



Religious Education Newsletter (May 2018)

Mrs Kelly - RE Leader

Understanding Christianity

Our school is in its second year of using the **Understanding Christianity** resource, which is the Diocese recommended scheme of work for teaching Christianity in primary schools. There are three elements which run through the project: **making sense of the text**, **understanding the impact** and **making connections**.



The purpose of the resource is to contribute to our pupils' understanding of the world and their own experience within it. It aims to develop their understanding of significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of their wider religious literacy. In particular, it enables pupils to make sense of Biblical texts and understand their significance in the lives of Christians. Through using this resource at the Priory School, we seek to develop pupils' ability to connect, critically reflect upon and apply their understanding of religion and belief.

Feedback and Response to Our Recent Ofsted Inspection (March 2018)

We were pleased to see that Ofsted recognised that Christian distinctiveness is at the heart of our work. However, we recognise that the inspectors felt our pupils did not have a secure enough understanding of other cultures and faiths beyond Christianity. In RE (and also in our cross-curricular planning), the need to develop and strengthen pupils' understanding of other faiths is a key development area for the school.

Our main teaching of 'other faiths' is usually done in the summer term of each year (Years 1/2 – Judaism; Year 3 – Sikhism; Year 4 – Buddhism and Years 5/6 – Islam). We will review this, spreading the topics more evenly across the year. For further details about the RE covered this term, please see the **curriculum newsletters on the website** and the **RE curriculum page**.

Mr Ruffle is currently teaching RE to Class 4 on a Friday afternoon during the summer. He is focusing on Buddhism, using the locally agreed syllabus from Hampshire called 'Living Difference'. We are going to be using aspects of this resource to enrich and deepen our current planning.

Developments in Collective Worship

Our worship themes always centre on Christian values and we focus on a different aspect each half term. Our current value is **'Service'**. The fortnightly newsletter now has a dedicated 'worship' section which explains what the children have been learning.

Since our last RE newsletter we have introduced **'Open The Book'** on a Thursday during worship. Using the Bible Society resource <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book>, a group of volunteers literally open the Bible and act out one of the key stories, more often than not including our pupils. Open the Book helps to bring the stories from the Bible to life for all our pupils.

The ministry team from the Priory Church continue to regularly lead worship on a Wednesday morning and we value this partnership. Father Charles and Father Richard

link their worships with our half termly values. Our pupils also have the opportunity to be involved in the regular family services at the Priory Church. We are looking forward to further strengthening our relationship with the Priory Church by working with the new Parish Children's Worker, Heidi Haagensen. She will be starting a Christian lunchtime club for KS2 children after May half term.

We now have the '**Big Sing**' fortnightly, led by either myself or Miss Deay (our Music Leader). During this worship we concentrate on the hymns or Christian songs that we are preparing to sing at our beginning and/or end of term services. We are keen to develop our repertoire so we also rehearse new songs linked to our values or songs the children might be familiar with from church.

We have added '**Aspiration**' as one of our core values, alongside **Love, Forgiveness** and **Respect**. Our mission statement is '**Learning together, aiming high.**' Pupils are very aware of our school values and what they stand for. We refer to these in school regularly.

Monitoring and Training

In December, I carried out a pupil voice and book scrutiny with the previous RE Governor, Mr Labuschagne. He spent a morning in school talking with pupils, looking at books and attending worship. On Tuesday 1st May, I also met with colleagues from around the region at the Diocese RE Network held at St. Katharine's Primary School. This was a good opportunity to share ideas and look at best practice.

Summer 2018 SIAMS Church Inspection

SIAMS stands for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. The main objective of a SIAMS inspection is to evaluate the **distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church school**, as well as how well the distinctive Christian character and ethos of the school ensure the development and achievement of the whole child or young person. We are due our SIAMS inspection this summer as it has been five years since our last one. Our current rating is good.

The SIAMS asks four core questions:

- How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?
- What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?
- How effective is the Religious Education? (*in VA schools and academies*)
- How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school?

No doubt the inspectors will want to speak with parents as well our pupils and staff, but I'm sure we are all getting used to that by now! They will observe RE lessons and an act of collective worship as part of their day with us.

If you have any questions about our RE provision, please contact me via the School Office.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Kelly

Words of Wisdom reminder

"There is more happiness in giving than receiving."

The words of Jesus recorded in Acts 20.35 – The Good News Bible.