

RE at Clifton Primary School

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Intent and rationale

The intention of the RE curriculum at Clifton is to encourage and motivate children to empathise with other faiths by recognising the similarities that the major religions hold by displaying certain themes or values such as ‘being open, honest and truthful’, ‘being merciful and forgiving’, and ‘being courageous and confident’ (amongst others). These themes or values can also be discussed from the viewpoint of those who may not have any religious beliefs.

Our diverse RE curriculum is taught through 24 dispositions or themes which can all be found in the key progression document for RE. Through these dispositions, we encourage children to become tolerant individuals who will go on to have a positive impact on our society. We encourage children to understand and recognise that people behave similarly when it comes to; being truthful and living with integrity, having compassion in order to be fair and just and displaying kindness by caring for others (included in some of the dispositions), and that these innate qualities are what binds us together as humans.

We want our children to have an awareness of the world around them and be mindful of the beliefs of others. We will encourage them to make links between themselves and others and develop an understanding of cultures and different ways of life. By using the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus, we will make sure our children are prepared to live, flourish and work in a global and diverse community.

Implementation

The RE curriculum at Clifton is taught from the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus 2022 which was agreed by a number of locally elected representatives, teachers and members of the faith community from various backgrounds. This means that our RE curriculum is thorough and diverse as it enables teachers to offer pupils an insight into the key values that play an important part in all religious traditions. This syllabus uses a learning model which breaks the dispositions into four tangible, interconnected aspects. They are:

- 1. Learning from Experience** - Each disposition is initially encountered by discovering what pupils know about the concept from their experiences. Learning from Experience is therefore a powerful and universal foundation from which to move on to explore the other dimensions of the disposition.
- 2. Learning about Religious Traditions and Non-Religious Worldviews** - Pupils will acquire knowledge of religious traditions and non-religious worldviews enabling an understanding of their own faith or established view and those of others. Additionally, this knowledge will enable pupils to understand others around them as they encounter diverse communities, festivals and places of worship that are part of the everyday life of this multi faith city.
- 3. Learning from Faith and Non-Religious Worldviews** - Pupils will be supported as they reflect on their own practice in the light of their experiences so that they can to learn to live

well. In Religious Education character is developed through a growing acquisition of religious knowledge and knowledge of non-religious worldviews. To develop as a whole person means to grow intellectually, emotionally and behaviourally.

4. Learning to Discern - In learning to critically interpret and evaluate the content that is presented, pupils will grow in their ability to discern. Pupils will be encouraged and challenged to reflect and evaluate, to think critically about what they have learned. This will involve reflective and interpretative skills, as well as the ability for pupils to examine themselves in the light of the information encountered.

The RE curriculum at Clifton is taught as a spiral curriculum in which all the dispositions are taught with appropriate key questions at each of the following stages: Key Stage 1 (ages 5-7), Key Stage 2a (ages 7-9) and Key Stage 2b (ages 9-11). The dispositions are clustered to reflect their interdependence and the different configurations in which they may be encountered within the varying cultures and civilisations. The cluster 'Developing Compassion' includes the dispositions 'Caring for Others, Animals and the Environment', 'Sharing and Being Generous', 'Being Regardful of Suffering' and 'Being Merciful and Forgiving'. This means that by the end of Key Stage 2, our children will have an in-depth understanding of how different religions display these dispositions simultaneously and so will be well equipped to draw upon similarities rather than differences between the faiths easily.

Our lessons involve creating an environment where children are able to express their views, discuss similarities or differences between various faiths and also consider other peoples' views in a healthy manner. We believe that it is important for children to start developing critical thinking skills at this stage as it will help them to become tolerant and caring individuals in future.

Our RE curriculum is taught as discrete lessons where children are able to focus specifically on the objective of discussing how that value is shown within a certain religion(s). However, that does not mean that the lessons cannot be linked to other subjects. We encourage teachers to assess whether some of the PSHE, History and Science objectives link to the RE objectives being taught and to make cross-curricular links where appropriate. In Year 5, when children are looking at important individuals from the past who have had a positive an impact on society based on their religious beliefs (Mother Teresa, Oscar Romero, Mahatma Gandhi, Malala Yousefzai), children will arrange these individuals in the order in which they took a stance in History. In Year 2, children look at the theme of 'Caring for the Environment' by planting seeds and discussing various methods of care for their plants using scientific enquiry. When looking at feelings and emotions in PSHE, children will also look at how spirituality can sometimes uplift a person's mental health and study techniques that faiths use to elevate their mental health such as meditation in Buddhism.

We are mindful that the children at Clifton come from various backgrounds and faiths, which is why our RE lessons are mainly based on discussions about how these themes are displayed within various religions through the study of religious festivities or events. The themes of 'Being Thankful', 'Cultivating Inclusion, Identity and Belonging', and 'Being Merciful and Forgiving' may be displayed during the following religious festivals or events: Ramadan for Muslims, Vaisakhi or Diwali for Sikhs and Hindus, Lent or Christmas for Christianity and

during the time of Hanukkah for Jews. Allowing children to study all these events simultaneously means that they are able to recognise the similarities all these faiths hold by displaying these key values.