

## Religious Education (RE) Policy

*"At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them." John 8:2*

### School Vision

At Crookham Infant School we aim to make learning irresistible so that as Team Crookham we all develop the life-long learning habits of resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity through exploring together the loving invitation of Jesus to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10. Our vision stems from our Christian foundation and is firmly rooted in our values: Love God, Love Others, Love Learning.

### Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of Religious Education at Crookham CE Aided Infant School. It was developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff, governors and the Vicar of Christ Church, Church Crookham.

### Religious Education

All state funded schools have a statutory duty to teach Religious Education (Education Act 2001, Section 78), and as a Church School the provision of Religious Education is also a requirement of our school Trust Deed. Religious Education is defined in the National Curriculum 2013, as a broad and balanced curriculum that:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

There is no agreed national syllabus for Religious Education, however the governors at Crookham Infant School, in consultation with the Headteacher, have chosen to follow the curriculum designed by the Diocese of Guildford entitled 'Big Ideas' as we believe it aligns closely with our School Vision and Values and with the Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good.

### Aims of Religious Education

We agree with the aims of Religious Education outlined in the National Society's Statement of Entitlement 2016. Religious Education should:

- enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today;
- enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents;
- develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth;
- contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

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### Principles of Religious Education

When teaching Religious Education we are mindful of the different backgrounds and experiences of our pupils. Therefore we adhere to the principles of an enquiry-based learning cycle which allows for these different starting points, as together we engage, enquire and explore, evaluate and express our RE learning. More information on this approach is available in the Guildford Diocesan Guidelines for RE accessible to all on their website [www.cofeguildford.org.uk](http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk)

Religious Education is underpinned by our school Vision and values as in all areas of school daily life we seek to celebrate our uniqueness and diversity alongside the shared understanding that binds us together as Team Crookham.

### Organisation of Religious Education

At Crookham Infant School Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject following the Guildford Diocese Syllabus entitled 'Big Ideas', and Diocesan guidelines as to the time allocated to the teaching of Religious Education, (between 5 - 10% of the school timetable). When reviewing the termly planning for their class or year group teachers may decide whether to teach RE units in a series of weekly sessions or in a larger block, or a mixture, dependent on the needs of their pupils. The unit on Prayer for example, is frequently taught in blocked sessions over one week to coincide with a Pause Week or Prayer Space within the school.

Links are made during the teaching of all units to our School Vision and values, as well as to other areas of the curriculum, particularly Relationships Education where the core value is love.

### Promoting high quality Religious Education

At Crookham Infant School we have adapted the Big Ideas units to meet the needs of our pupils by ensuring that a key Bible story or passage is at the heart of the teaching of each unit, and that there is at least one opportunity for higher order thinking (from the Thinking Skills pack) within each unit.

Other strategies used to promote high quality teaching and learning include:

- Encouraging children to engage with the prayer/focus table within each classroom
- Big Question books to allow children in Year 2 to share their ideas and thoughts on life's challenging questions
- Class RE books to capture children's thinking about RE where they are just beginning written recording
- Individual RE books for pupils in KS1, with front covers to demarcate each unit of work, and reflection opportunities at the start and end of each unit
- Resourcing to support children in engaging with our vision and values
- Welcoming visits from appropriate local community representatives including the Vicar of Christ Church, Army Chaplain, Open the Book team
- Assessing children's learning at the end of each unit, finding it helpful to consider learning about religion and learning from religion, and the children's progress is reported regularly to parents at parents' evening and in the annual written report.
- Ensuring regular continuing professional development for staff who teach Religious Education so that subject knowledge is strong

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### **Responsibility and Leadership**

It is the collective responsibility of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and RE Manager, supported by the named Governor for RE to lead by example in implementing the school vision and upholding the school values through the delivery of high quality Religious Education in line with legal and diocesan requirements.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment**

The RE Manager, supported by the Headteacher and named Religious Education governor, is responsible for monitoring the quality and impact of RE teaching, learning and assessment.

Strategies used to monitor include:

- Planning and assessment record scrutiny
- Data analysis
- Lesson observation and learning walks
- Work and display sampling, including comparison with work quality in other subjects e.g. English
- Pupil, parent, staff and governor conferencing and feedback

Evaluation is key to all school improvement and evidence from RE monitoring feeds directly into the overall School Evaluation Form (SEF) as well as the evaluation against the SIAMS schedule.

### **Right of Withdrawal**

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from the teaching of Religious Education. The Headteacher will discuss the matter sensitively with any parent who wishes to withdraw their child. Where a child is withdrawn alternative supervision will be arranged as appropriate.

### **References:**

Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good (2016)

Education Act 2002

1988 Education Reform Act

Valuing all God's Children (The Church of England Education Office, Second Edition Updated Summer 2019)