

Religious Education (R.E.) is a Statutory part of the National Curriculum in England and Wales. However, with a national picture where religion is being less and less a part of our daily lives, we felt it was important for us as a school to consider the reasons for; and the benefits of; teaching good quality Religious Education as part of a busy school curriculum

We hope you find this leaflet both interesting and informative. Should you wish to discuss any of the issues raised with in this document or the teaching of R.E. with in our school please don't hesitate in contacting the Headteacher through the e-mail or telephone number provided below.

Do we really want Religious Education taught in our school?



Kislingbury CEVC Primary School

High Street
Kislingbury
Northamptonshire
NN7 4AQ

Headteacher— Mr Neil Tyler
Telephone: 01604 83117
E-mail: head@kislingbury.northants-ecl.gov.uk



Why the teaching of Religious Education is such an important part of our school's curriculum

A Parent and Carers Information Leaflet

Kislingbury CEVC Primary School

A Very Busy and Full Curriculum

At Kislingbury School we always strive to ensure we have a very full and enriching curriculum. Although we give a strong focus to academic achievement and the development of our pupils mathematical and literacy based skills we do also recognise the importance of developing the whole child. We wish to produce children who have confidence, independence, and the life skills and value system to become a central part of our community.

Developing a System of Belief

All of us as adults and children reflect on our own belief and values system when we are faced with the dilemmas that life throws us. It is our core beliefs and values that sets our understanding of; and attitudes to others. Everyone needs, and has belief, if you believe God does not exist it is a belief. Good R.E. teaching makes children question their own beliefs and those that underpin their society. It gives them an insight in to the beliefs of others and helps them to reach their own views and opinions.

John Keast, chair of the R.E. council wrote:

Ideas of life, if they are not discussed and considered in school, children may be ill-equipped to deal with these ideas later and become prey to those who do it for them through preaching, the media, I.T. or worse.

The teaching of R.E. in our school, as part of our values based ethos, gives our children a safe and non-pressured environment in which to develop their own views, opinions and beliefs that will help to guide them through the rest of their lives.

Social Development and Community Cohesion

Good quality teaching of R.E. allows children to develop an understanding and appreciation of; not only the religious beliefs and values that underpin their own families and communities, but those of other peoples, cultures and communities and of our society in general. We use knowledge to overcome the differences and misconceptions that cause social tension. Being tolerant and understanding the thoughts, beliefs and customs of others allows us to develop stronger relationships and make our society happier and more secure. As part of our R.E. curriculum the children will learn about the beliefs, culture, festivals and celebrations of the main world religions, all of which are present in our multicultural, multi faith modern British society today.

The modern world needs young people who are confident in their own beliefs and values and that are tolerant and respectful of the belief system of others.

Emma McVittie 'The Value of Primary R.E.'



Cultural Heritage

The history of the United Kingdom and Europe has been deeply influenced by not only Christianity but by other world religions such as Judaism and the Islamic faith. Our language, literacy, number system, law, political system, art, architecture and moral standards have all been formed around religious writings and teaching. Much of the work of great artists and authors in history has been dominated by religious themes. It is impossible to study history with out studying the beliefs and values that shaped it. Even our calendar of holidays has been set around religious festivals. How can we not give time in our children's education to studying such a major influence in the world they live in?

Personal Development

Learning about and from religion helps to develop us personally, it helps us consider what is right and wrong, to consider what it means to be human. The time given for discussion and thought helps us to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally. It helps us to grow and foster empathy, sensitivity, humility and communication and thinking skills. It can help to give us greater self-awareness and deeper respect for others. It can help to shape what values and moral path we may follow for the rest of our lives. It can help us to think about the sort of people we want to be.

Academic Challenge and Learning Skills

Development

How R.E. is taught in our school encourages the children to question what they are taught. It strongly develops high level thinking skills such as reflection, analysis, investigation, interpretation, evaluation, empathy, expression, discussion, communication and debating skills. It helps with mental, linguistic and cognitive development and is one of only a few subjects where the thought process and the discussion is as important as the facts and the knowledge. It helps children to develop their learning skills and to question the perceived 'right answer'.

In Conclusion

Religious Education is not about indoctrination or conversion, as some may fear, it is in fact the opposite. It is about learning to question, to consider your own beliefs and to be tolerant of those of others. It is about developing your self and understanding our society and your own place in it.