



Welsh House Farm Community School & Resource Base



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (Discovery RE)

Intent

Our intent is for the children of Welsh House Farm Community School 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 school values and our learning. 'Discovery RE: The enquiry approach to RE' is the tool through which we teach our Religious Education. It aligns to our school values and what we believe our children need to make a positive contribution to the school community and beyond.

Our intent is that, using an enquiry-based model well, 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 for the enquiry is such that it demands an answer that weighs up 'evidence' (subject knowledge) and reaches a conclusion based on this. This necessitates children using their subject knowledge and applying 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 oracy 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.

Children's written and oral responses are used to create a class portfolio that follows them throughout their school life

Impact

- RE is an opportunity for pupils to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect and relate their learning in RE to their own experience.
- There is a wide-ranging study of religion and belief across the key stages as a whole.

- Religions are studied in a way that is coherent and promotes progression.
- Pupils have the opportunity to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives, and subject matter should facilitate integration and promotion of shared values.
- The study of religion is based on the legal requirements and provide an appropriate balance between and within Christianity, other principal religions and, where appropriate, other religious traditions and worldviews, across the key stages as a whole, making appropriate links with other parts of the curriculum and its cross-curricular dimension.