

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



11 July 2012

Mr D Baldwin  
Headteacher  
Holbeach Bank Primary School  
Roman Bank  
Holbeach Bank  
Spalding  
PE12 8BX

Dear Mr Baldwin

**Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: religious education (RE)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 3 July 2012 to look at work in RE.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of RE is satisfactory.

**Achievement in RE**

Achievement in RE is satisfactory.

- The standards reached by pupils vary year-on-year. Overall, by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment over time is broadly in line with the expectations set out in the Lincolnshire agreed syllabus. Pupils across Key Stage 1 use religious words to describe some of the ways in which people show their beliefs. Pupils in Key Stage 2 can describe the key elements of the religions that they have studied. They make links between beliefs and religious stories and sacred texts. The majority of pupils identify symbols used in religion and belief accurately and increasingly identify meanings for a range of religious expression.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They appreciate the important role religion and belief play in people's lives. An aim stated in the Lincolnshire agreed syllabus is for pupils to 'learn from religion and respond to human

experience'. Some pupils are able to relate what they learn to their own lives and contribute their ideas in class discussions. However, systematic opportunities for pupils to apply ideas and reflections that religion and belief raise are insufficiently planned for and promoted in the teaching.

- The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and can explain why it is important to show respect for religious and cultural diversity. Pupils' behaviour in the lessons observed was good.

### **Quality of teaching in RE**

The quality of teaching in RE is satisfactory.

- Teachers use a broad range of stimulus material to engage pupils and enliven learning. For example, in one of the lessons observed, good use was made of artefacts from the Jewish traditions.
- Pupils have an accurate understanding of how well they are progressing through teachers' feedback and their own self-assessment against criteria that they understand. Teachers use the level descriptors from the agreed syllabus to make overall judgements about standards attained. The descriptors are also increasingly being used to plan work for the different abilities and ages in each class.
- Much of the learning is organised soundly and pupils say that they enjoy their different tasks and activities. In another lesson observed, the learning was partially enquiry based, so that prior learning was reinforced well.
- Opportunities for pupils to investigate religion, for example aspects of Hindu beliefs and practices, enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and understanding. However, opportunities for pupils to undertake more independent and structured enquiries into religion are not extensive, resulting in pupils not attaining higher standards.

### **Quality of the curriculum in RE**

The quality of the curriculum in RE is satisfactory.

- The school follows the locally agreed syllabus closely. This has secured breadth in the religions covered across the key stages. However, there is some imbalance between 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion.
- Reasonably detailed long- and medium-term plans are in place. A number of changes to the planning reflect changes to the age profile in each class. Short-term planning is fit for purpose. Tasks and activities are suitably identified and generally matched well to pupils' different needs.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in RE**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in RE is satisfactory.

- You have recently taken on the role of subject leader to cover for extended leave. A clearly defined RE policy makes appropriate reference to the Lincolnshire agreed syllabus.
- The subject is resourced well with texts and artefacts. Teachers have been supported with their planning, and monitoring of the plans has led to improvement.
- Other monitoring arrangements are more informal but there is a reasonable view of the provision for the subject. There is a commitment to having a sharper focus on evaluating how well pupils are learning in RE.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- raising standards by providing more challenge for pupils, including developing their enquiry and investigative skills
- increasing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their reflective skills in relation to the agreed syllabus aim of 'learning from' religion and human experience.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop RE in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website and sent to SACRE. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Dilip Kadodwala**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**