

ST NEOT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RATIONALE

Intent

At St Neot Primary School our intention is that all our children will become resilient, accepting, mindful and inquisitive learners, developing self-awareness and confidence. RE lessons will offer a broad and rich RE curriculum, allowing for a variety of ways to explore religions, community cohesion, personal development and wellbeing. The lessons will provide high quality, coherent and progressive experiences, with opportunities for cross-curricular learning. Pupils will learn about a range of religions and world views, through a Cornish focused syllabus. Teaching RE is vital to children understanding other beliefs and making connections between their own beliefs and values. We believe that it is essential to ensure that pupils are curious, engaged and are able to express their own ideas. Meaningful discussions, challenging questions and time for reflection will enable pupils to develop a rich understanding of religions and beliefs, and will encourage deeper moral and cultural awareness. High quality experiences, including balanced and informed conversations, will prepare pupils for modern life and enable them to develop personally.

RE contributes to the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The ability to understand moral and ethical issues, cultural influences and diversity enables pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, ideas and values. We use the new Cornwall Agreed Syllabus (2020-2025). The purpose of the units are summed up in its principal aim 'The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas.' It is our aim that this is reflected in all the RE lessons taught at our school and will enable all pupils to develop religious literacy, effective, articulate dialogue and the ability to participate positively knowing that they will all be respected and valued.

Implementation

It is important that the children's learning is inclusive of all religious and non-religious world views. They also need the opportunity to learn more about the religious, spiritual and cultural character of Cornwall and its rich heritage. The teaching of RE in St Neot Primary School will be taught using the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus (2020-2025). This syllabus is designed to develop and deliver excellence in RE throughout the whole school. It does this by studying one religion at a time in a systematic approach. Pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their ability to investigate questions, explore key concepts and encourage deeper understanding.

The teaching and learning approach has three core elements, which are interwoven together to allow for breadth, depth, flexibility and progress. The three core elements are:

Element 1: Making sense of beliefs – Identifying and making sense of religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean; looking at a range of sources such as texts and how they are used and expressed and interpreted in different ways.

Element 2: Understanding the impact – Examining how and why people put their beliefs into practice in diverse ways, within their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.

Element 3: Making connections - Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting beliefs and practices studied, allowing pupils to challenge ideas and the ideas studied to challenge pupils' thinking; discerning possible connections between these and the pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the wider world.

The RE curriculum enables pupils to revisit previous learning and embed new concepts and develop long-term consolidation. Pupils will study in depth the following religious traditions.

Foundation: Discovering Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.

Key Stage One: Exploring Christians, Jews and Muslims and one Cornish Unit, "What makes some people and places in Cornwall sacred? "

Lower Key Stage Two: Connecting Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews and one Cornish Unit, "How and why do people in Cornwall mark significant events in community life? "

Upper Key Stage Two: Connecting Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews and one Cornish Unit, "Does faith help people in Cornwall when life gets hard? "

The pupils encounter engaging and imaginatively resourced lessons, which are taught using a range of teaching and learning styles. These allow for the personal development of skills and understanding. There is a clear sequence of progression throughout the school and children's knowledge and understanding is built upon as they move from year to year. Progress and attainment is monitored through the end of phase outcomes and any gaps are then addressed. When monitoring, we check that pupils know, understand and apply the concepts, skills and learning processes relevant to each unit and that they are consolidating and embedding learning.

In addition to the RE Curriculum which is taught through dedicated RE lessons using the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus, the children attend daily assemblies and as part of these, enjoy and participate in 'Open The Book'. This is a fortnightly assembly led by a dedicated group from the local church. They perform a series of plays that bring bible stories to life and enable pupils to think about some of the more challenging ideas. The school also has strong links with the local church and the local community. A Harvest Celebration is usually held each year in the church and at Christmas, the whole school welcomes families, friends and the local community to celebrate the Christmas Story. In order to strengthen our multicultural links and to support our enriched curriculum, we organise a range of workshops. The pupils learn about Hindu and Sikh traditions, culture, clothes and cooking, in addition to the important aspects of Hindu and Sikh faith and beliefs. A wide range of resources and artefacts are used to inspire and encourage learning and opportunities for research and self-development are promoted.

Impact

As a result of our RE Curriculum, all children have a better understanding of the religions in the United Kingdom. They appreciate and value the diversity of people's different backgrounds and beliefs, resulting in a common vision and a sense of belonging, which leads to greater community cohesion. They are able to talk confidently about the importance of contributing to the community and getting on with others. The children are more informed about their position in the world and they show a deeper understanding of the main religions, demonstrating respectful opinions and tolerance and an understanding of all those around them including themselves.

They often recall key facts many years after they have been taught and recall memorable learning experiences, such as their participation in Sikhism, Hindu and Islam workshops. We regularly visit the local Church and have also visited the synagogue in Plymouth. They speak enthusiastically about the activities that have taken place and what they have learnt. Lessons enable high quality work to be produced and there are many examples of the children applying their learning through cross-curricular links. All pupils, including disadvantaged and SEND pupils, successfully build upon "the

knowledge and cultural capital” they need to succeed in life, including a greater knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews. They are better prepared for the “next steps” and have an increased awareness and resilience to manage the way ahead.