

Rode and Norton St Philip School Federation (RNSF)

Religious Education and Collective Worship Policies 2019

Our Christian Vision is to ignite a creative spark; illuminating new possibilities, hidden potential and big dreams, enabling each and every child to embark on a unique adventure towards life in all its fullness (John 10:10). We believe that Religious Education and Collective Worship are at the core of achieving 'Life in all its fullness', central to our Philosophy of Learning and exemplified through our core values of friendship, respect, hope, forgiveness, perseverance, generosity. This Policy sets out our intent and method of implementation of our teaching of Religious Education and our delivery of Collective Worship.

Religious Education

CONTENT

As a Voluntary Controlled Methodist First School in Rode and a Voluntary Aided Church of England First School in Norton St Philip we have statutory responsibility to cover the Somerset Agreed Syllabus for religious education – Awareness, Mystery and Value.

RATIONALE

Religious Education involves learning about and from religions and human experience. It makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, cultural development of pupils. This in turn helps them gain a greater understanding of themselves and a more sympathetic awareness of the needs and values of others. Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice. Thus, equipping them to cope with the responsibilities and experiences of life in a multi-cultural society.

AIMS

We adopt the aims of the Somerset Agreed Syllabus – Awareness, Mystery and Value.

Religious education helps pupils to:

- ❖ Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.
- ❖ Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and culture.

- ❖ Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principle religions represented in Great Britain.
- ❖ Enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by
 - Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences and how religious teachings can relate to them.
 - Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience.
 - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.
- ❖ Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions.

OBJECTIVES- Our 6 Lines of Enquiry

These objectives will guide us in our decisions in relation to planning schemes of work. Children will be taught to explore:

- ❖ Human identity, personality and experience.
- ❖ The world in which we live.
- ❖ People values and commitment.
- ❖ Beliefs about spiritual dimensions of life.
- ❖ Religious practice and life styles.
- ❖ Ways of expressing religious belief, ideas and feelings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The implementation of Religious Education in our schools echoes our Christian Vision, Our Philosophy for Learning and our Core Values.

Our Christian Vision is to ignite a creative spark; illuminating new possibilities, hidden potential and big dreams, enabling each and every child to embark on a unique adventure towards life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

Our Philosophy: We believe that children in our schools will

- be **inspire** by the world, by each other and by learning to become the best they can be.
- **explore** their spirituality, to “look up to the stars”, to wonder, and be playful, to ask questions and challenge themselves in order to become resilient and hopeful individuals.
- be free to **discover** in a safe and strong environment, to make connections and to learn something new every day.
- be confident, imaginative thinkers who believe in themselves, their BIG dreams and their ability to **create** and innovate.
- **flourish** as independent, caring and responsible citizens, who have the ability, desire and compassion to change the world for the better.

Our Values: friendship, respect, hope, forgiveness, perseverance, generosity

The RE Syllabus at Rode and Norton St Philip First School Federation is taken from the Somerset SACRE Awareness, Mystery and Value Syllabus. <http://amvsomerset.org.uk/syllabus>

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Reception	Who Are We?	Why Are Sometimes Special?	Special Places
Year 1	Where Do We Belong?	Special Stories	Journeys Through Life
Year 2	How Should We Live Our Lives?	Why is Jesus Important?	Why is Our World Important?
Year 3	What is important to me?	What does it mean to belong to a religion? Islam	How should we live and who can inspire us?
Year 4	Why do religious books and teachings matter?	What does it mean to belong to a religion? Hinduism.	Why are some journeys and places special?

CONTINUITY, PLANNING AND PROGRESSION

Schemes of work are carefully planned to ensure balance between the two attainment targets – Learning from Religion and Human Experience and Learning About Religions as well as a balance between the Six Lines of Enquiry. Planning will allow for the development of skills and attitudes, knowledge and understanding. At both Key Stages examples will be drawn from faith communities as agreed with the FLP.

The exploration of personal experience through reflection and enquiry will be fundamental to learning in the early years and Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2 as children develop a greater understanding of broader religious issues, belief and practices. A variety of structured activities will provide children with the opportunity to develop skills such as reflection, questioning and enquiry, expression, respect and fairness. This will be reflected in appropriate teaching and learning styles. We refer to the Objectives for Learning and Assessment from the agreed syllabus which help teachers to plan for progression.

