***Religious Education in Cheshire East***

**Religious Education & Good Community Relations**

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Religious Education between December 2013 and February 2014 under the guidance of Stephen Lloyd MP examined how Religious Education contributed to good community relations. It recognised that Religious Education makes an important contribution to a school’s duty to promote good community relations and it can contribute to promoting a positive and inclusive whole school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

RE can be a strong contributor to good community relations through enabling pupils to:

* acquire systematic knowledge and conceptual understanding of religions and worldviews;
* learn from visits and visitors through personal encounters;
* learn about religion and belief in local, national and global contexts;
* consider a range of viewpoints on religious, ethical and philosophical issues;
* articulate their own opinions while respecting the right of others to differ;
* develop their own beliefs, values and identities;
* participate with confidence and openness in dialogue;
* recognise and challenge ill-informed or prejudiced viewpoints, including those in the media;
* ask questions and address contentious issues in a safe space;
* explore reasons why misconceptions exist in some groups;
* evaluate attitudes and actions and how they impact on the community;
* be informed, active citizens and potential leaders.

The subject provides a key context to develop young people’s understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote good community relations.

Schools can do this by providing safe places in which children can discuss controversial issues and be given the knowledge and confidence to challenge extremist beliefs and ideologies. This can be achieved in the context of:

* **The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
* **The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
* **The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.
* **The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

(Adapted from ‘RE & Good Community Relations’ written by APPG published by REC 2013 & ‘Prevent duty’ DfE June 2015)

NB Please see Sensory Based RE experiences for children with special needs.