

The policies of this school have been developed from our core values. In executing these policies, special attention is taken to consider fairness, compassion and equality. Our belief is that we are all made in his image of God and are therefore equally valued, ensuring that these policies are for the benefit of the school and the wider community, and demonstrate the love of God through Christ.

Religious Education Policy

Rationale

Religious Education is a statutory part of the primary curriculum and has equal standing in relation to core and other foundation subjects. Religious Education is central to the purpose of the FORT Federation. As church schools, the Christian faith and values inform all aspects of our Christian distinctiveness, school life and learning environments.

Religious Education within the FORT Federation explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through Christianity and other principal religions of the world. It enables children to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate 'big' questions of life. Religious Education is taught in such a way that it inspires our children to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and develop respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. Through this, we aim to nurture and foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, improving their understanding and awareness of the Christian way of life.

Aims

Specifically, Religious Education within the FORT Federation aims to enable pupils of all abilities and stages of development to:

- ❖ **Develop a deep understanding of the Christian Faith**, beliefs and practices so that they understand the importance of the Bible, the role of the church and recognise that for Christians, their faith provides a way of interpreting life and its meaning.
- ❖ **Provoke challenging questions** and look for answers about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. This develops pupil's knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions and religious traditions that examine these questions, developing and fostering personal and spiritual reflection.
- ❖ **Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (regardless of their religion), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses, building resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives. Children are supported in their own search for meaning and purpose in life.
- ❖ **Enable pupils to build a sense of identity and belonging** which helps them to flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- ❖ **Teach pupils to develop respect for others** including people of different faiths and belief and the responsibility to challenge prejudice. This develops attitudes of respect, sensitivity and open-mindedness.
- ❖ **Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. This encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- ❖ **Develop their spirituality** through reflection and creative experiences in a supportive environment.
- ❖ **Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.**

Teaching and Learning

To achieve these aims, teachers within the FORT Federation will:

- ❖ Follow the agreed Religious Education schemes and accompanying material to ensure a broad coverage of Christianity and the other principal religions. This ensures continuity and progression for all children and opportunities for assessment.
- ❖ Ask children questions that encourage them to explore their own thoughts and ensure teachers own knowledge is adequate in answering children's questions.
- ❖ Offer children opportunities to explore, question, reflect and express their feelings in a safe learning environment.
- ❖ Provide a range of rich teaching and learning activities that will inspire and ensure all children learn effectively with a keen interest in religion.
- ❖ While Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject, opportunities for cross-curricular links are made where possible.
- ❖ Assess children's knowledge and understanding of RE throughout the course of each academic year.

Our Learning Environments

In addition to the above guidelines, to promote the importance of Religious Education and our Christian distinctiveness across the FORT Federation, teachers will ensure that learning environment include the following:

- ❖ Classrooms are to display examples of Religious Education work and/or activities.
- ❖ Every classroom must have a dedicated worship area, encouraging prayer and reflection and support opportunities for whole class prayer and quiet times.
- ❖ Each classroom should have a prayer box or class equivalent with which teacher's model and encourage its use.
- ❖ Our core values, which are rooted in the Christian faith are actively discussed and referred to as well as being on display.
- ❖ A prayer is said to give thanks before lunch and at the end of the school day and at any other time deemed appropriate.

Religious Education Syllabus

The Fort Federation uses the Understanding Christianity scheme of work to aid the teaching and learning of Christianity from Foundation stage through to Key Stage 2. This scheme has been endorsed by the local Diocese and provides children with a full and broad understanding of the Christian Faith. In conjunction with the Understanding Christianity scheme, the Fort Federation uses the Discovery RE scheme to aid in its teaching and learning of six other principal religions.

Time Allocation

In addition to collective worship, Religious Education will be taught explicitly as part of the curriculum to the Foundation for half an hour per week, Key Stage 1 for one hour per week and Key Stage 2 for one hour and twenty-five minutes per week.

Assessment

Assessment of Religious Education within the Fort Federation takes many forms; this is by no means an exhaustive list. Most commonly, it will take the following forms:

- ❖ Assessment will be levelled in accordance to the National Curriculum guidelines for Religious Education and the Fort Federations own 'I can' statements.
- ❖ Information about children's learning and progress in Religious Education is included in every child's end of year report.
- ❖ Religious Education is included in book scrutinies each year.
- ❖ SLT/RE Co-ordinator will conduct lesson observations and/or pupil conferencing

Withdrawal

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of the Religious Education curriculum. However as Religious Education is central to the life and identity of the FORT federation, we would ask parents to discuss any reasons they might have for doing this with the Head Teacher before making a final decision.