



*Learning and growing together within the love of God*

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

**November 2016**

**Introduction**

Religious education at Wenlock asks about meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end. It gives space for individual reflection; it explores Christianity, other principal religions and world views, and how these views affect the fabric of personal and social life; it identifies the reality of injustice and suffering and it opens up visions of how life for all the world's citizens may be transformed by truth, beauty and goodness.

Religious Education (R.E.) occupies a special place within this school's curriculum. It can be said that this is the subject which provides the link throughout daily life in the school community. As a church school we seek to promote Christian values in a caring environment. The children will experience this throughout their school day, not solely through R.E. lessons. However, we also recognize the importance of belonging to a multifaith community and are respectful of other religious beliefs and practices. We hope that such guidance and provision of experiences will contribute towards the development of the "whole" child.

The school's R.E. programme is related to the aims and ethos of the school, the admissions policy, the collective worship policy and framework, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, PSHE and other policies and guidelines.

**Legal Requirements**

The Education Reform Act 1988 requires that the curriculum for every maintained school shall comprise a basic curriculum, which includes Religious Education for all registered pupils at school. The Act also states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum and that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.' Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education only after consultation with the Head Teacher and then with the Head Teacher's agreement.

As a voluntary Aided School the Religious Education curriculum is required by law to be determined by the Governors in accordance with the Trust Deed. This states that religious instruction shall be given in accordance with the doctrines, rites and practices of the Church of England. However, teachers should never seek to indoctrinate or

evangelize. At Wenlock we follow the Agreed Syllabus for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton (2012) with additional advice from St Alban's Diocese and local clergy. In Voluntary Aided Schools the governors and Head Teacher have the responsibility for the provision of both Religious Education and Collective Worship.

In accordance with the National Statement of Entitlement, Religious Education is at least 5% of timetabled curriculum time. All year groups spend one term focusing on one of the main world religions and two terms focusing on Christianity (Y3 Judaism; Y4 Sikhism; Y5 Islam and Y6 Hinduism). Wenlock also enhances the children's Religious Education by the provision of focused RE days, visits to places of worship and by inviting guests to speak and engage with the children.

Going for Growth (endorsed by the General Synod 2010) provides the expectations of Religious Education within Church of England Schools. Wenlock's Religious Education policy takes account of all of the above legal requirements and Going for Growth expectation as noted below.

### **Rationale and Aims for teaching RE:**

As noted Wenlock teaches Religious Education in accordance to the Agreed Syllabus for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton (2012) with additional advice from St Alban's Diocese and local clergy. It is our aim that Religious Education will:

- encourage children to explore their own beliefs; that of others and to consider how the different religions understand and respond to the major issues facing society today. Such exploration will allow the children to develop their self-esteem, an understanding of their religion and culture in relation to British Values and will aid the development of resilience.
- allow children the opportunity to ask and respond to challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life; justice and fairness; poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth/resources; the existence and purpose of God, Allah and other deities from the main religions; or any other questions the children seek to address.
- allow children to explore how Christianity has shaped British culture, British heritage and the influence Christianity has on people's lives today by considering religions in a cultural and historical context. Religious Education also allows children to consider their rights and responsibilities in relation to Christian values, Human values and British values.
- give children opportunities to develop their own spirituality (see SMSCD policy).
- offer children the opportunity to experience Christian life and worship (see Collective Worship policy); and how Christianity embraces all values (Christian, Human and British values).

At Wenlock Cof E Junior School we give regular thought to how values can be used to support the child as a reflective learner and promote equality through quality teaching and learning. The school recognises and values all individuals no matter what their ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background.

### **How will the children achieve the above?**

Through a system of planning, teaching and evaluation the children at Wenlock are exposed to a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum that enables the children to develop the following skills:

- Knowledge about other faiths (AT1).
  - Skills of accumulating facts and understanding these facts.
- Learning from other faiths (AT2).
  - Skills of investigation
  - Skills of analysis
  - Skills of synthesis
  - Skills of empathy

### **Development of attitudes:**

While AT1 and AT2 skills are being developed throughout the children's time at Wenlock; Religious Education also offers opportunities for children to develop and consider their attitudes of:

- curiosity, appreciation and wonder of the world and universe we inhabit. Children will also be expected to think in theological terms when exploring the ultimate questions.
- respect and tolerance for all, and the positive impact that this attitude could have on global issues of: racism, persecution and intolerance of other faiths.
- self-awareness as each child progresses in their spiritual journey and how their attitudes change as they grow in their personal understanding of Religious Education.
- open-mindedness – which allows for critical reflection thus developing the children's analytical and synthesis skills; and an understanding that religion is a means to respond to the national and global issues that society faces today.

As a Church school, Wenlock 'has a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and world views. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will be able to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice.'

*[A statement of Entitlement]*

### **Teaching and Learning:**

The above skills are learnt through a variety of teaching methods (research, debate, P4C); all of which are conducted in a safe learning environment to encourage debate and allow children to change or amend their understanding of a topic.

In addition the curriculum is enhanced by:

- termly whole school visits St. Mary's Parish Church to participate in the following services; Christmas Carol service, Easter service and the Leavers' service.
- termly visits to St. Annes as our local parish church,
- visits to other religious buildings and churches as appropriate to each year group.
- visiting speakers from charities, local churches, different religious organizations and people from the local community.

- termly drama productions (Nativity Y3; Easter Y4 and Ascension Y5).
- focused RE days.

Charges **may** be made for visits in accordance with the school's charging policy.

### **Resources**

A range of R.E. resource materials is provided to support the teaching of Religious Education. These are continually being added to and include books, posters, artifacts and videos. All these are stored centrally or in relevant year groups.

### **Organization & Management**

The R.E. Coordinator is responsible for leading and managing the subject within the school. This includes suggesting suitable books, posters, DVDs etc. for other members of staff, recommending teaching strategies, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning throughout the subject and keeping up to date with developments in the subject.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting of Religious Education:**

All teachers evaluate and monitor the progress of the pupils continually throughout the year in accordance with the school assessment policy.

All teachers assess children termly against both AT1 and AT2; children are expected to make progress in line with the standards set out in the Agreed Syllabus for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton (2012). The results of these regular assessments are reported to the Governing Body.

A written report detailing pupils' progress in R.E. is given to parents at the end of the year. This constitutes part of the children's annual school report.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation:**

The coordinator monitors the quality of the teaching and learning of Religious Education in the school in a variety of ways, including: looking at year groups planning, checking children's work, talking to children, observing lessons.

### **Health & Safety**

Teachers must be aware of the school's health and safety policy when taking pupils on educational visits in R.E. They should also consult the Educational Visits Coordinator.

Reviewed: November 2016

Review date: November 2017