

Issue Date: 2011
Date Adopted: September 2016
Signed By:
Approval Committee: Governing Body
Date of next review:

Powerstock CE VA Primary School



Policy : RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

“All children should have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion”. UNCRC Article 14

School Mission Statement

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Powerstock aims to provide a Christian education, according to the tradition and principles of the Church of England, whilst at the same time taking into account the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

1. The Legal Position of RE

The 1988 Education Act identifies the unique status of Religious Education in the school curriculum that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the national Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’ and that 5% of curriculum time be allocated to it. The teaching of RE at Powerstock School follows the locally Agreed Syllabus ‘The Dorset Agreed Syllabus for RE 2011’ with additional modules from ‘Christianity Unpacked’ and ‘Take One Concept’ and Discovery RE incorporated into the rolling programme.

2. Rationale/Aims for teaching RE

This states as its vision: “The principal aim of Religious Education in Dorset is to engage pupils in **enquiring** into big questions arising from the study of religion, belief, philosophy and ethics. In so doing RE will support pupils’ own personal, moral, philosophical, ethical and **spiritual development** and promote **respect** for others.” This vision fits with our school aims and values as a Christian school community, Rights Respecting Schools values and our more creative, enquiry based curriculum.

To this end each of the modules starts from pupils’ own experience and progresses through schemes of work, building their individual knowledge.

At Powerstock School we aim that Religious Education will:-

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions and religious traditions that examine these questions and encourages personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **encourage pupils to explore their own** beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), examine issues of religious belief and faith and to express their responses
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs and help to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- The specific **skills for learning** to be developed in RE are given on page 15 of the syllabus.

3. The contribution of RE to other curriculum aims, in particular community cohesion

RE offers opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive ethos that emphasises democratic values and human rights. RE plays an important part in the school’s Rights respecting status.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which ‘promotes the spiritual, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life’. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills

contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims.

Personal development and well-being

RE helps children become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It encourages the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to make good decisions and positive and healthy choices. It underpins our Restorative Justice approach to peaceful problem solving, reinforces the belief that we may make mistakes but we have the capacity to rectify these.

Community cohesion

RE enables a developing understanding of community cohesion, shared values and the reasons for challenging racism and discrimination and should promote community cohesion at four levels:

The school community - RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

The community within which the school is located - RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and, when appropriate, make links with different groups in the local area.

The UK Community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

4. Approaches to teaching RE

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through locally agreed syllabuses, (diocesan advice) and in schools, taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

In order to make RE a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible, we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

5. How RE is organised

In accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, Christianity will be studied at depth at Key Stages 1 and 2 and there must be a focus on Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. In addition, should it be appropriate to the curriculum or learning context, material from

the study of Buddhism, Sikhism and secular worldviews such as Humanism, can be included. In this sense, the new agreed syllabus allows greater flexibility for RE to form an integral part of topic based work within a more creative curriculum. For the most part, RE will be delivered as a discrete subject but, where appropriate, themes will be delivered as part of topic work set out in the four year rolling programme. The structured planning process modelled in the syllabus will be followed to create appropriate schemes of work. These can be based on previously used/adapted schemes or can be written specifically to suit cross-curriculum theme identified in the four year rolling programme. Schemes of work will be planned alongside Programmes of Study to ensure coverage. Development - Two year rolling programme based on Discovery RE Programme to ensure coverage.

6. Assessment and recording of RE

Each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through the marking of set work. Pupils will complete termly assessment tasks relating to the topics taught. The class teacher, on a separate pro forma, will record the progress made by each pupil. As part of our trialling a new method of assessment to link with the Mastery curriculum, we are focusing on Approaching/At/Above the expected level. This information will be used by the co-ordinator to track pupil progress and used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging.

7. Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data in conjunction with regular lesson observations and work scrutiny. Observations and analyses made will contribute to the Church school self evaluation process.

8. Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head, teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal observations, the governing body and Headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum.
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion.
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion

- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are sufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the Headteacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE. In these circumstances, the HT might wish to seek advice from their LA or SACRE

Some of these responsibilities may be used as a focus of RE Subject Leader/Governor updates.

9. The right of withdrawal from RE

At Powerstock School we wish to be an inclusive community. Therefore the school will strive to accommodate children of other faiths and recognise the value of their belief. We recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at school.

Links with the Local Community

Christian

- Reverend Janet Delaney (Powerstock Church)
- Church of St. Mary & St. Catherine RC (contact: Fr. Richard Meyer)
- Bridport United Church (Revd Peter Clark: 01308 425978)
- Exeter Cathedral Education Centre

Islamic

- Exeter Mosque: Islamic Centre of SW, 12-13 York Road, Exeter. EX4 6PG (01392 250597)

Hindu

- Sushma Sahajpal – sushma_sahajpal@yahoo.co.uk
- Mr. Rahi Bains – rahibains@aol.com
- Southampton Hindu Temple: 75-195 Radcliffe Road, Northam, SO2 0PS, (contact: Mr. P. B. Sharma (Assistant Secretary) 01703 632275)

Judaism

- Jewish Education Workshops: Jane Silver-Corren (01308 459320/07887 675161)