**Religious Education**



**Rationale and Intent**

As part of our **school mission** at Brentry, we support our children to become ‘**Responsible citizens’**. We aim to prepare them to take their place in the multi-cultural world as thoughtful and responsible adults. Through the teaching of **religious education,** our intent is that they will develop positive attitudes of respect towards others, including those who hold different beliefs. We want pupils to learn about others’ religions and world views and reflect on their own personal world view. The teaching of RE provides unique opportunities for children to explore big questions about life and find out what matters to them.

At Brentry we follow the Bristol locally agreed syllabus and use the curriculum scheme of work developed by South Gloucestershire. We have chosen and clearly sequenced the units of study so the children build on their prior knowledge. In line with the Bristol requirements for teaching RE, the children will encounter different religions and worldviews.  In **Key Stage One**, children will encounter **Christianity, Judaism and Islam**.  In **Key Stage Two,** children will revisit these religions, but also encounter **Hinduism and non-religious views, such as Humanism**.

We feel that it is important that our RE curriculum includes non-religious world views, such as humanism –which reflects the backgrounds of many of the pupils in Brentry.

All children are given the opportunity to express their values and opinions and support is given to those who find it harder to articulate them. RE is an inclusive subject and is made accessible for all through visual resources and support with specific religious vocabulary and language that some children may not be familiar with.

We use opportunities to develop cultural capital through learning that focuses on inspirational religious leaders who led people to change their lives. Children also gain an understanding of the different religious traditions and festivals within the country. Children learn about people from different cultures and backgrounds and we encourage them to talk about their own experiences. Many children will not have met a variety of people from different cultures so we ensure we include visits to different places of worship and invite visitors from different faiths into our school. We engage children with thought provoking questions and enhance their learning with opportunities to engage with religious art, stories and artefacts.

**Implementation**

We have a whole school curriculum map which outlines when we will deliver the units from the RE scheme of work. This curriculum overview was developed and adapted after meeting with the SACRE advisor for Bristol. The units are specifically designed for certain year groups and they build on the knowledge and understanding previously taught. Some units will be taught within one term and others are taught over two, as specified on the curriculum overview. RE is taught regularly, either in a weekly session or a blocked teaching sequence. The RE teaching objectives have also been linked to specific British values.

In EYFS children are discovering religions and exploring in more depth the religions in Key Stage 1. Then in Key Stage 2 children are making connections and comparisons between the religions. Some units are systemic where children just learn about one religion. In Key Stage 2 there are more thematic units where children compare aspects of different religions.

There is a carefully planned balance of different strands of **believing,** **expressing** and **living** across the units in each year group. The progression of skills grid allows teachers to clearly understand the different objectives to be taught within the three strands throughout the year and across the whole school. Teachers can look at the learning outcomes and suggested content to enable good planning and progression.

Lessons are based on an enquiry question that children then investigate. At the end of the unit children will have opportunities for evaluation and self-reflection. There will be opportunities for debate and religious dialogue to happen with the lesson. Children may have artefacts, images or stories to aid their learning.

Religious language will be taught and explained within the lesson and then referred back to in following lessons to reinforce it. We also use religious stories to reinforce learning and make memorable links to religions. Links will be made to other subjects such as PSHE, Art and historical links will be made. Children will have a variety of types of lessons. Some may be based on writing, others may be discussion based. Visitors from different faiths and visits to places of worships are planned across each year to reinforce learning and make it memorable and real to the children.

We ensure that the religions taught are covered in depth and we have chosen not to include too many so as not to cause confusion. Using our knowledge organisers, pupils are made clear as to what the key information will be covered in the topic. We have also introduced the ‘handy hand’ which helps younger children retain key information about each religion as does our set of religious artefacts and books organised into each religion.

Within the foundation stage we carry out assessments based on classroom observations using the early learning goals. All other year groups complete a post assessment at the end of a unit. They demonstrate what they have learnt through a variety of different ways. From this assessment, teachers can build up an understanding of whether pupils are emerging, expected or exceeding the learning outcomes. Assessment in RE also comes from children’s responses given in lessons and their attitudes to others.

Support is regularly given to colleagues to ensure they have up to date subject knowledge through staff meetings and informal meetings with teachers. Membership to NATRE ensures relevant resources can be given to teachers and they can receive any updates. I attend regular local RE cluster meetings as the subject leader and ensure I pass on resources and new information to staff about my subject. I meet with the local SACRE leader Katy Staples who has supported me with our curriculum overview and assessments for RE. We invite the Encounter Christianity team in to teach some of our units based on Christianity which supports teachers. We also welcome the Branch Community Church into school who support our teaching of Christianity.

**Impact**

The impact of teaching and learning is monitored through scrutiny of pupil books and pupil conferencing. Substantive knowledge such as knowing the five pillars of Islam is crucial so that it enables children to develop and apply their thinking skills and evaluative skills. They need to have secure knowledge about each religion to then be able to draw comparisons and make contrasts.

We use post assessments to help track progress of subject knowledge as well as pupil conferencing to check children’s understanding of religious language and their attitudes.

We can also gain an understanding of the impact of teaching RE through children’s individual responses which are informally assessed and through their attitudes and behaviours shown to others within the school.

It is hard to measure the impact on their personal development with which RE contributes to. The notion of developing not just academic skills but also self-knowledge, courage, a capacity to empathise with others has long been a desired outcome of education.

Children at Brentry show respectful attitudes towards others and visitors often comment on this. The respectful and responsible behaviour they develop in school will be transferable outside of school and in the wider community. We want to continue to develop their ability to disagree well and will continue to monitor how they develop their ability to engage in religious dialogue.