



## Religious Education Policy

**Approved by:** Head teacher

**Last reviewed :** June 2024

**Next review due:** September 2025

**'Together we will flourish'**

Your beginning will seem so small, since your future will flourish – Job 8:7

## **INTRODUCTION**

Religion and Worldviews should help children to clarify and interpret their perceptions of themselves and the world around them. From this foundation, they may progress to searching for answers to ultimate questions: those which reason beyond the mundane and ordinary, towards those concerned with the basic human existence. If this is to be achieved, the key principle will be exploring and reflecting upon the place and significance of religious beliefs and practices in everyday life, with children learning both about and from religion.

## **AIMS**

The teaching of Religion and Worldviews in school will seek to:

- Give children a knowledge of Christian beliefs and traditions and other principal religions represented in Great Britain so that they may reflect on the role these aspects have played in shaping society, both past and present, and the relevance these faiths have in their own lives today.
- Contribute to children's social development, by fostering an atmosphere in which every individual is valued and, as such, is treated with care and respect.
- Enhance cultural awareness, by responding to the fundamental questions of life, with reference to the experiences of religions and to the child's own understanding and experience.
- Make strong links with religious communities so that children may experience the 'living faith' and recognise its significance in the lives of Christians and other faith traditions.
- Contribute to children's spiritual development, by providing times for stillness and focused personal reflection on the experiences and beliefs of both themselves and others:

## **SPIRITUALITY**

It is very difficult to put into words what 'spirituality' actually is because it is a very personal experience. It differs from person to person, and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

As a school, we have defined spirituality as:

*"Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves."*

- The language we use to define spirituality is not child-friendly, so when talking to children about it we will refer to:
  - A sense of awe and wonder
  - Care for nature and living things
  - Wanting to love and to be loved by people

## **Awe and Wonder**

Children are born inquisitive, and it is our duty to nurture this natural curiosity and guide them towards looking at the world and noticing, with awe and wonder, the natural and man-made delights all around us. We want to encourage them to ask 'big questions' about life, religion, nature, science and any other area of fascination.

### **Caring for Nature and Living Things**

We provide many opportunities for children to learn about nature and the role they play in protecting our world. As a Church School, this is especially important. We have a very active Eco Committee and Forest School. Our School has been awarded the Eco Schools Award. All children in Key Stage 2 are able to attend a residential where they are explore and interact with the natural world through woodland walks, orienteering, caving, and ghyll scrambling. Through curriculum topic work and other school visits children learn about the world and how they can care for living things.

### **Love**

We are a very caring school and pride ourselves on our ethos of family. Through our Christian Values, we teach children to care for friends, family and the community. Indeed, our curriculum includes learning about those we love and who love us.

Children's spiritual development is fostered through all aspects of our provision. It is about the relationships and the values that we consider to be important, as well as the development of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. We give children opportunities to:

- Express personal beliefs and compare views with others, sharing feelings and opinions through discussions and stories.
- Begin to develop their own system of beliefs which may or may not include religious beliefs.
- Experience a love of learning through rewarding their enthusiasm and by encouraging exploratory play and learning.
- Reflect upon the world around them and show a sense of awe and wonder towards aspects of the natural world or human achievement.
- Reflect on the situations of others through role play, stories.
- Experience a range of stories, music, art, drama and dance

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Planning and Organisation**

As a school, we follow the Kirklees & Calderdale 2019 Agreed RE Syllabus. This provides children with an opportunity to study Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism in depth. All pupils are given the opportunity to understand spirituality – they are encouraged to make connections with the world and its creatures. Children learn about these religions through the following thematic units:

#### **Reception**

- How and why are special times celebrated?
- Which places are special and why?
- What makes a good helper?
- Where do we live and who lives there?
- Who and what are special to us?
- What do religious believers believe about who created the world?

### **Year 1**

- How and why do we care for others?
- How do we celebrate special events?
- What does it mean to belong to a church or mosque?
- Which books and stories are special to us?
- Who brought messages about God and what did they say?

### **Year 2**

- How and why do people pray?
- How can we look after the planet?
- How can we make good choices?
- How is new life welcomed?
- What did Jesus teach and how did he live?

### **Year 3**

- How do Jews remember God's covenant with Abraham and Moses?
- What do Christians believe about a good life?
- What do the creation stories tell us?
- What is Spirituality and how do people experience this?
- Who can inspire us?
- How did Jesus forgive other people?

