Upperwood Academy Approach to Teaching of Religious Education

Intent

In line with the National Curriculum and the Six Key Questions of the Barnsley Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education we have developed our HCAT RE curriculum. Children learn about a variety of religions and social development points throughout their time at school. The HCAT progressive document supports the progression of knowledge and skills a child should learn and how children revisit knowledge and skills to ensure depth and rigour over time. RE in school provides a balance of opportunities for children to learn about, and learn from, religion. We believe that learning from religion provides huge scope for developing children's spirituality. As a school, we wholeheartedly believe that a high-quality religious education, which promotes a celebration of all cultures and religions, centred around spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is essential in promoting strong shared values among children as well as a knowledge and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values. At Upperwood Academy, the RE coverage for each half term has been thoughtfully considered to ensure that all six major world religious are covered in all year groups each term. This ensures that the content of each session is purposeful, meaningful and has a relevant context for our children to engage with

Implementation

RE is taught discretely and it is delivered to raise interest, self-esteem, creativity and aspirations of all our children. The curriculum is rich and varied, which provides our pupils with the skills required for life in the 21st Century. Within a sequence of RE lessons children would be given chance to explore religions through 6 key questions to ensure continuity and progression in each year group. The questions are designed to guide and shape pupils' learning in RE across the years of schooling. Pupils begin by handling the key questions very simply, moving on to learn about and respond to religious objects and ideas, to describe for themselves, to analyse information, and increasingly to develop the ability to draw thoughtful and balanced conclusions.

The Accelerated Learning Cycle, based on the work of Alastair Smith, is applied in all lessons. It stems from the idea of a supportive and challenging learning environment. The cycle has active engagement through multi-sensory learning, encourages the demonstrating understanding of learning in a variety of ways and the consolidation of knowing. It is important that children 'know more and remember more' about each religion and can articulate what they know confidently to others.

Impact

At Upperwood Academy, formative assessment is ongoing throughout each lesson. It judges progress and enables teachers to make flexible adaptions to their planned teaching. Through this regular ongoing assessment, tasks are matched to the ability of each child through scaffolds, adult support and providing a level of challenge that is stimulating for pupils and questioning skills.

Alongside formative assessment, Arbor is used as a summative assessment to assess foundation subjects. The analysis of data from arbor, identifies any gaps or misconceptions to be addressed.

Adaptations

At Upperwood Academy our curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those children with SEND. Curriculum designers and teachers have high expectations of what SEND pupils can achieve and the curriculum is not diluted or unnecessarily reduced for SEND pupils. Every pupil is different and so what works for each pupil varies. Pupil's individual needs are carefully considered and adaptations are planned to ensure the success of pupils. The way that our curriculum is designed ensures that chunks of learning are sequenced in a coherent way to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to build on prior knowledge. Cognitive overload can be a barrier to learning which is one of the reason why we have chosen half termly curriculum drivers.

Where pupils are identified with having complex needs it may be appropriate to provide a personalised curriculum which will be based on individual needs and will retain ambition for the pupil. Where working memory is an issue for pupils, including those with SEND, we look to reduce extraneous load as much as possible as well as identifying key information when teaching. Adaptations to support individual pupils will be recorded on personal school support plans.

At Upperwood academy we do not assume that pupils with SEND learn content better through practical work as this can cause distraction and cognitive overload rather than increase clarity or accessibility. The curriculum is not narrowed for any pupils. Knowledge is taught and then pupils are provided with opportunities for scientific enquiry to test and investigate the knowledge taught. Pupils' specific needs determine the types of adaptations which are required. These adaptations are in how the subject is taught rather than the content pupils are expected to learn. Where appropriate, learning will be chunked into smaller steps and pre learning and consolidation time in planned in to support need. Time is also planned to ensure pupils with SEND are pre taught vocabulary to support their understanding. Adaptations may include supporting pupils to pay attention to key aspects as well as reducing excessive or unhelpful demands on working memory.