ASSESSMENT

The Agreed Syllabus lays down end of key stage assessment descriptions and these will be built into the Scheme of Work. Evidence will be gathered through observation, oral discussions, written tasks and drawing. The recorded evidence will assist teachers in both their planning and in their reporting to parents and governors.

ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR

The Religious Education co-ordinator will support colleagues in their planning of religious education through discussion and monitoring. He or she will organise and review resources. The co-ordinator will keep staff and governors informed of new initiatives in religious education.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING

Religious Education planning, teaching and learning will be monitored by the head and governors with the support of the Religious Education co-ordinator. When each unit has been completed, teachers will evaluate the teaching and learning process, reflect and modify the planning accordingly.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, DIFFERENTIATION AND SEN

Religious education can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on providing respect for all. It will be planned to provide equal opportunities for all pupils taking into account personal beliefs, practices, background, experience, age, ability, and gender. The religious education curriculum will build on and be enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring the classroom. A variety of approaches will be used e.g.: discussion, music, dance, drama, and visual arts. RE is taught at a level appropriate to the age ability and experience of pupils and is therefore accessible to all.

We recognise that parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education under the terms of the Education Reform Act 1996. However, our schools believe that religious education is an entitlement for all pupils, regardless of their faith or belief and that, without it, they will not receive a balanced education that informs them about the role and significance of religion in the modern world and the important beliefs and values that shape it.

RESOURCES, VISITS & VISITORS

Religious Education will be funded within the school budget plan and will include resources such as artefacts, books, posters etc. Pupils will be able to make appropriate use of the Internet as well as use equipment such as digital cameras and video. Religious Education books are held centrally in the library area and cover Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, Islam and Buddhism. Other resources can be borrowed from Resources for Learning.

Religious Education will be made relevant by starting with the pupil's own experiences and developed by using primary and secondary resources, such as visits, visitors, videos and artefacts.

WITHDRAWAL

Under the provisions of the Religious Reform Act 1996, all parents have a right to withdraw their child from Religious Education. Any parents wishing to withdraw their child should discuss their wish with the head in the first instance to ensure they fully understand the educational basis and purpose of the subject.

Collective Worship

The Collective Worship Policy at Rode Methodist VC and Norton St Philip Church of England First VA Schools pays due regard to statutory requirements and has taken account of the guidance offered by the Methodist Church, The Church of England and the LEA through its SACRE.

Our Collective Worship Policy reflects and reinforces Our Christian Vision, our Philosophy of Learning and our Core Values. It provides an opportunity for children to participate in shared experience of celebration and thanksgiving.

Definition of Collective Worship

Worship is the response of the individual and the community to life, living and to what is ultimately real. Generally, the worship will involve the school community in school but it will also take place on Church premises or elsewhere when it is appropriate.

Aims of Collective Worship

For the School:

Collective Worship contributes significantly to the ethos of Rode Methodist and Norton St Philip Church of England schools and it is our aim that it is a time when the school community can:

- share common aims and values
- celebrate achievement and special times
- explore together the world in which we live
- develop a community spirit and a sense of collective responsibility

For the Pupils:

We also intend that Collective Worship contributes to the development of the pupil as a 'whole' person by providing opportunities to:

- consider spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs and those of other faiths
- develop their own spirituality
- reinforce positive attitudes
- participate and respond
- reflect on what it means to be human
- feel awe and wonder for the natural world and the gift of life
- share achievements and ideas

The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum

Collective Worship time is distinct from curriculum time. However, in Rode Methodist and Norton St Philip Church of England First Schools, Collective Worship will at times feature aspects of the curriculum, which will enhance the experiences of pupils by reflecting on the work done in classes. At times, Collective Worship will enrich classwork through its consideration of subject matter from different perspectives.

The provision of opportunities for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is in line with school policy which informs our practice. To ensure Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development it should address a wide variety of themes and topics, use diverse stimuli and resources and provide pupils with the opportunity to ‘respond’ on their own level.

