



Barthol Chapel School

Religious & Moral Education Policy

Introduction

“Children and young people must become aware that beliefs and values are fundamental to families and to the fabric of society in communities, local and global. There is an intrinsic value in learning about religion as well as learning from religion, as children and young people develop their understanding of diversity in our society and their own roles in it. The skills of reflection and critical thinking and an enhanced understanding of the beliefs and values of others are all crucial in this process.”

A Curriculum for Excellence Religious and Moral Education: Principles and Practice

Learning in, through and about Religious & Moral Education enables children and young people to:

- Recognise religion as an important expression of human experience
- Learn about and from the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and the world religions selected for study, other traditions, and viewpoints independent of religious belief
- Explore and develop knowledge and understanding of religions, recognising the place of Christianity in the Scottish context
- Investigate and understand the responses which religious and non-religious views can offer to questions about the nature and meaning of life
- Recognise and understand religious diversity and the importance of religion in society
- Develop respect for others and an understanding of beliefs and practices which are different from their own
- Explore and establish values such as wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity and engage in development of and reflection upon their own moral values
- Develop their beliefs, attitudes, values and practices through reflection, discovery and critical evaluation
- Develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions
- Make a positive difference to the world by putting their beliefs and values into action
- Establish a firm foundation for lifelong learning, further learning and adult life.

Features for Effective Learning

It's important to consider that effective learning through religious and moral education requires the following key features:-

- Coherent Curriculum
- Learning and Teaching
- Support for Pupils
- Leadership
- Partnership Working

Skills of effective learning will be founded on the idea that learners learn best when:

- They understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them
- They are given feedback about the quality of their work and what they can do to make it better
- They are given advice about how to make improvements
- They are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next and who can give them help if they need it.

Aberdeenshire 3-18 Curriculum Framework

Curriculum Organisers

The experiences and outcomes are structured within three curriculum organisers

- Beliefs
- Values and Issues
- Practices and Traditions

Within the teaching and learning of religious and moral education skills and knowledge focus is placed on the four capacities: confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens to allow each child and young person to reach their full potential. The experiences and outcomes relating to the development by children and young people of their own beliefs and values does not form a separate context for planning but is intertwined with the experiences and outcomes for Christianity and the world religions selected for study.

Religious and Moral Education experiences and outcomes encourage links with other areas of the curriculum to provide learners with deeper, more enjoyable and active experiences. These experiences contribute much to the development of the four capacities of successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, as described in Building the Curriculum 1. Religious and moral education has strong associations with learning for citizenship, enterprise, international education, creativity and sustainable development.

Learning and Teaching

In planning learning and teaching in religious and moral education, teachers will

- *Sensitively take account of and value the religious and cultural diversity within their own local communities, using relevant contexts which are familiar to young people*
- *Develop, through knowledge and understanding, discussion and active debate, an ability to understand other people's beliefs*

- *Draw upon a variety of approaches including active learning and planned, purposeful play*
- *Encourage the development of enquiry and critical thinking skills*
- *Create opportunities for the development of problem-solving skills*
- *Build in time for personal reflection and encourage discussion in depth and debate*
- *Provide opportunities for collaborative and independent learning*
- *Take account of the faith background, circumstances and developmental stage of the children and young people and their capacity to engage with complex ideas*
- *Recognise and build on the considerable scope for connections between themes and learning in religious and moral education and other areas of the curriculum*
- *Make appropriate and imaginative use of technology*
- *Build on the principles of Assessment is for Learning*

Curriculum for Excellence: Religious and Moral Education Learning Principles and Practice

Teachers will ensure that children and young people from within any faith are treated with sensitivity. While some may wish to discuss their faith, others may not. Teachers should not assume that any child or young person should be automatically drawn upon as a source of information.

