

POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



Policy for RE & Collective Worship -Document Status			
Date of Policy Creation	October 2017	Executive Headteacher	Denise Garner
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'Love, Laugh, Learn'

Respect, Resourcefulness, Reciprocity (teamwork), Resilience, Reflectiveness

The Governing Board and the school are committed to the teaching of Religious Education as an important subject in its own right and because of the contribution it makes to other aspects of the school's curriculum and ethos. Our children are growing up in a multi-faith, multi cultural world where religious and cultural issues are at the forefront

Religious Education Aims

Our aims are the same as those set out in the Telford and Wrekin Agreed Syllabus which Governors have adopted for the school.

The principal aim of Religious Education is to help young people to:

- achieve a knowledge and understanding of religious experience, insights, beliefs and practices (Learning about religion)
- to deepen or realise their own beliefs and respect the freedom of other people to hold beliefs different from their own so preparing them for adult life and citizens in a plural society (Learning from religion)

Through our teaching of Religious Education we aim to help our children to:

- develop an awareness of
 - that many people believe human life depends upon an ultimate being or sustaining creative power often referred to as God.
 - a spiritual dimension to life
- develop an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the broad religious, spiritual and ethnic heritage of their immediate and global communities
- reflect upon the experiences and the mysteries of life and to recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief
- learn about religions and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgments on religious and moral issues

Personal Beliefs and the Teaching of Religious Education

At Wrockwardine Wood Infant School and Nursery we recognise the right of all members of staff to withdraw from the teaching of R.E. We have agreed that the emphasis in our teaching will be an educational rather than religious and that this may ensure such an option is rarely used. We have agreed that, irrespective of strongly held personal beliefs, our teaching should not be to indoctrinate but to lead children to greater knowledge and understanding of what others believe. We will answer questions about our personal beliefs with honesty and integrity and respect those of our children, in this way, encouraging children to respect the beliefs of each other and other adults in school.

Teaching Religious Education

The way the RE curriculum is organised ensures that opportunities are provided for children to become familiar with all religions and beliefs. Each year group has detailed units of work to be covered in each term (see APPENDIX 3)

The Agreed Syllabus acknowledges the cross-curricular nature of RE. This matches our own philosophy and practice. We have agreed that there should be no difference in the way we teach R.E. and the approach used in any other curriculum area. Therefore, R.E. should:

- start with the child bearing in mind his/her stage of development
- be delivered through a range of creative, practical, learning experiences which will inspire and motivate children
- provide opportunities for reflection and discussion
- allow pupils to work individually or in groups
- provide opportunities to use and build on a range of learning skills
- make use of a range of resources including artefacts
- be sensitive to the beliefs and opinions of all children
- recognise and use materials from different cultural and national traditions
- to be based on previously gained knowledge and experience, so ensuring progression.

Assessment and Reporting

We should remember that it is the concepts, skills, attitudes and knowledge that we are assessing and reporting and not the child's degree of commitment to religious belief.

Careful questioning will provide the key to the assessment of R.E. Evidence may be written, pictorial or verbal responses to questioning or discussion. When assessing and reporting R.E. we need to consider:

- **What do the children know?**
- **What do the children understand?**
- **What do the children feel?**

When we respond to children's work we will encourage children to discuss their own experiences, feelings and beliefs, whilst respecting the freedom of others to have different feelings and beliefs.

The Place of Christianity and the R.E. Programme

Our school recognises the emphasis given in the Agreed Syllabus to Christianity and this is reflected in our overall planning. Through our agreed R.E. programme our children will be introduced to the main stories and beliefs of Christianity as well as the major festivals. Although our school accepts the importance given to Christianity it does not see R.E. as a vehicle to either "convert" pupils or direct them to follow a particular Christian practice. We

believe a study of other religious beliefs and practices is important if we are to develop a child's religious understanding.

In our school families follow Christianity, Sikhism, Islam, and Buddhism.

Spirituality

In a world that gives increasing importance to material possessions and immediate goals, it is important that children are made aware of a dimension of the human personality that transcends such value systems. It is characterised by a searching for meaning and purpose and is closely associated with the pursuit of truth and beauty.

We believe that spirituality within our school can be recognised in our ethos, the values and attitudes we foster and through activities like the following.

Children are given opportunities to:

- talk about things that matter to them
- talk about the puzzling questions in life
- have a quiet time to reflect on a story or experience
- respond to the wonder and beauty of the natural world for example, the wind, autumn leaves, snow and ice melting, seeds growing, shadows and sunshine
- express themselves creatively in art, drama, and dance
- discuss feelings and emotions

Visits and Visitors

As staff we believe children should not regard religion as a series of past events but as a living phenomenon. For this reason we recognise the value that visits and visitors can make in helping children find out, at first hand, the effect that a belief can have on a person's life. We already have excellent links with our local church, Holy Trinity and would wish to extend these out into the community.

