



Religious Education

Intent

Our vision is for the children of Wheatcroft to have high aspirations and to strive to be the best that they can be whilst making a positive contribution to the school community and beyond. We support this through our three school values of courage, care and commitment; our learning of RE and PSHE helps to underpin the development of these. 'Discovery RE: The enquiry approach to RE' is the tool through which we teach our Religious Education. Our belief is that, using an enquiry-based model, children's critical thinking skills can be developed, their motivation to learn increased, and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise, will be enhanced. This approach takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief. RE does not try to persuade but rather to inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place

Implementation

Discovery RE advocates an enquiry model (recommended by Ofsted in "Religious education: realising the potential", 2013) with a 4-step approach as the basis for implementation. Every unit (enquiry) is based around a key question. The key question focuses on discovering an answer that weighs up 'evidence' (subject knowledge) and reaches a conclusion based on this. This requires children to use their subject knowledge and apply it to the enquiry question, rather than this knowledge being an end in itself. Discovery RE focuses on critical thinking skills; on personal reflection into the child's own thoughts and feelings; on growing subject knowledge and nurturing spiritual development.

The children start from their own experience to ensure understanding of the concept being studied then move into investigating that concept in depth from the point of view of the chosen religion. This continues over three lessons of investigation and discussion throughout Step 2, which embeds subject knowledge. These lessons not only support the children with embedding their RE knowledge, but also contribute to their reflection and critical thinking skills. Exposure to and analysis of religious texts can also enhance their reading, comprehension and inference skills.

In Step 3, they complete an assessment activity to evaluate the question again in light of their new knowledge, and have further opportunities to embed their own reflections on the learning in Step 4.

The recommended Discovery RE model for Key Stages 1 and 2, of studying Christianity plus one other religion in each year group, means both religions have multiple enquiries (or 6 week units) per year. This ensures that the children revisit prior learning for both religions throughout the year to build on the previous enquiries, and Christmas and Easter enquiries are built on year-on-year throughout the child's primary school journey. In addition to this, the medium-term nature of the Discovery RE planning allows teachers the freedom to plan with detail and attention to their individual children. Learners can be scaffolded and any individual needs can be supported where necessary. Greater depth children can be challenged to ensure that they are being given the opportunities to enrich their learning further.

Impact

The children at Wheatcroft Primary School enjoy learning about other religions and why people choose to follow a religion. Through their R.E. learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. Through R.E. our children are developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life and worship, which they are then able to communicate to the wider community.