

Questions for reflection

- Can we ensure that RE is planned to involve creative and imaginative experiences?
- Are we proactive in inviting members of local faith communities to regularly visit the school, both formally and informally?
- Do we ensure that religious celebrations are not tokenistic?
- Do we give pupils opportunities to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions through the creative and expressive arts as they explore the awe and wonder of the natural world and make their own response to spiritual awareness?

Next steps

Curriculum Audit: Conduct an evaluation of existing Religious Education studies – is there potential for development of global learning skills? Are there opportunities to include the expressive arts? How do we promote respect for all? Do we have a programme for visits to places of worship in the locality? Do we plan to develop critical thinking skills that are implicit in Attainment Target 2 for RE?

Make decisions: Does our RE scheme of work reflect the religious diversity of our local community? Do we have the skills to implement the critical thinking required by global learning studies? Can we plan to make RE part of our cross curricular work?

Monitoring & Evaluation: how do you know it's working?

Pupils making sense of the world with a wider and more informed perspective:

- having positive attitudes and growing empathy towards different communities
- developing a sensitivity to diverse lifestyles in the UK and how they connect with the rest of the world
- sharing information from the media with teachers and aware of disasters in different parts of the world
- talking about people and places using specific geographical vocabulary
- school council representatives offering ideas for participation and action in the school and local community and within the global dimension
- in the classroom there are pupil questions about fairness, links are made between fair trade and exploitation, poverty, wealth and interdependence
- school curriculum projects which incorporate global learning skills are motivating pupil engagement.

Thematic Links

The non-statutory framework for RE places inclusion, tolerance, diversity and interfaith dialogue at the heart of children's learning. Good RE taught in the spirit of the Framework can address the prejudices brought about by a shallow knowledge of world religions and beliefs.

RE in the local context

Schools can maximise RE's contribution to pupils' understanding of faith in the community by:

- providing opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate diversity by exploring how practices and beliefs vary within traditions, change over time and are influenced by cultures. This could include taking part in visits, speaker events, web-based investigations, dialogues or community projects that involve understanding differences and seeing similarities.
- providing opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' beliefs about why people belong to faith communities, what challenges and tensions might be caused by belonging to a faith, and how religious beliefs relate to a secular world view. Providing pupils with a safe forum for the discussion of controversial issues is an essential part of RE's contribution to the curriculum and school life.

Introduction

Religious Education asks questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and what it means to be human. Pupils explore beliefs, practices and feelings in relation to religious faith and traditions which have shaped peoples' lives. The Global Learner needs to be equipped with this knowledge and understanding in order to respect values and attitudes in a diverse society, while evaluating commonalities and differences. RE's significant partnership with global learning is to ensure that pupils have a critical interest in the lives and concerns of others, with sensitivity to their feelings. In developing insight into others' beliefs pupils will reflect on their own beliefs and experiences, form their own opinions and develop positive attitudes to religious and cultural diversity.

RE and Global Learning

Effective RE teaching can actively challenge stereotypes, promote respect and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs when developing enquiries which investigate the diversity of religion both locally and globally.

Common concerns in human experiences are emphasised in RE through moral insights in spiritual stories and teachings. Through exploring the meanings of these, pupils develop views of what is right or wrong and consider people's rights to be treated fairly, as they begin to develop skills in making moral judgements

In comparing the above ideas common themes are identified that promote cooperation, honesty and justice, which help pupils to begin to recognise inequalities and injustice.

Global learning demands that pupils have an interest in and respect for cultures that are different from their own. Enjoying culturally and religiously diverse experiences in RE develops the ability to learn from and to empathise with people from different cultural traditions. Pupils have opportunities to know and understand that beliefs, values and cultures can be expressed in diverse traditions of language, art, music, and dance amongst many other artistic forms.

Enquiry based studies of world religions in the primary school focus on daily life and religious observance both in the home and place of worship. These aspects increase pupil knowledge and understanding of the importance that religion can have in the lives of others. The recognition of similarities in life styles develops empathy with children of different faiths and ethnicity.



