

## Southern Road Primary School

### Religious Education Policy

#### Introduction

Religious Education has a special place in our curriculum at Southern Road Primary School as we recognise the importance it plays in the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of the children. Southern Road Primary School is made up of staff and pupils who originate from many nations, cultures and faith groups. As a school we celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including new arrivals and non-native English speakers. We believe that Religious Education provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school and the wider world. It is a subject that celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes.

#### Agreed Syllabus

At Southern Road Primary School RE is taught in accordance with the guidelines of the Newham Agreed Syllabus. Particularly relevant to our school is the aim which states:

*'Religious Education should help pupils to develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of many religions and beliefs.'*

#### Legal Requirements

In accordance with the law we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. Parents are informed in the school prospectus that they have the right to withdraw their pupils from religious education. Parents who choose to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons are required to state this in writing annually to the Head teacher.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the parents who have chosen to withdraw their children from school RE to provide acceptable alternative religious education work for their children to do during RE lessons. We expect that this work will be discussed with the class teacher so that these children can be fully included, and their alternative work linked to what the rest of the class is learning.

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### The Scheme of Work

The scheme of work for Religious Education covers all the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. RE is taught in half-termly units in a combination of religion-based and thematic topics.

Each year group has six areas to follow and wherever possible these are related to the rest of the Creative Curriculum. At Southern Road we aim to ensure that aspects of all religions are taught as much as possible. For instance, in Key Stage 1, each topic covers at least two religions or all six major ones if appropriate. An example of this is where Year 1 look at expressing beliefs in all of the major faiths rather than focusing on one or two.

### Aims for Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

The principal aims of RE in the school are to help our children:-

- Awaken & develop an awareness of the spiritual side of life.
- Experience feelings of awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and beauty.
- Know and understand the beliefs of others and respect their right to believe.
- Develop the ability to empathise and appreciate similarities and differences between religions.
- Develop skills and attitudes which will help them in addressing questions of meaning and in their personal, moral and social development.
- Become caring people who are able to contribute to their multi-faith community.

Key attitudes that will be addressed:

- Respect
- Open - mindedness
- Sensitivity
- Appreciation & wonder
- Self esteem

### Equal Opportunities

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN and EAL are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of RE we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

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We draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. One way in which we do this is through our links with local religious communities and through visiting places of worship when relevant.

### Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as PHSE and our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

### Assessment

Teacher assessment is an ongoing part of the teaching and learning process. The marking and assessment of pupil's work is used to inform subsequent teaching and learning. It enables teachers to ensure children's learning needs are met. It is recognised in school that in RE it is not the intention to assess what children do or do not believe, but what children know and understand about religion. For example, when assessing the skill of communication in RE, it is about observing how the child expresses opinions not the content of what is expressed. Where possible, opportunities for self assessment are provided as a process of involving children in their own learning.