

How we Plan, Teach and Assess

Religious Education

Planning Overview

At Langney Primary Academy, R.E. (Religious Education) is taught following a comprehensive scheme of work entitled Discovery RE. This detailed scheme of work is aligned to the East Sussex Religious Education Agreed Syllabus and provides detailed medium term lesson planning from Nursery to Year 6.

This scheme adopts an enquiry approach to teaching R.E. covering Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. It supports teachings in SMSC, British Values, Anti-Radicalisation whilst promoting critical thinking skills, growth mindset and personal development in our 8 key life skills.

The scheme provides teachers with support to deliver engaging and challenging R.E. lessons with confidence and secure subject knowledge; whilst being flexible enough to honour teachers' creativity. R.E. is a learning experience that pupils look forward to. It provides a safe enquiry space, encourages children to ask and answer the big questions, enhances children's critical thinking and evaluation skills, supports their spiritual development and finally equips them for a world of diversity.

R.E. across the school

All children in years 1-6 will have a 'Memory Challenge' at the beginning of lessons as a form of retrieval practice. They will have between 1 and 9 questions (dependent on age and appropriacy) that will recap their previous R.E. learning, ensuring this information is revisited.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, five of the world's religions are taught across the year. These religions are Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. These are taught through a theme (e.g. celebrations) and a key question (e.g. How do people celebrate?) per term. Christianity features in all but one of the terms and is the sole religion in two terms (Autumn 2, Christmas; Spring 2, Easter).

R.E. across the school

Across Key Stage 1 aspects of Christianity, Judaism and/or Islam are taught through a theme (e.g. Passover) and a key question (How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?). Christianity is the sole religion taught in seven out of the 12 modules.

Across Lower Key Stage 2, the principal world religions taught are Christianity, Judaism, or Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhism. These are taught through a theme (e.g. beliefs) and a key question (How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?) Christianity features in half of the modules taught.

Across Upper Key Stage 2, the principal world religions taught are Christianity, Sikhism or Hinduism in Year 5 and in Year 6, Christianity and Islam. Christianity features in half of the modules taught. These are taught through a theme (e.g. Beliefs and Meaning) and a key question (Is anything ever eternal?)

The Enquiry Approach

The key question for the enquiry is such that it demands an answer that weighs up 'evidence' and reaches a conclusion based on this. This necessitates children using their subject knowledge and applying it to the enquiry question, rather than this knowledge being an end in itself.

Teaching R.E. this way focuses on critical thinking skills, on personal reflection into the child's own thoughts and feelings, on growing subject knowledge and nurturing spiritual development.

The Four Steps to the Enquiry

Step 1 Engagement

The human experience underpinning the key question is explored here within the children's own experience, whether that includes religion or not e.g. a human experience underpinning the question, 'What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?' is 'commitment', so step 1 aims to help all children resonate with the experience of 'commitment' in their own lives. If they can relate to this human experience they will be better able to understand the world of religion into which the enquiry takes them. Their personal resonance with this underpinning human experience acts as the BRIDGE into the world of religion (which may be very much outside of their experience).

The BRIDGE concept/experience is shown clearly under the Step 1 box on the planning. This guides the teacher as to the focus of the Lesson, which does not have to include anything explicitly 'religious'.

The Four Steps to the Enquiry

Step 2 Investigation

The teacher guides the children through the enquiry, children gaining subject knowledge carefully selected to assist their thinking about the key question.

Some of the enquiries have a lot of relevant content that the teachers can choose from. The acquisition of the factual information about the religion / belief system being studied is important, but not as an end in itself.

The Four Steps to the Enquiry

Step 3 Evaluation

This step draws together the children's learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry. This is an assessment task which the teacher can assess by using the end of year expectations descriptors. The activity sheet provides evidence in children's books for their learning in each enquiry.

We are not suggesting that paper-based evidence is the sole form of assessment in R.E. The expectation is that the assessment activity sheets provided will be seen in conjunction with teacher observations of the children's work and responses throughout the enquiry. We believe that R.E. insights are not bound by literacy skills.

The Four Steps to the Enquiry

Step 4 Expression

Children are taken back to Step 1, to their own experience, to reflect on how this enquiry might have influenced their own starting points and beliefs. They then express their belief in connection to the enquiry through a creating activity.

E.g. creating their own version of a christingle that symbolises something important to them or writing how they show commitment.

How is the Subject Assessed?

The Evaluation step draws together the children's learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry. This is an assessment task which the teacher can assess by using the end of year expectations descriptors on OTtrack (the school's online assessment and tracking tool) to assess if the children are 'Working Towards Expected,' 'At Expected' or 'Greater Depth.' This assessment is then recorded on O-track.

Whilst the activity sheet provides evidence in children's books for their learning in each enquiry, we are not suggesting that paper-based evidence is the sole form of assessment in R.E. The expectation is that the assessment activity sheets provided will be seen in conjunction with teacher observations of the children's work and responses throughout the enquiry. We believe that R.E. insights are not bound by literacy skills.