Outcomes for pupils

- Pupils develop an understanding of what religions have in common and how and why they differ. They develop positive attitudes towards diversity of belief and practice. This will enable them to challenge other viewpoints when misconceptions are feeding stereotyping and prejudice.
- They may recognise that they themselves do have feelings of prejudice which they are uncomfortable with.
- Opportunities given in RE - spiritual awareness, inspirational stories, questions that open up moral dilemmas, time to express own thoughts and feelings - will impact on personal development.
- In RE pupils will have opportunities to articulate their own ideas about right and wrong and consider their own rights and responsibilities.
- Older pupils may become aware of negative reporting in the media of the practices of some religious faiths.
- Critical awareness of stewardship and the awe and wonder of our relationship with the Earth can inspire both spiritual development and global awareness.
- Conflict resolution plays a role in stories and teachings from different faith traditions. Learning from these will help pupils to evaluate their own attitudes and feelings for tackling conflict prevention in the classroom.



Global Learning Centre

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Details of current teacher training, information on global learning and examples of HEC's work
www.globallearninglondon.org.uk

Join the London Global Teacher Network - LGTN offers London teachers the chance to connect around global learning.
www.lgtn.org.uk



Learning in a Global Context was developed through Local4Global, funded by UK Aid.



Learning in a Global Context is a framework for supporting schools in preparing young people for life in an increasingly globalised world.

Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religion and beliefs which form part of contemporary society

Religious Education in Schools Non Statutory Guidance 2010

Children learn that people in their own community and around the world have diverse belief systems and recognise similarities between them. By doing this they will begin to develop awareness and respect for different points of view.

KS 1 Curriculum Objective

Children learn about the world's major religions and about how each individual is important. By doing this they can appreciate religious diversity in their own society and around the world. They can learn about others' diverse beliefs with regard to the environment and how religion impacts upon people's lives

KS 2 Curriculum Objective

The disorder of the world surfaces in school in many ways and the very qualities that are needed to address the global crisis are the very same qualities required in school...Any school can become a community which models how the world may be... The values of community, simplicity, helpfulness, creativity, celebration and openness to the spirit bring with them the possibility of a school where people matter and where they can be fulfilled. The same values are those that can contribute to a world where justice, peace and care for the environment are made a priority.

Values and Visions: Spiritual Development and Global Awareness in the Primary School 1993

Key texts expressing the importance of Sustainability.

These connect with the views of pupils and will form the basis for discussion of similarities and differences between these commitments and values.

Judaism

When God created the first man, he led him around all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him, "Look at what I have made, how beautiful it all is. Do not spoil and destroy my universe. If you do, no one will repair it."

Midrash Rabbah, Kohelet 7

Hinduism

This world is the home of God. He dwells in all things. One should only take what one needs and leave the rest for others, because it really all belongs to God.

Hindu Isa Upanishad

Christianity

Take care of the air water, earth, plants and animals as if they were your brothers and sisters

United Reformed Church

Buddhism

The trees are like our mother and father, they feed us nourish us and provide us with everything; fruit, leaves, the branches, and the trunk. They give us food and satisfy many of our needs.

Maha Ghosananda, the leading Buddhist monk in Cambodia

Islam

It is an act of kindness to plant a tree or sow a field where animals and people can eat its fruit

The Qur'an

Live Thoughtfully: an RE Curriculum Guide for Global Citizenship
Christian Aid

Global Learning experiences within KS 1 and 2 R.E.

KS1 Identity and diversity - Shompa

Global Learning skills: Exploring similarities and differences between communities and faiths; seeing community life from different points of view; appreciating cooperation, developing empathy and challenging stereotypes.

RE skills: Knowledge and understanding of the Hindu faith; religious observance in the home / links with Divali; analysing levels of the commitment of the family and the community to look after each other.

