

Withnell Fold Primary School



Religious Education Policy

2023 – 2025

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and staff.

The context of RE

As a community school Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus 'Searching for Meaning'. This is an ambitious curriculum and outlines the curriculum intent and methods of implementation that will enable all pupils to achieve well and attain high level outcomes by the end of each key stage. The curriculum is taught from Reception to Y6 and reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.

The syllabus aims to support pupil's personal search for meaning as they explore what it means to be human. It follows the Lancashire 'Field of Enquiry' medium term planning model, but also specifies knowledge and skills which build towards clear goals at the end of each key stage. This ensures that the curriculum is progressive, clearly sequenced and suitably ambitious. It is rooted in disciplinary knowledge based in theology, social sciences and philosophy.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. The taught syllabus is not designed to convert pupils, or to promote a particular religion or religious belief. As a school we maintain that teaching about religions and worldviews should be sufficiently fair, balanced and open. We aim to promote mutual respect and understanding, whilst not undermining or ignoring the role of families and religious or belief organisations in transmitting values to successive generations.

Purpose and Aims of Religious Education

We believe that studying religious and non-religious worldviews is essential if pupils are to be well prepared for life in our increasingly diverse society. Pupils need to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to make sense of the complex world in which they live so that they can 'respect religious and cultural differences and contribute to a cohesive and compassionate society' (RE Review 2013).

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. Pupils learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Pupils are encouraged to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences so that they can hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religions and worldviews whilst respecting the views of others.

Our curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
 - describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.
 - identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews; and
 - appreciate and evaluate the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- 2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
 - explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
 - express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues; and
 - appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.
- 3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
 - find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
 - enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all; and
 - articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

('A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England' Religious Education Council October 2013)

Curriculum Structure – what we teach, when

Time allocation

The National Framework for RE (2004) recognises RE as a 'core' subject, required for all pupils. In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus a minimum allocation of 5 % curriculum time for the teaching of RE is endorsed by the 2011 Agreed Syllabus. This endorsement is based upon the law and DfE and QCDA guidance. R.E may be provided in a 'whole block' or the time may be divided into smaller sessions and may be delivered via a creative curriculum. However, over the whole year class teachers and the R.E subject leader endeavour to ensure that all children have equal access to the required amount of curriculum time. RE curriculum time does not include assembly or collective worship, even where the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work.

Scheme of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in the light of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus for RE and will be delivered as investigations each year. It is a 2-year rolling programme to accommodate our mixed age classes. Each year group has a key question, and each investigation has a question as a starting point. Christianity is taught in three of the investigations and Islam and Hindu Dharma will be the two religions progressed throughout the school. The three religions not progressed (Buddhism, Judaism, Sikh Dharam) must appear as a minimum of one investigation over the two Key Stages. All investigations are taken from the Non-Statutory Scheme of Work and can be found on the RE section of the Lancashire Grid for Learning web site in the RE section under 'planning a unit of work'. No teacher can be an instant expert in six religions. Staff who feel the need to build up their own subject knowledge can take up some training opportunities and the RE subject leader can supply some introductory reading material for staff.

Curriculum Implementation – how we teach Religious Education well

Teaching and Learning Styles

Our policy is to aim to increase the use, in RE, of art, drama, thinking skills, speaking and listening activities, visits, visitors, posters, photos, DVD's, ICT use, display work and other active learning styles. This is in line with a creative

curriculum, and whole school policy on teaching and learning. Within any one class, children are given the opportunity to work as a class, as individuals and as part of a group. The choice of class organization will be determined by the learning task or activity and resources being used. All abilities should be catered for, including those children identified with SEN and those who may be gifted and talented, to allow for differentiation in terms of content, context, resources, tasks, outcome and support. Although Religious Education is taught as a **separate subject discipline**, opportunities arise in lessons for children to **apply skills** from other subject areas. For example, in English, art, drama, computing, technology. This ensures that the curriculum is taught in a creative and engaging manner as well as being knowledge rich and ambitious.

Resources

Resources are stored both in the staff room cupboard and upstairs on the mezzanine, and should be returned after use in tidy order. A selection of religious books can also be found in the school's library. Resources are shared and all staff, including visiting students, have equal access to all resources. It is the RE subject leader's responsibility for maintaining the RE resources and monitoring their use. Resources are purchased by the RE subject leader following general school ordering procedures. Staff are invited to suggest gaps in the resources for future spending. The purchase of resources is planned each year by the RE subject leader based on the budget bid from the main school budget.

Assessment recording and reporting

We report on pupils' progress and attainment in RE to parents. The Agreed Syllabus provides descriptions of 8 levels of attainment. This will help guide the teachers' in the assessment process. At the end of each Key Stage, levels for Attainment Target 1(AT1 - learning about religion) and Attainment Target 2 (AT2 - learning from religion) are reported to SACRE. We will make comments on each child's progress in RE in end of year reports, based on regular monitoring of work with regard to the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus. We will transfer this information to new.

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education is taught in accordance with our school's Equality Opportunity Policy. Stereotypes are avoided. Attempts are made to ensure that examples of religious figures reflect all aspects of diversity within society.

Pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and awareness of Prevent and British values.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Standard self-evaluation procedures are used to monitor and evaluate pupil achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of curriculum provision in Religious Education.

The subject leader will maintain a clear overview of the intent, implementation and impact of Religious Education through planned monitoring tasks included with the school's overall monitoring schedule. This might involve reporting to SLT and Governors to support their evaluation and contributing to the school's 'self-evaluation' in preparation for the next Ofsted inspection. It is the responsibility of staff to monitor and evaluate curriculum provision made for RE within the school, in order that all pupils make the greatest possible progress. Evaluation may take place by the means of a number of methods including:

- Looking at children's work
- The analysis of teachers' planning, as seen in long term and medium-term planning

- Discussion amongst groups of staff or the whole staff – both informally and formally at staff meetings meetings
- Classroom observations
- Monitoring of displays
- External advice

It is the statutory duty of the governing body to ensure that:

- Religious Education is included in the basic curriculum and that the school meets its statutory duties.
- Sufficient time and resources are devoted to Religious Education to provide a curriculum of quality.

Withdrawal

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the Headteacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the Headteacher and a record kept of them.

Visitors and visits to places of worship

We enrich the curriculum by organising visits to places of worship in the immediate vicinity of the school. Faith leaders and other members of the community are also invited when appropriate to contribute to learning in the classroom as an additional valued resource. The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits.

Policy written – May 2023

Next review – May 2025