



## Maryland Primary School Religious Education Policy March 2017

### The legal position

Maryland Primary School, in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act, provides Religious Education for all pupils registered at the school. Religious Education is statutory, but not part of the National Curriculum because it is taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus (in our case the Newham *Agreed Syllabus*). We must stress that Religious Education has the same status and importance as any other foundation subject and the same high standards are applied to Religious Education as to all other foundation subjects.

We teach Religious Education according to the aims of the Newham Agreed Syllabus which is written by SACRE to suit the demography and diversity of the area. The local SACRE review and agree the syllabus every 5 years alongside all faith leaders and this also refers to visiting places of worship. All faith leaders agreed that children should participate in RE in order to have an understanding of the people they meet and of the wider world.

### Aims

The Newham Agreed Syllabus aims to support pupils to:

1. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain
2. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
3. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious and moral issues with reference to the teaching of the principal religions represented in Great Britain
4. enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
  - a) developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experience, and how religious teaching can relate to them;
  - b) responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their understanding and experience;
  - c) reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study
5. develop respect for other people's right to hold different beliefs
6. develop a positive attitude towards living in a society of diverse religions.

### Planning and delivery

The Religious Education curriculum is based on three attainment targets:

1. Attainment target 1-----Learning about and understanding religions and worldviews
2. Attainment target 2-----Expressing and communicating ideas related to religions and worldviews
3. Attainment target 3-----Gaining and deploying the skills needed for studying religion and worldviews

To ensure all three attainment targets are met and that all units of work are covered thoroughly, children at Maryland Primary School:

- visit a different place of worship every year to learn about religions locally as well as worldwide.
- have a local Christian charity called Faith in Schools come in to our school 3 times a year and cover some of our Christian units.
- also embed their learning of all faiths through assemblies; CPSHE and other subjects such as Science, Literacy and Topic.

The R E curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop the following skills and attitudes:

#### Skills:

Investigation, empathy, synthesis, interpretation, evaluation, application, reflection, analysis and expression.

#### Attitudes:

Commitment, fairness, respect, self-understanding and enquiry.

## **Resources / ways of responding**

A variety of resources is used when/where appropriate, namely books, artefacts, posters, videos, slides and people from local faith traditions. Pupils have the opportunity to respond to material in a variety of ways. This may be through: poems, stories, reports on visits, art work, design technology, music, drama, maths work, discussions, displays and through their own behaviour.

## **Assessment and record keeping**

At present there is no nationally laid down assessment framework. However, the postholder ensures that teaching is pitched at the right level for pupils and this is monitored through book sampling and against the three attainment targets until the new 2016 guidelines from the Newham Agreed Syllabus.

At the end of each academic year, personal responses of pupils are not formally assessed however teachers are expected to use the 'I can' statements from the planning templates to help each child assess their own success at the end of each unit studied.

## **Withdrawal from religious education**

Parents may withdraw their child from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school, as is the practice within the London Borough of Newham (***see Appendix F of the Newham Agreed Syllabus in line with LA additional guidance\****). However, if parents/carers wish for their child to be excused from RE lessons within the School, then the School is required to comply. Parents are not obliged to provide reasons for withdrawal. Where a child has been withdrawn, the School has a duty to supervise them but not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from Religious Education in a way that the school cannot provide without extra cost, then Maryland Primary School is no longer *in loco parentis* and the parents must provide some sort of alternative Religious lesson content during the time the remainder of the pupils are being taught. RE is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad-minded, therefore the school does not support selective withdrawal from RE. However, we hope that all parents would feel comfortable with the content of Religious Education being taught at Maryland School and value the spirit of understanding and tolerance it engenders in pupils. It is also worth noting that as the LA has carefully included all religions and world views encountered within our community and has these groups' approval of this syllabus, it is rare that withdrawal from lessons would ever be required.

***\*If parents want to pursue withdrawal from RE, it is our practice here in Newham that they must write to the headteacher and governors to make this request. This request will then be discussed at the next governor's meeting and a decision made about how the school will cover this request.***