Within each school year all our children have the opportunity to visit a place of worship. Sometimes this is part of a school service, harvest festival for example, at others part of a theme being followed. In all cases children must behave in an appropriate and respectful manner. We have agreed that teachers must find out before the visit if any special clothing is required, or any demonstrable sign of respect needs to be made. Although parents should always be informed of any such requirements we will emphasise that such actions indicate respect and not worship. As with all other visits teachers undertake a preliminary visit to assess any risks and plan carefully in order to maximise the learning opportunities.

Religious Education and the Act of Worship

All staff recognise the need and value of the daily Act of Collective Worship. It is a time when we focus on the values and beliefs we hold to be important in our school. Whilst we accept that R.E. is not synonymous with the Act of Worship there are times when we explore some of the key questions from the agreed syllabus through our assemblies.

We believe assemblies provide an opportunity for children to encounter or experience the elements of worship without presuming they are practising believers. We agree that respect is central to the way we view the Act of Worship and that no adult or child should feel threatened or awkward. We should all be able to take part without fear of compromise or embarrassment.

Although Christianity will provide the major inspiration for reading, beliefs and practices we do draw on material from other secular sources and religious traditions.

In order to ensure the Law is fulfilled regarding Christianity all assemblies will be recorded in the School Assembly Book which is kept in the staff room.

THE ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Organisation

At Wrockwardine Wood Infant School and Nursery we have agreed that our assemblies will be organised in the following way.

Monday 10.30 - 10.45am

Whole school assembly is taken by the head teacher or, in her absence, the deputy head or member of the management team. Using the agreed school guidance and pro forma these assemblies are planned by the head teacher and link with the assembly theme for the term. A lead assembly is used to introduce every new theme including *Jigsaw*.

Tuesday 10.30 - 10.45am

Whole School Assembly is taken by teachers in rotation. These assemblies are planned by individual teachers following the agreed school guidance and pro forma and are linked to the theme for the half term. After each assembly teachers complete the evaluation section of the pro forma and place the completed sheet in the School Assembly Book.

Wednesday 10.30 - 10.45am

Whole School take part in Singing Practice. Whilst the emphasis is linked to the Music Curriculum and the focus is the enjoyment of singing and learning new songs, there is always a link with forthcoming festivals to be celebrated, i.e. Christmas, Harvest, Easter. There is also a link with assembly themes for each half term and themes ongoing in classrooms. Song practice is taken by the music subject leaders or music specialist teacher with additional staff supervision. Each song practice ends with a corporate act of worship incorporating a time for reflection and prayer. Each half term music subject leaders liaise with staff and plan a six week programme. This is available for staff in the School Assembly book.

Thursday 10.30 - 10.45am

Year Group Assemblies/Individual class assemblies. These assemblies are planned by teams of teachers from each year group and recorded on the teachers planning sheet. The focus is linked to work ongoing in the classroom.

Friday 10.30 - 10.45am

A whole school '*Golden*' assembly is held to celebrate successes. Each assembly is designed to recognise the achievements of children and adults working within our school. This may be in a curriculum area or in an issue related to PSHE/JIGSAW. It may be an achievement outside of school. To ensure equality of opportunity teachers keep a record of children and adults who have contributed. In this way we ensure that the efforts of all are recognised and celebrated. All teachers join this assembly.

The head teacher ensures that all parents are informed of their right to withdraw their child from assembly. This is discussed at the meeting of all parents when children attend the first of their preliminary visits before starting

school. Using the ethnically based statistics as a guide, teachers then ensure at the start of each academic year, that parents are aware of the content of Religious Education. Parents are then able to make a well informed decision.

At each assembly the teacher who has planned the assembly will decide the level of supervision needed. If there is considerable pupil participation then additional staff support may be helpful. Teaching and ancillary staff are available for all assemblies. Usually partner year group teachers support one another. Special support assistants working with reception aged children are always available.

The brief outline of themes is circulated to all staff and a copy placed in the School Assembly Book.

We agree that effective assemblies contain three key characteristics.

FOCUS

All good acts of worship 'focus' the children's attention on some aspect of ultimate reality, the spiritual dimension to life.

MOOD

This focus is achieved through the creation of a 'mood' or atmosphere.

MEANS

Both the 'focus' and the 'mood' are approached through a number of 'means' so that the children become involved. All teachers agree that participation by children in both the planning and the delivery influences the quality of the experience.

We have agreed a pro forma (see APPENDIX 1 & 2) to aid planning.

