

Religious Education (RE)

It is the intention of this policy to inform staff, associates, parents and all other interested parties of the content, practice and implementation of the RE curriculum at the Jam Creative School.

All children, including those with special educational needs, as defined under the 1981 Education Act and more recently as indicated in the DFE Circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship, (DFE 1994, para. 20) are entitled to a broad and balanced Religious Education Curriculum. It is recognised that RE is an essential element of each child's education, contributing to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

The principal religion of staff/associates at The Jam Academy is Christian, however we welcome students from all religions to learn and grow at our school. RE is concerned with 'Learning about Religions' and 'Learning from Religion' and it is not the practice of our school to preach to or convert students to a particular faith. The faith background of both the staff/associates and student's family is respected at all times.

Parents/guardians of a student at our school have a right to withdraw their children from religious education (RE). If a parent/guardian asks for their son/daughter to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent/guardian who wishes this may consult the Curriculum Director.

Values & Aims

We believe at our school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable students of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in our country. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
2. Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
3. Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions
4. Enhance their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
 - developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
 - responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
 - reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
 - expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. Recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within a religiously diverse society.

Objectives

Learning

RE education is delivered through our Project and Current Affairs classes, encouraging a reflective approach to learning by encouraging an open and honest enquiry, awareness of prejudice, a growing self-understanding and respecting the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own.

Students will be 'Learning about Religions' and 'Learning from Religion' through:

1. Investigation; the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories.
2. Questioning; developing curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world
3. Empathy; developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, joy and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
4. Reflection; the ability to consider thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs of oneself and others.
5. Relating; linking significant features of religions, making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar.
6. Expression; the ability to identify and explain feelings and aspects of religions.

Teaching

Although specific project classes will look at the history of the key religions, the teaching of RE will also be fully integrated within the delivery of other subjects. This approach is closely linked to our delivery of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education of our students.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC) helps students develop personal qualities which are valued in any civilised society; for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, and self-respect. At the Jam Creative School we seek to teach these qualities across the curriculum and throughout school life. It is linked closely to our school's ethos and aims.

We also ensure that we provide effective preparation of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. To this end, every opportunity is taken to actively promote Fundamental British Values in the school.

We use the following definitions of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural:

Spiritual

Beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform students' perspective on life and their interest in, and respect for, different people's feelings and values. A sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. Use of imagination and creativity in their learning and willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Moral

Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and students' readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives. Understanding of the consequences of their actions. Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues.

Social

Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with students from different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively. Interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

Cultural

Understanding and having an appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage. Willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities. Interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in the local, national and global communities.

The Contribution of English

English contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Developing confidence and expertise in language, which is an important aspect of individual and social identity.
- Enabling students to understand and engage with the feelings and values embodied in high quality poetry, fiction, drama, film and television.
- Developing students' awareness of moral and social issues in fiction, journalism, magazines, radio, television and film.
- Helping students to understand how language changes over time, the influences on spoken and written language and social attitudes to the use of language.

The Contribution of Mathematics

Mathematics contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Spiritual development: through helping students obtain an insight into the infinite, and through explaining the underlying mathematical principles behind natural forms and patterns.
- Moral development: helping students recognise how logical reasoning can be used to consider the consequences of particular decisions and choices. Helping them learn the value of mathematical truth.
- Social development: through helping students work together productively on complex mathematical tasks and helping them see that the result is often better than any of them could achieve separately.
- Cultural development: through helping students appreciate that mathematical thought contributes to the development of our culture and is becoming increasingly central to our highly technological future, and through recognising that mathematicians from many cultures have contributed to the development of modern day mathematics.

The Contribution of Science

Science contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Encouraging students to reflect on the wonder of the natural world.
- Awareness of the ways that science and technology can affect society and the environment.
- Consideration of the moral dilemmas that can result from scientific developments.
- Showing respect for differing opinions, about creation for example.
- Co-operation in practical activity.
- Raising awareness that scientific developments are the product of many.

The Contribution of Information Communication Technology

ICT contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Preparing the students for the challenges of living and learning in a technologically enriched, increasingly interconnected world.
- Making clear the guidelines about the ethical use of the internet.
- Acknowledging advances in technology and appreciation for human achievement.

The Contribution of History

History contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Looking at the creation and evolution of British society.
- Enabling students to reflect on issues such as slavery, the holocaust and Imperialism.
- Showing an awareness of the moral implications of the actions of historical figures.

The Contribution of Geography

Geography contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Opportunities for reflection on the creation of earth and its' origins, future and diversity.
- Reflection on the fair distribution of the earth's resources and issues surrounding climate change.
- A study of people and physical geography gives our students the chance to reflect on the social and cultural characteristics of society.

The Contribution of Modern Foreign Languages

Modern Foreign Languages contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Gaining insights into the way of life, cultural traditions, moral and social developments of other people.
- Social skills are developed through group activities and communication exercises.
- Listening skills are improved through oral/aural work.

The Contribution of Religious Education

RE makes a distinctive and substantial contribution to the delivery of SMSC:

- Students learn about beliefs, values and the concept of spirituality.
- RE reflects on the significance of religious teaching in their own lives.
- Develops respect for the right of others to hold beliefs different from their own.
- Shows an understanding of the influence of religion on society.
- Fosters appreciation and understanding of different cultures, religions and traditions.

The Contribution of Art

Art contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Art lessons develop students' aesthetic appreciation.
- In turn, art evokes feelings of 'awe' and 'wonder'.
- Giving students the chance to reflect on nature, their environment and surroundings.
- Studying artists with a spiritual or religious theme, issues raised by artists which concerns ethical issues, such as war paintings.

The Contribution of Design and Technology

Design and Technology makes a contribution to students' SMSC development through:

- Reflecting on products and inventions, the diversity of materials and ways in which design can improve the quality of our lives.
- Awareness of the moral dilemmas created by technological advances.
- How different cultures have contributed to technology.
- Opportunities to work as a team, recognising others strengths, sharing equipment.
- Giving the opportunity to examine cultural differences in food and diet.
- Reflecting on the social issues around food such as price and income.
- Acknowledging government guidelines for health and dietary requirements.
- Reflecting on the moral issues concerning food production in third world countries.

The Contribution of Music

Music contributes to our students' SMSC development through:

- Teaching that encourages students to be open to the music of other cultures.
- Discussing and reflecting upon a range of personal experiences (own performance) and observed experiences (trips, concerts and peer performances).
- Lead students to appreciate aesthetic order, beauty and on occasion ambiguity, for example through listening activities, where possible beyond their common experience.
- Looking at the way music can change moods and behaviour.

The Contribution of Physical Education

Students' SMSC development is actively promoted through PE by:

- Activities involving co-operation, teamwork, competition, rules, self-discipline and fair play.
- Exploring the sports and traditions of a variety of cultures.
- Individual activities that provide the opportunity for self-reflection, awareness and challenge.

The contribution of PSHE/Citizenship

Students' SMSC development is actively promoted in PSHE and Citizenship by:

- Exploring questions about democracy, justice, inequality, how we are governed and organised.
- Learning to work together to create solutions that try to address challenges facing neighbourhoods and wider communities.
- Developing knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society as informed and responsible citizens.
- Appreciating diversity, understanding different viewpoints, collaboration for change

Monitoring & Implementation of the Policy

- Provision for SMSC is monitored and reviewed by the Curriculum Director, teachers, associates and students.
- Regular discussions are held at staff/associates meetings.
- Staff/associates share classroom work and practice.
- The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff/associates.