Leadership

Every member of the school teaching staff, our Methodist minister and associated Methodist colleagues, our Anglican clergy, the Hardington Vale Children and Families worker and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of Collective Worship will be considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils. We have 6 core values which provide the themes for Collective Worship. *See Appendix 1.*

Faith Strategy

The Foundation Governors of both schools have worked together to produce a combined Faith Strategy. *See Appendix 2.*

Withdrawal

Any parent who objects to their child attending an act or acts of Collective Worship may request, in writing, that their child is withdrawn. Parents are encouraged to discuss this with the head teacher. Any pupil who is withdrawn from an act or acts of Collective Worship will be supervised during that time by a member of the school staff.

REVIEW

Next Review Date –

Adopted by the Governing body on _____

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

APPENDIX 1 –

Rode and Norton St Philip First Schools - 6 Values

Friendship
Respect
Hope
Forgiveness
Perseverance
Generosity

**APPENDIX 2 –
Faith Strategy**

Faith Strategy for Rode and Norton St Philip Schools

FINAL DRAFT 01/03/17 & updated 2019-----

Introduction

Following the successful federation of Rode and Norton St Philip schools, both of which have a Christian Foundation (one Church of England and one Methodist), it is important to create and agree one faith strategy that indicates how the Christian ethos is incorporated into school life at both schools.

A distinctive Christian Ethos determines the tone, character and quality of a school, especially its spiritual, moral and aesthetic mood and quality of the relationships there. This ethos provides a climate for successful learning attitudes, high standards and relationship with others in the school community.

To this end, the following discussion paper is presented to the governors for their consideration. In a nutshell, our vision for faith is this: -

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, for as long as ever you can. (John Wesley)

What do we mean by a Faith Strategy?

There are several areas to consider here. The first, and perhaps the most important, is to set out the Christian values that we feel should be embedded into the values and vision of the two schools so that children who progress through from Reception to Year 4 have one clear set of standards to aspire to, values that are consistent and unchanging.

This is a timely discussion, as we have also just agreed our new vision and values to support the emerging federated chapter for the two schools. Here is a set of 6 Values (with some explanation of how this is relevant for our children). These can be found within the larger set of Christian Values set out by the Diocese of Bath and Wells and also in the Methodist doctrines.

It is proposed we adopt these as the 6 Values for our Federated Schools.

Friendship *mutual support and working together towards an agreed result. Treating other people gently and celebrating them for who they are. Learning to make friends and nurture friendships, looking after each other and including those who feel left out. Including building trust and speaking the truth with one another.*

Respect *learning to take responsibility by showing consideration of others whether that is their faith or view point. Recognising that everyone is equal, no matter who they are or where they come from, whatever their ability, faith, colour or gender.*

Hope *a positive outlook that looks optimistically and embraces life and all its opportunities, whilst promoting peace and harmony.*

Forgiveness *a grudge can cause bitterness and revenge only escalates situations. Forgiving others resolves conflicts and shows that love and humility can overcome anything.*

Perseverance *learning to be tenacious and trying hard to achieve, overcoming obstacles and sticking to our beliefs. Seeing things through to completion even if this means facing opposition or danger and standing up for what is right*

Generosity *an open handed, unselfish sharing of things, time, possessions, friendship that shows the way others are valued. Being willing to give of our time and help those in need and not ask for anything in return, reflecting our thankfulness for our lives and all that we are blessed with.*

We need to think about how these values manifest themselves in school life and in the experience of all our children, regardless of their faith. These values should serve to determine how children 'behave' and also to inform their 'decisions'.

What are our responsibilities as governors?

Church schools must ensure that the needs of each pupil are being met and all feel valued - every child matters and the whole child matters.

Various documents that are available point to key areas that we need to consider, in order to ensure that our responsibilities as governors of Christian schools are met. Particular reference has been made to the Checklist for Governors and Teachers of Church Schools.

We should ensure that our schools clearly state our Vision and Mission and what our Christian values are, and these should be visible to everyone through noticeboards, symbols and displays. The schools should also offer a welcoming space for all visitors.

In addition to setting out our Values and what this means for our children, this document explores the following in more detail:

1. What are we doing to ensure that the schools have a distinctive Christian character?
2. What opportunities are there for collective worship in the school timetable?
3. What appropriate religious education are we offering to each age group?
4. What support are we giving the leadership and management of the schools so that these objectives are met?

Distinctive Christian Character

Christians believe that God is love, self-giving, forgiving, generous, gracious, demonstrated supremely in the life of Jesus Christ. Seeing how Jesus lived and the teachings that are evident in the bible, gives us a set of guidelines by which to shape our lives.

