



Headteacher: Mrs L Armstrong

Date: October 2016

Date for review: Annually

## **Introduction**

Religious Education is an essential part of our curriculum at Burnside and makes a vital contribution to the education of our children. It plays an important part in the provision of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which every child is entitled. Through RE, teachers are able to foster spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, physical and social development. Children are engaged in not only learning about religion, but also from religion.

The ethos of our school is further enhanced through the teaching of RE – skills of empathy, understanding, acceptance, consideration and respect are all developed through RE lessons.

RE contributes to personal and social development with pupils encouraged to reflect on their own spiritual and moral ideas whilst also exploring a range of world religions and developing understanding of other cultures and traditions. Skills for adult life, employment and lifelong learning are all explored through RE.

“RE provokes challenging questions....develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding....offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development ... and encourages respect for all.” (Durham Agreed Syllabus 2012)

## **The legal position of RE**

The Education Reform Act 1988 sets out the legal requirements for the teaching of Religious Education and states that all pupils aged 5-18, must be taught Religious Education.

Burnside Primary school follows the Durham Agreed Syllabus 2012, which is a statutory order. This syllabus, in accordance with The Education Act 1996, reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of teachings and practices of other principal world religions represented in Great Britain. At Burnside Primary, the children in Key Stage 1 focus on Christianity and Buddhism, whilst at Key Stage 2, there is a focus on Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Elements of other faiths may also be included. The Foundation Stage also explore some aspects of world religions. The Agreed Syllabus must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge particular religion or religious belief on pupils. At Burnside, we treat all belief systems with respect and encourage our pupils to do the same.

## **The importance of Religious Education**

The main aims of Religious Education at Burnside Primary are summarised in the Durham Agreed Syllabus as follows:

- to provoke **challenging questions** about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- to develop pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and world views that offer answers to questions.
- to offer opportunities for **personal reflection and spiritual development**, encouraging pupils to explore their own beliefs, examine religious issues and consider their own response. RE enables pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging whilst encouraging empathy.

- To promote **mutual respect and tolerance** in order that pupils understand and appreciate the diverse society, helping to challenge prejudice, discrimination and racism. Both personal development and community cohesion are thus promoted through religious education.

### **Withdrawal**

Under the terms of the 1988 Education Reform Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Religious Education.

It is the responsibility of the school to make adequate alternative provision for children withdrawn from Religious Education.

Burnside Primary respects the rights of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, however, the Headteacher would be very happy to meet with parents who have any concerns to discuss religious education in the school and consider arrangements.

### **Organisation and Management of RE**

RE lessons take place in a variety of ways depending upon the religion and class topic.

The school has an RE co-ordinator who prepares the Action Plan and reviews, monitors and evaluates provision and practice of Religious Education.

Governors will be informed of any developments and changes to provision in RE and amendments to school policy are made available for discussion and approval.

Class teachers will report verbally to parents at parents evening and they will additionally present a written report to parents once a year.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Religious Education is open to all children at Burnside Primary School regardless of religion, race, culture, gender and ability. Through the teaching of religious education, children learn to:

- become aware that Britain is multi-religious and multi-cultural
- challenge inequalities and discrimination based on race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic groups
- respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others.

## **Planning and Delivery of RE**

Burnside Primary has a long term plan in place which has been produced by the RE co-ordinator in conjunction with Durham County Council and this meets the needs of the Agreed Syllabus. All staff follow this plan when teaching RE.

As part of the RE curriculum and to further enrich the pupils experiences, we invite visitors from other faith communities into our school to meet with the children and talk about their faith. The children will also visit religious buildings linked to the RE topic they are studying.

Parents will be kept informed of any developments in relation to Religious Education and the school RE policy is available for parents to view.

October 2016

Here are some of the visitors we have welcomed to Burnside Primary School:



Kirtida from the Hindu Temple in Newcastle came to visit us in February 2016.



We all enjoyed dressing up in traditional Hindu costumes and listening to music and stories.

Andrea, the vicar from St. Andrew's Church in Stanley comes into school and leads whole school assemblies. Here she is talking to us about Advent.