At Wrockwardine Wood Infant School we believe our assemblies should provide a balanced approach to collective worship. The value of assemblies can be seen in the way they:

- support the ethos of our school
- foster a sense of group identity
- provide a time to consider the common values we hold to be important for our school
- provide opportunities to celebrate, e.g. achievements, special occasions
- provide opportunities for learning social skills - how to behave in a large gathering
- provide opportunities to perform and to learn how to respond to a performance
- provide opportunities to welcome people into sharing in the life of our school
- provide opportunities to pause, reflect, question and enquire
- provide opportunities to develop sensitivity to the sincerely held beliefs of others
- provide opportunities for pupils to consider their own beliefs in relation to those of others

- provide opportunities to learn about the beliefs of others in our community and the wider world
- provide opportunities to develop the human spirit
- provide opportunities for a high quality, interesting, learning experience for all members of our school community
- have a broadly Christian bias
- helps to make visible the leadership within the school

At the start of each school year the RE subject leader presents suggested themes to teachers for consideration. We believe using a theme helps to provide coherence and continuity. It provides a framework in which to work and plan and it helps children to understand and remember. We agree that good themes are interesting to both staff and children and are sufficiently open ended to allow all to take part.

We agree that ideally our assemblies should have variety in content, method, the organisation and use of accommodation, as well as leader. Be non-denominational as well as religious and above all be appropriate for the age, aptitude and background of all children.

Within our approach we believe there is sufficient flexibility for all staff to deliver assemblies of the quality outlined in this policy.

APPENDIX 1

Act of Collective Worship

FOCUS All good acts of worship 'focus' the children's attention on some aspect of ultimate reality, the spiritual dimension to life.	MOOD This focus is achieved through the creation of a 'mood' or atmosphere.	MEANS Both the 'focus' and the 'mood' are approached through a number of 'means' so that the children become involved. All teachers agree that participation by children in both the planning and the delivery influences the quality of the experience.
Self Awareness	A sense of Reverence	Drama
Suffering	Mystery	Silence
Human Weakness	Peace	Choral Speaking
The Natural World	Stillness	Singing
Love	Joy	Music
Relationships	Hope	Prayer
Celebration	Respect	Mime
Birth and Death	Awe	Reading
Courage	Reassurance	Spoken Word
Commitment	Simplicity	Illustration
The Wider World	Quiet	Ritual
Reconciliation	Community	Communal Action
Beauty	Praise	Movement
Mystery	Thanks	Dance
Truth	Delight	Collaboration
Personal Qualities	Compassion	Interaction
Journeys	Belonging	Giving
Growing Up	Curiosity	Story
Forgiveness	Anticipation	Artefact
Thanksgiving	Co-operation	Poetry

APPENDIX 2

PROFORMA FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

DATE	TITLE	LEADER
SEAL THEME	RESOURCES	

FOCUS	MOOD	MEANS

CONTENT

EVALUATION

APPENDIX 3

Telford and Wrekin SACRE RE Scheme of Work – 4 units per year group

Year Group	Unit A	Unit B	Unit C	Unit D
Y R	1. RE through play: a flexible ideas unit (many religions)	2. Who celebrates what and how? (Wedding, birthday, welcoming a new baby)	3. Festivals: how are they celebrated? (Christmas, Eid, Passover, Divali)	4. Myself: Who am I?
Y1	5. Creation + Thanksgiving: How do we say 'thank you' for a beautiful world? (Jews and Christians)	6. Special stories: what can we learn? (Christians and Muslims)	7. I wonder... Questions that Puzzle Us	8. Finding out about Christian Churches
Y2	9. Respect for everyone: what does that mean?	10. Symbols of belonging: what can we learn? (Hindu, Muslim, Christian)	11. Holy words: Why do religious people love their scriptures?	12. Beginning to learn from Islam: Muslims and Mosques in Telford and Wrekin
Y3	13. Divali: How and why is the festival celebrated and what does it mean?	14. Living in Harmony: Stories to show we care	15. Leaders and followers in Family Life (Jewish and Christian)	16. Is life like a journey? (Christian, Muslim, Hindu)
Y4	17. What can we learn from visiting sacred places? (Any two faiths)	18. Does a beautiful world mean there is a wonderful God? (Christian, non-religious)	19. Why do some people think Jesus is inspiring?	20. Keeping the 5 Pillars of Islam today

Y5	21. Temptation: What can we learn from Muslims and Christians?	22. Prayer: asking questions, and seeking answers.	23. Values: What can we learn from Christians and Humanists?	24. Christian Aid and Islamic Relief: Can they change the world?
Y6	25. Religion + the individual: Exploring commitment.	26. Words of Wisdom from Sikhs, Muslims and Christians	27. Expressing spiritual ideas and beliefs about God through the arts (Christian)	28. What will make our community more respectful? (Many religions + beliefs)