's viewpoints differ from their own and reflect on and revise their own perspectives on life as appropriate.

Planning for Religious Education

R.E is taught to all pupils at Barker's Lane Community School, in accordance with the Wrexham LA Agreed Syllabus.

It is extended with Foundation Phase (FP) philosophies, which comprises of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity and Knowledge & Understanding 'People, Beliefs & Questions' themes based around: Themselves; Other People; Living things.

R.E links with other subjects of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The Programme of Study for R.E at Key Stage 2 comprises of:

<i>Skills</i> - Engaging with fundamental questions	<i>Range</i> – The World
Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)	Human Experience
Expressing personal responses	Search for Meaning

R.E is planned to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding through the inter-relationship of the three core Skills focussing on the various contexts the Range provides.

Planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps out the learning challenges to be covered over the Foundation Phase and in Key Stage 2. The Curriculum Leader liaises with colleagues to establish these.

Our medium-term plans give further details of learning challenges for each term. These plans focus on developing children's skills, determine the learning challenges and ensure an appropriate balance across the term. The Curriculum Leader keeps a copy of these plans and review them with colleagues.

Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis by individual/teams of teachers. Each teacher keeps these individual plans, and the teachers and the Curriculum Leader discuss them on an informal basis. The headteacher monitors these plans each half-term.

R.E is planned to build upon children's prior learning. Whilst there are opportunities for children of all ability levels to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, there is planned progression built into the scheme of work, so that children are increasing challenged as they progress.

Planning takes account of key skill development, including the development of children's thinking skills through a variety of problem solving and investigational experiences.

The Literacy & Numeracy Framework (LNF)

The Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) sets expectations for learners to develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Literacy skills in oracy, reading and writing; and numeracy skills in numerical reasoning, number, measures and data are planned for across all areas of the curriculum.

Developing / applying these skills through creative work in Foundation Phase, for example:

Literacy

- Discussion about religious and moral issues.
- Recording and communicating ideas, beliefs and practices in various ways e.g. writing prayers.

Numeracy

- Sequencing days of week – creation

- Counting in two's – Noah's Ark

In Key Stage 2, for example this might be:

Literacy

Communication Skills

- Asking questions, communicating ideas and expressing their own feelings and opinions using different forms as appropriate to the audience and purpose of the activity.
- Listening carefully to others, noting the strengths and weaknesses of viewpoints or lines of reasoning.
- Use different reading/writing strategies depending on the investigation or activity they are undertaking and show increasing understanding of religious/symbolic language with a growing awareness of the range of possible interpretation.

Numeracy

- Using information such as ordering events in time, by measuring time through the calendars of various religions
- Calculating percentages of tithing, and by considering the significance of number within religions.
- Interpreting results/data and presenting findings from questionnaires, graphs and other forms of data in order to draw conclusions and ask further questions about issues relating to religion and the world.

Digital Competency

The Digital Competency Framework (DCF) develops skills and confidence that enable learners to become adaptable to changes in technology over time. The DCF is planned across the curriculum to develop skills in **citizenship, interacting & collaborating, producing and data & computational thinking.**

In R.E, learners use their digital skills to:

- communicate and share information (using, for example, e-mails and PowerPoint);
- present information in a variety of formats using word processing and graphics;
- find and develop information on the internet and other sources;
- support oral presentations and the creation of ideas and strategies to improve the impact of their work.

R.E across all areas of learning in the Foundation Phase

Effective provision for R.E is carefully planned across all areas of learning to ensure that children have opportunities to develop, apply and extend their skills, knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes.

Personal and Social Development and Well Being

- Discussing the values and moral beliefs which underpin behaviour.
- Promoting values and attitudes for citizenship e.g. respect, responsibility, tolerance

ESDGC / Cultural Diversity

- Exploring religious belief and spirituality in Wales and the wider world
- Demonstrating responsibility for the world e.g. recycling / global concern
- The needs of God's people - charity

Bilingual Skills

- Using bilingual vocabulary to express feelings.