Activity Sequence: The big book, 'Shompa', has large colourful, good quality photographs of Shompa's daily life. She lives in a village near Kolkata in India. The starting point is a class discussion about how we help each other before the book is introduced. Illustrations give areas of similarity with UK life experiences – Shompa playing with her friends, at school, watching television, her mother cooking. Differences have positive images - clean water from the pump, new house that her father built with a solid roof, close community interaction and strong mutual support. Sensitive discussion of commonalities are listed, compared and analysed with opportunities to reflect on pupils own lives. Focus on the shrine in Shompa's home can support sensitive discussion of different ways of worship and special places in the home.

Shompa, Christian Aid (Geography and Literacy)

KS 2 Fair Trade, economic justice - Slice of the cake

Global learning skills: Making decisions about what is fair or unfair; critical thinking to evaluate moral arguments; working together as a team.

RE skills: learning from religion - expressing feelings and personal values, applying learning in RE to their own and others' lives.

An enquiry into social and economic justice makes an active and lively starting point for Y5. Slices of cake are given to the class (25 % are given nothing, 25% have 1 slice each, 25 % have 3 slices each, 21% have 10 slices each and 1% has 1 slice.) The ensuing discussion centres on the unfair distribution leading to an understanding that this reflects the worldwide distribution of food. In groups pupils research two stories of families working in cocoa bean plantations. One is exploited and other is part of a fair trade cooperative. Pupils make decisions about differences between the lives of these families. Internet resources from the Fair trade Foundation are researched to analyse the reasons for fair trade. A range of statements from different faiths are investigated to compare views on fair trade. E.g. *Production and trade in business are all done as part of honest religious life* Dharam di Kirt *God requires justice and kindness and giving* The Qur'an. Pupils will be able to synthesise these pieces of information to evaluate the moral choices explicit in both fair trade and religious values in the belief systems of faith communities. Living Thoughtfully, Christian Aid.

KS 1 and 2 Visiting local places of worship

Global learning skills and attitudes: appreciating the similarities between cultures, recognition that different faith communities have similar moral and social beliefs, value and respect for difference and diversity, developing own viewpoints.

RE skills and attitudes: Know and understand that religious communities have an impact on the lives of believers, and how beliefs are expressed in worship and spiritual awareness.

Activity sequence: A range of enquiries before the visit stimulate and engage pupil interest - focusing on key beliefs and traditions, collaborative work - interrogating visuals of significant features of the building to scaffold deductive skills, handling artefacts and promoting respect for their significance. Recalling visits to other places of worship, compare and contrast how art is used in worship. Share differences and similarities, while investigating meanings of symbols and sacred writing. During the visit, organise time for appreciating stillness and how this special place feels (awe and wonder) - find out how people behave in this place, and about the community rooms attached to the place of worship and discuss the importance of other activities, decide why people meet there socially on a regular basis ? Discuss why people want to worship together, pupils express own views and feelings, ask questions, evaluate the impact of this religious community in the locality,

QCDA units of work for KS1 and KS2 are useful for planning when visiting a place of worship in the locality.

Global dimension concepts in the context of R.E.

Sustainability

Teachings from different faiths have respect and care for the environment and spiritual awareness expressed in feelings of awe and wonder for the natural world.

Peace and Conflict

Conflict resolution plays a role in stories and teachings from different faith traditions alongside strong messages in how we treat others.

Identity and Diversity

Understanding and respecting differences in religious belief and ways of life

Appreciating and celebrating diversity and recognising commonalities

Social Justice

Key teachings of all faiths recognise injustice and call for action. Concern for inequalities of low levels of poverty in some communities is a strong call to action for primary pupils.

Economic unfairness in world trade - action through Fair-trade activities

World religions have a global dimension linking people with diverse national, ethnic and cultural background

Globalisation and Interdependence

An understanding that our actions in the UK can have a positive or negative impact on the quality of life for other people – exploring the making of moral decisions. World religions have a global dimension linking people with diverse national, ethnic and cultural experiences.