Teachers and Educators will consider how to:

- *Create and maintain stimulating environments, which engage and motivate learners including interactive learning and teaching displays*
- *Plan for and implement effective and efficient management of learning activities*
- *Promote active learning and opportunities for learners to work collaboratively and independently*
- *Provide resources which are interesting, accessible and relevant to the needs of all learners*
- *Make effective use of new technologies and e-learning*
- *Make effective use of the learning environment, including outdoor learning opportunities*
- *Work as a collegiate team to make effective use of space, time and resources*

Aberdeenshire 3-18 Curriculum Framework

As children and young people deepen their understanding of religion and morality they will develop a range of skills and improve how they describe, explain, analyse, evaluate and reflect on their learning. They will extend their understanding of the values of wisdom, compassion, justice and integrity which underpin curriculum for excellence and which are shared by all of the world's major faith communities. Learning and assessment in religious and moral education should encourage learners to make connections across learning so they understand better the relationships between beliefs, practices, traditions, values, issues and moral responses.

Planning

Teachers and other practitioners in planning together will ensure that experiences are relevant and realistic for the child or young person in his or her circumstances. Provide the children with knowledge of mathematics and numerical skills for learning for life and work.

- Within the experiences and outcomes which span more than one level, careful planning is required to ensure appropriate breadth, progression and pace.
- Teachers and other practitioners will plan and present learning in ways that enable learners to use knowledge and skills in different contexts.
- Teachers should make use of Aberdeenshire Progression Frameworks for Religious & Moral Education and national benchmarks as a support tool.
- Additional curricular planning is also required in an appropriate format to support interdisciplinary projects.

Assessment

Assessment will focus on the application of standards and expectations of each learner's progress and achievement in;

- Knowledge and understanding
- Skills
- Attributes and capabilities

Assessment approaches will help learners to show their progress through the levels and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways which are appropriate to learning. For learners to demonstrate that their progress is secure and that they have achieved a level, they will be provided with opportunities to show they:

- Have achieved a breadth of learning across the experiences and outcomes for an aspect of the curriculum
- Can respond to the level of challenge set out in the experiences and outcomes and are moving forward to more challenging learning in some aspects
- Can apply what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situations.

Teachers will use these three aspects to decide when a learner has met agreed expectations and achieved a level, either in a part of a curriculum area or in a whole curriculum area. Teachers will gather evidence of progress as part of children and young people's day-to-day learning about, and their responses to, practices and traditions and beliefs and values. The use of specific assessment tasks will also be used in assessing progress in knowledge, understanding and skills. From the early years through to the senior stages, children and young people will demonstrate their progress through increasingly reflective responses to the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of others, in their skills of discussion of moral issues and in their own personal response.

Assessment will identify the extent to which children and young people can reflect on the beliefs, values and traditions they have studied. Approaches to assessment will take account of the idea that there is not always a 'right answer' where issues of belief and morality are concerned. Children and young people can demonstrate their progress through:

- How well they respond to questions and issues
- The depth to which they engage with issues of belief and morality
- Their developing abilities to think critically

- Their awareness of how they can put their own beliefs, values and attitudes into action and show respect for those who hold different beliefs.

Assessment will also link with other areas of the curriculum, within and outside the classroom, and offer children and young people opportunities to investigate religious and cultural diversity and the impact of religion on lives and society within the local and global community.

The use of specific assessment tasks will be important in assessing progress at key points of learning including transitions.

Religious Observance

There is a statutory requirement to provide religious and moral education within the normal school curriculum. Religious education in the primary school is about learning about religions and by realising that religion plays a role in many people's lives today. Through moral stories and learning about other religions children and young people gain an awareness of themselves, others and the need to be sensitive to others when understand different points of view. It is hoped that by learning about religion, our children will have a greater insight, understanding and perhaps most important tolerance of religious beliefs and practices.

Under the terms of the Education Act (Scotland) 1980, parents have the right to ask for their child to be withdrawn from Religious and Moral Education and Religious Observance. Our school deals with such requests sensitively and with understanding.

Resources

It is important that the resources used to deliver Religious and Moral Education experiences and outcomes meet the following criteria:-

- Are relevant to age and stage
- Are current and listed to show whole school progression
- Are purchased to reflect improvement plans
- Have mechanisms for consultation with staff, pupils and parents where appropriate

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy has been written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and the wider community.

A copy of the policy will be made available to all stakeholders and monitored and evaluated in line with our Quality Assurance procedures.

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed on an annual basis as informed by local and national developments.