Knowledge & Understanding of the World

- Talking about special people from the past who have been influential e.g. St David

Physical Development

- Using fine manipulative skills to create cards to celebrate festivals with religious significance e.g. Christmas, Easter

Creative Development

- Creating artifacts which have significance for Christians and other religions e.g. Diva lamp

R.E and Skills across the Curriculum in Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, learners should be given opportunities to build on their thinking skills that they have started to acquire and develop during the Foundation Phase, in line with the *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*. Learners should continue to acquire, develop, practise, apply and refine these skills through group and individual activities in a variety of contexts across the curriculum. Progress can be seen in terms of the refinement of these skills and by their application to tasks that move from: concrete to abstract; simple to complex; personal to the 'big picture'; familiar to unfamiliar; and supported to independent and interdependent.

Thinking Skills

Learners develop their thinking across the curriculum through the processes of planning, developing and reflecting.

In R.E, learners develop thinking skills through a range of activities. Learners ask fundamental questions which are raised by human experience, the world and aspects of religion. They explore and make links between the religious beliefs, teachings and practices that they study. They plan investigations by gathering and utilising a range of religious and non-religious sources and use these to evaluate and justify their personal responses. They use a range of critical and creative problem solving techniques in order to develop ideas and explore and challenge interpretations, preconceptions and possibilities.

In addition to this at Barker's Lane Community School we take account of statutory requirements and cross curricular themes, such as the Curriculum Cymreig and personal and social education, which includes equal opportunities, food and fitness and sustainable development.

At Key Stage 2, learners at Barker's Lane Community School are given opportunities to build on the experiences gained during the Foundation Phase, and to promote their knowledge and understanding of Wales, and their personal and social development and well-being.

Curriculum Cymreig

R.E contributes to the Curriculum Cymreig by allowing learners to appreciate the significance, value and impact of the rich Christian heritage and dynamic multi-faith composition of Wales past and present. By using a range of stimulating resources from the locality learners are challenged to ask fundamental questions about meaning and the purpose of life, and the significance and impact of religion and religious thinking on twenty-first century society. Such insight supports social cohesion, cultural/religious awareness and cooperation within society and individual communities.

Personal & Social Education

R.E contributes to personal and social education through exploration of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions. Learners develop understanding of and respect for various world religions and explore how religion impacts on decisions made, and lifestyles adopted by individuals and societies within various cultures around the world. Learners focus on the desire of many religions to foster values and aspirations such as equality, justice, responsibility, peace and morality through

such things as social action, sustainability and global citizenship. Learners will also be encouraged to question the values and aspirations of their own lives, the lives of others and of society.

Additional Learning Needs

R.E is developed with all children, whatever their ability. It forms part of a broad and balanced education for all children.

Learning opportunities are matched to the needs of all children to include challenge and support for our most and least able children. When necessary these take account of any relevant targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Equality

Equality is always observed with positive attitudes being developed. We will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or on the grounds of Welsh language.

All pupils, their parents and guardians, volunteers, staff and school governors are valued and will be treated with dignity and respect. The school will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We will work across our school community to ensure our commitment to equality and fairness is shared and take steps to ensure that our school is accessible, welcoming and inclusive.

Curriculum Cymreig

Opportunities are provided to develop and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding of the cultural, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales. The local and school environment is utilised to support this. E.g. St David; William Morgan and the first Welsh Bible
Throughout their time at Barker's Lane Community School the children visit places of worship within the local and wider community.

Health and Safety

Children are encouraged to discuss safety implications concerning themselves and their fellow pupils when working. We aim to ensure pupils work in an environment which is safe and hazard free at all times.

Parental Involvement

Parents and members of the community are encouraged throughout the school to support their children's learning. They are invited to services / concerts at various times throughout the year.