### **Year 4**

- How are important events remembered?
- How do the five pillars guide Muslims?
- What faiths are shared in our country?
- Why are Gurus at the heart of the Sikh belief and practice?

### **Year 5**

- Should we forgive others?
- What do Christians believe about the old and new covenants?
- What values are shown in the codes for living?
- Why are some places and journeys special?

### **Year 6**

- How do Jews remember Kings and Prophets in worship and life?
- How do Sikhs show commitment?
- How does growing up bring responsibilities?
- What do Christians believe about Jesus death and Resurrection?

In all classes termly study units are planned. There is also a programme of focused visits to places of worship. This includes children in KS 1 visiting local churches and a mosque while children in KS 2 also visit a Gurdwara, Synagogue and Hindu Temple. These visits provide essential first hand learning experience for children studying appropriate world faiths that enhance understanding and empathy.

The monitored long-term curriculum map, medium term planning and short term planning ensures that there is continuity, between classes and key stages.

Worship, whether in the hall, church or classroom, support R.E. teaching through a selection of themes relevant to the teaching of R.E. in the classroom.

Cross-curricular links are made where possible.

### **Managing the Learning**

In Religion and World sessions, children will work in a variety of ways as appropriate to their needs, and to the learning outcome. Children may work as a class, as a group or on an individual basis.

The role of the teacher will be determined by the needs of the children and the intended learning outcome. Emphasis will be given on offering a range of opportunities for questioning and reflection.

The children will be encouraged to communicate their R.E. findings to others using a variety of different ways, for example verbally, using written models, ICT, pictures and through drama.

### **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

Religion and Worldviews plays an integral part to a broad and balanced curriculum. Parents are, however, made aware that they may exercise their right to withdraw children from Religion and Worldviews lessons.

The ethos of our school is one of a positive approach, committed to inclusion, in which children are encouraged to achieve. Therefore, each study unit begins with what the child already knows, either as a result of life experience or previous learning and using this as the springboard from which to extend their knowledge and understanding. We aim to ensure equal access to RE for all our children. Teaching takes account of pupil's cultural backgrounds, language needs, abilities and different learning styles.

Throughout the study units, emphasis is placed upon the importance of discussions as a means of extending the children's learning. Differentiating the follow-up recording activities is at the teacher's discretion; this may be outcome, time or task. The class teacher will aim to provide support for the less able, and extension activities to further extend the understanding of able children.

Whilst multicultural education is a consideration that runs throughout the curriculum of the school, Religious Education has a distinctive role to play by educating children about the faith of other cultures. As such, all six major world religions are studied explicitly. Throughout, attention is largely focused on what members of these faiths do, working towards an understanding of what they believe. Children are given the opportunity to engage with the 'raw material' of these faiths: its people, places of worship, artefacts and festivals. Our aim through this approach is for children

to view diversity as something to be celebrated, promoting empathy and preparing them for life in a multicultural society.

### **CURRICULUM LINKS**

Links with other subjects will be made in the children's exploration and, in some instances, recording of their learning in Religion and Worldviews.

### **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

At the end of each unit, all children will be assessed against the criteria provided in the Kirklees and Calderdale 2019 Agreed Syllabus. This will identify whether the children are working at age related expectations, towards them or are exceeding them. This information will then be recorded in the year group assessment folder. This data will be monitored by the subject coordinator.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

We are constantly seeking to develop and maintain all staff knowledge and understanding of RE through:

- Key Stage planning meetings.
- R.E. coordinator support.
- Monitoring subject progression
- Providing and using appropriate books/videos, software, websites, and courses recommended to further teacher knowledge.

### **THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT CO-ORDINATOR**

Specific responsibilities: -

- a) To be responsible for the co-ordination of R.E. throughout the school.
- b) To research, prepare, monitor, report and review on a regular basis the R.E. throughout the school to ensure coverage, progression, balance and improved learning.
- c) To take the lead in producing a policy document, a scheme of work and an action plan outlining developments throughout the school.
- d) To give professional support in R.E. to other members of staff.
- e) To organise and request appropriate books, software, materials and equipment.
- f) To evaluate new approaches and materials, keeping up to date with developments in R.E.
- g) To ensure stock is kept in good order.
- h) To liaise with other schools.
- i) To inform and report to the Governors.
- j) To liaise with diocesan and support agencies.
- k) To maintain an up-to-date portfolio of samples of RE work from across the EY, KS1, KS2 age range

### **REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually.