

*Lanchester E.P. (Cont.) Primary School*

*A Caring Community*  
*where all can flourish*



*Religious Education*  
*Policy*

## **Lanchester Endowed Parochial Controlled Primary School R.E. Policy**

**Religious Education in a Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.**

### **Mission Statement**

We strive to strengthen our relationships with others as part of God's family. We are a place of distinctive excellence where all are valued as individuals. We achieve this by involving our children in a lively and relevant curriculum.

### **Philosophy**

Religious Education makes a vital contribution to the education of our children, forming part of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It helps them both to learn about, and to learn from, religion and to ask ultimate questions which concern all of humanity. RE promotes in the children the development of positive attitudes towards themselves and other people's attitudes such as fairness, respect, self-understanding and enquiry. It helps too in the development of skills in investigation, interpretation, evaluation, analysis and synthesis.

### **Rationale**

The Education Reform Act (1988) provides a legal framework for the provision of RE and states that it must be taught to all pupils aged 5-18. At Nursery level many practitioners opt into R.E. teaching, as it is an ideal vehicle for covering many of the Early Learning Goals and also facilitates joint planning in the Foundation Stage. The Act further states that R.E. must be taught in accordance with the agreed syllabus in LA Controlled school and must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking into account the teachings and practices of other principle world religions represented here. Legally the agreed syllabus must be non-denominational and must not be used deliberately to convert pupils or to force a particular belief or non-belief upon them. We provide RE in accordance with the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

We acknowledge that although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, they are managed separately with each area having its own policy and guidelines.

## Aims

The main aims and purposes of R.E. in County Durham are to introduce pupils to important concepts in religion, to develop in them the skills to evaluate what they learn about and from religion and to encourage them to foster positive attitudes that are encountered in the exploration of religion.

Our aims are:

- To provide an awareness and experience in the Christian faith, cultivating spirituality, mutual respect and responsibility.
- To develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- To encourage our children to explore and experience the Christian faith, develop a true sense of awe and wonder and celebrate the significant Christian festivals.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- Develop an awareness the fundamental questions of life raised by human experience and of how religious teaching can relate to them.
- Respond to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their own understanding and experience.
- Reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold beliefs different from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions.
- To promote the highest academic standards in all aspects of the curriculum by ensuring that all of our children learn and make progress.
- To ensure that everyone within our school feels safe and valued and is encouraged to develop lively enquiring minds, to question and reason.
- To encourage independence and skills for life-long learning.
- To teach respect for others and their beliefs through RE, Collective Worship and the hidden curriculum.

- To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- To nurture links between our school, the home, the parish and society.

The teaching of R.E. underpins the aims of our school, in particular:

- At Lanchester EP School we have a positive, caring ethos founded on Christian beliefs where all children are valued, respected and encouraged to maximise their potential.
- Every child matters and every success is celebrated.
- Our aim is that children will leave us as good citizens. Feeling fulfilled, challenged and inspired with a solid Christian foundation.

Religious Education in a Church School lies at the very heart of our curriculum with at least 5% of curriculum time devoted to R.E. Christianity plays a central role in R.E., taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time available and appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is included.

### **Withdrawal**

Under the terms of the Education Reform Act (1988), parents have a right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Religious Education. The school must comply with the parents' request and no reason need to be given to support it. It is the responsibility of the school to make adequate alternative provision for the children withdrawn from RE. However, the Head Teacher may wish to establish a working relationship with the parents to discuss issues and practical implications of their decision for withdrawal.

**It is essential that the Religious Education curriculum maintains a balanced approach of Learning about Religion and Learning from Religion.**

This can be expressed distinctively as:

### **Learning about Religion**

We learn about:

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

### **Learning from Religion**

We learn from:

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

**Religious Education in Lanchester E.P. (Controlled) Primary School should help pupils to:**

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world

**It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of the other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths.**

**Therefore R.E. in Lanchester E.P. (Controlled) Primary School should also help pupils to:**

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

**The distinctive content of the Religious Education Curriculum in Lanchester E.P. (Controlled) Primary School includes:**

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year
- study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church and a Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life
- liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur
- skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions.
- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts
- the facility to listen to Christian 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence

**Religious Education in Church Schools should enable:**

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society

## **R.E. makes a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural development.**

Spiritual development within RE in Lanchester E.P. (Controlled) Primary School aims to enrich and encourage the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

### The Curriculum

*Long Term Plan.* This is written at school level

At Foundation Stage there is a two-year rolling programme of study which links to the Early Learning Goals. Planning materials are provided by the Durham Agreed Syllabus 2012.

At KS1 a two-year cycle includes Christianity and Buddhism as core religions with Judaism as a supplementary study.

Upper and Lower KS2 have two year programmes which include Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism as core religions with additional reference to Judaism and Islam. There are opportunities to compare aspects of difference faiths.

Throughout the school, Christianity is also taught in the three weeks leading up to Easter and Christmas.

*Medium Term Plans* These are written by class teachers and take into account:

- Knowledge and understanding of religion
- Critical thinking
- Personal reflection
- Raising key questions
- Differentiating activities
- Assessment and reporting



### Teaching and Learning Style

The content and nature of Religious Education lends itself to an active approach that is multi-sensory. Pupils will be given opportunities actively to engage with the material that is taught, for example to handle artefacts, devise and make models and games, listen to sounds and silence, visit places of worship, engage in role play, prepare and eat food, examine relevant artwork and reflect on their own experience and those of others.

### Governors, Parents and the Wider Community

The school will ensure that Governors are informed of any developments and changes in RE provision and amendments to school policy will be made available to them for discussion and approval. We will also keep parents informed of any developments concerning RE and will make the school policy for RE available if requested. The school actively encourages visits from local speakers representing different faith groups and local churches. We are keen for children to visit different places of worship.

### Resources

We use a wide variety of resources including books, posters and real objects which are organised according to curriculum units. The interactive whiteboard is used for teaching many aspects of R.E.

### Health and Safety

Audio visual equipment should be checked for safety. Care should be taken with candles. A risk assessment is carried out prior to visits.

### Equal Opportunities

R.E. is open to all of our children, regardless of race, culture, gender or ability. Through the teaching of RE children learn to:

- Be aware that Great Britain is multi-religious and multi-cultural.
- Question inequalities and discrimination based on race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic grouping.
- Respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others.

### Special Educational Needs

In all aspects of Religious Education, children with special needs are given the opportunity to work at their own levels and pace. They are given as much support as possible by the class teacher. Children with Statements of Special Educational Need of EHCs receive further support from specialist classroom assistants.

### Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for long and medium term planning and will revise the Schemes of Work in light of evaluations.

### Assessment of R.E.

Assessment and record keeping is in accordance with guidance given in the RE Syllabus – this is currently being revised in accordance with the new curriculum.

***We are currently in the process of reviewing this policy in light of our work with Isobel Short RE Advisor Durham LA as we move towards using the Durham Agreed Syllabus in its entirety. We are introducing the “Understanding Christianity” resource as the foundation of our teaching about Christianity. The RE co-ordinator has been through diocesan training and will deliver appropriate training to other staff.***