A Christian life is based on a commitment to doing good, putting others first, supporting our community, looking after those in need, social action, justice, valuing all.

Our schools should therefore reflect these values and show every child how they help us to behave and take the right decisions. Even at this early stage in their education, we can begin to set down a strong moral compass by which every child can frame their lives.

Acts of Worship

Regular (termly) acts of worship have a positive impact on the school community and bear witness to the community beyond the school. We need to think about the implications of this with children of other faiths. However, it should be possible for every child to respect the Christian faith and understand that this is part of the school life that they belong.

Currently there are acts of worship every Monday and Wednesday with a focus on our Values, classroom reflection times on a Tuesday and Thursday and a Friday celebration of the week with the award of certificates for children whose behaviour has demonstrated one or more of the school values.

There should be regular acts of worship in the Parish church in Norton St Philip and the Methodist Chapel in Rode. Weekly assemblies in both schools can be led by Church representatives. This can introduce the idea of prayer and what this means and children can become familiar with prayer and what that means for our daily lives.

As part of these activities, we can incorporate Godly Play with each age group in discussion with staff to ensure the fit with topics being covered and fitting in with the school timetable.

To support all of this, the governing body should set aside just a few moments at the start of each meeting (when the whole governing body is assembled) to ask through a short prayer for God's guidance in the decisions that are made.

The following prayer is to be used:

Dear Lord, Please be with us as we gather here to work through and discuss matters that concern our two schools and our responsibilities as school governors. Help us to make good decisions that will benefit the school and all of the children in our care. Guide us in our thoughts and actions so that we can serve our schools to the best of our ability. Amen.

Religious Education

Both schools follow the RE curriculum as set out by Somerset Awareness, Mystery and Values 2016. This has been produced in close liaison with the Diocese of Bath and Wells and the Methodist church. This document contains local and national requirements on Religious Education for governors, head teachers and subject leaders. It includes recommendations for church visits to assist the children to learn about what Church is, what happens there, the role of clergy, what makes it special, the significance of signs and symbols (e.g. cross, font, pulpit, altar/communion table, Eucharist/Communion, the Lord's Prayer, rites of passage (Baptism, Weddings, funerals) importance of music, hymns.

It also includes the study of Seasons in the Church (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost/Whitsun, Harvest) as well as other religious celebrations.

This curriculum gives every child an opportunity to learn about the stories of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, the parables (Good Samaritan, Prodigal Son, Lost sheep) and other Bible stories that contain a moral lesson.

Support for Teachers and Leaders

The wider church membership of the villages can assist with the creation of reflection areas in both schools and a clear display of Christian values and ethos, so that we can ensure a consistent approach for every child.

Foundation Governors can make themselves available for support in the education of Jesus stories and in acts of worship.

Input from the Hardington Vale children and family worker and Methodist circuit paid workers - where appropriate.

ENDS

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Key features of church school distinctiveness as outlined by Dearing (The Way Ahead 2001)

- The head teacher committed to the Christian character of the school
- Collective Worship with distinctive Christian elements every day

- Strength in Religious Education and at least 5% of the curriculum time

- • Observation of Christian festivals
 - Active and affirming relationships with local schools
 - Proclamation of the school as a Church school

The recommendations of the Chadwick review (The Church school of the Future 2012), sets out the following topics:

- The recruitment of Christian teachers and headteachers

- Strategies for the improvement of teaching and learning in religious education, particularly in the teaching of Christianity

- The development of a Church school curriculum that includes implications for pedagogy, curriculum content and school organisation

- Attention to a study being carried out to establish 'well being' indicators

- Embedding and expressing distinctively Christian values.

www.amvsomerest.org.uk

SACRE courses (JW)

Somerset Standing Advisory Council

More than Caring and Sharing by John Cox

Making a church school distinctive and the SIAMS Inspection documents relating to Methodist distinctiveness.

<http://www.christianvalues4schools.co.uk>

The New 'Governors in Church Schools' booklet that the Diocese gives to all new foundation governors.

Church School Checklist www.bathandwells.org.uk

Good Practice in Church/School Partnerships - Agreed protocol and guidance from the

Board of Education Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Church School of the Future Review - Church of England Archbishop's Council Education Division March 2012