Liaison / Transition

Whole school planning allows for smooth transition between phases. Liaison between Curriculum Leader and local high schools allows for smooth transition, progression and continuity from FP to KS2 to KS3.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers make assessments of children's R.E through observation. These short-term assessments are closely matched to learning challenges and are recorded as part of on-going formative assessment records.

On a termly basis we use this information to measure progress / inform next step for learning by making judgements as we observe children participating in activities and by looking at their written work. We make a judgement against level descriptors. These assessments are recorded.

These records also enable the teacher to make an annual assessment of progress for each child, as part of the child's annual report to parents.

Resources

There are a wide range of resources, including ICT resources to support R.E across the school. These are housed in classrooms and central resource areas. The library area houses a range of books to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring the standards of learning and the quality of teaching in R.E is the responsibility of the R.E Curriculum Leader. The work of the Curriculum Leader also involves supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments, and providing a strategic lead and direction for this learning area within the school. The Curriculum Leader liaises with staff, the headteacher and indicate areas for improvement. This is recorded on our School Improvement Plan and shared with staff and governors termly.

This policy was compiled by Mrs N Gargan in June 2012 in consultation with all staff and the governing body. It was reviewed in April 2015 and again in March 2018, where amendments taking account of current guidance were made.

The next review will be following any statutory changes to the curriculum or Summer 2021 at the latest.

Appendix 1

(from WAG DCELLS 'National Exemplar Framework for R.E for 3 to 19 year olds in Wales – Jan 2008)

The statutory requirements outlined below apply to locally agreed syllabuses:

Religious education, along with other subjects on the curriculum, should promote: 'the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.' (Education Reform Act 1998, Part 1 [2][a][b])

Spiritual, moral and cultural development, in particular, are essential aspects of religious education and should be clearly identifiable within locally agreed syllabuses.

In this National Exemplar Framework for Religious Education:

the spiritual focuses on:

- the quest for meaning, which goes beyond the physical and material aspects of life, and explores responses to God/Ultimate Reality and truth (*the world*)
- the essence of what it means to be human, which explores shared values, identity, personal worth, creativity, imagination, love, faithfulness and goodness (*human experience*)
- the growth of an 'inner life', which focuses on the development of intellectual curiosity, open-mindedness, emotion, reflection, intuition and beliefs, including a relationship with God (*search for meaning*)

the moral focuses on:

- the exploration of shared values and attitudes, which highlights religious/cultural origins and contemporary social/political activities that influence and challenge our understanding (*the world*)
- the ability of human beings to make moral choices for good or evil, which focuses on understanding moral codes, relationships, responsibility, respect for diversity, temptation, the power of self-sacrifice and love (*human experience*)
- a personal response to moral issues, which focuses on the development of personal integrity, conscience, challenging personal/social norms and 'learning what is worthy of respect and what is not' (Hans Kung) (*search for meaning*)

the cultural focuses on:

- the ways in which culture/religion has influenced local and world history and human experience in both positive and negative ways, investigating the difference between official and personal standpoints (*the world*)
- the need for human beings to have a sense of cultural identity, belonging and purpose, which in Wales has been evident by the way in which religion and culture have been interwoven (*human experience*)
- pupils' personal response to multicultural/multi-faith Wales, Europe and the world (*search for meaning*)

the mental focuses on:

- the intellectual challenges of carrying out research, evaluating evidence, critical thinking, justifying opinions and theories, developing and interpreting alternative explanations (*the world*)

- the ability to discern, to challenge bias and to make value judgements and the skill of synthesising and analysing complex and often conflicting information (*human experience*)
- clarity of thought, reflection, intuitive thinking, symbolic understanding and interpretative skills (*search for meaning*)

the physical focuses on:

- physical activity that responds practically to the needs of others and demonstrates responsible (social) action and positive lifestyle (*the world*)
- physical activities that are creative, responsive and help people relate to and deal with the challenges of life, for example ritual, religious dance and prayer (*human experience*)
- physical activities that promote well-being and equilibrium, help clarify thought processes, and inspire, for example, meditation, stilling and yoga (*search for meaning*).