

“Let your light shine” Matthew 5:16



Waltham-on-the-Wolds Church of England Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy



Our Vision In our small rural, church school our vision is to maximise the potential of all learners and encourage them to become responsible global citizens. Based on our Christian and British values we cherish our community and family partnerships, where we celebrate friendship, diversity and inclusion

. "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Our Values

Our fundamental values are rooted in Christianity and British moral standards. We are passionate about demonstrating them in our daily lives and we plan lessons and activities that explore deeper thinking to broaden understanding. An example of this is how we teach the following core values through four specific Bible stories that children can relate well to:

Friendship - Bible Story of 'Ruth and Naomi' (Ruth 11-13 and 14-22)

Love - (Verses in Corinthians 13:4-8)

Perseverance - Bible Story of 'Joseph and his Brothers' (Genesis 37-50)

Respect and compassion - Bible Story of 'The Good Samaritan' (Luke 10:25-37)

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Statement of Intent

At our school, we recognise the importance of R.E. in every aspect of daily life. RE explores big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can make sense of religion. We show compassion by helping others. We value friendship through respect. We show perseverance and courage in all that we do. We love one another, learning and God’s world. Enabling children to flourish and succeed own ideas and ways of living. Our aim is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Our R.E. teaching offers opportunities for children to:

- to understand religious and belief systems, ‘commitment to morality and social justice, to responsible stewardship of the environment and to deepening the experience of being human.
- promote social and ethnic harmony and awareness of British values through the exploration of multiple identities and local communities, through visits to places of worship and meeting people from religious and belief communities, and through a deepening understanding of beliefs and practices, our aim is for young people to come to an informed and empathetic understanding of different groups which will help promote cohesion and integration. Pupils will explore British values in relation to religions and beliefs. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith or no faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.
- ensure high standards of achievement, learning and behaviour for all our pupils, as well as contributing to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- have weekly lessons in R.E. throughout Key Stage 1 and 2. In Early years, R.E. is taught through the children learning about the world around them in their learning through play and through stories, dance, drama, etc. Additional opportunities are provided in R.E., such as visits to places of worship, Open the Bible (lead by members of the local clergy) and messy fiestas. We endeavor to ensure that the R.E. curriculum we provide will give children the confidence and motivation to continue to further develop their skills into the next stage of their education and life experiences whilst becoming well informed citizens of the multi- cultural diverse world in which they live.

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- Our teaching aims to develop an enquiring mind and as such these skills are cumulative across the key stages and include: Investigation, Interpretation, Analysis and Evaluation, Synthesis, Application, Expression and Empathy.
- develop key personal learning and thinking skills in Religious Education, such as: independent enquirers, creative thinkers, team workers, self-managers, effective participators, reflective learners.
- encourage and develop key attitudes including: curiosity & wonder, commitment, fairness, respect, open-mindedness, critical mindedness, and enquiry

Statement of Implementation

Teachers create a positive attitude to learning about R.E. within their classrooms and reinforce an expectation that all children are capable of achieving high standards. R.E. is taught consistently throughout the year so that children achieve depth in their learning.

Our curriculum aims that all children are able to reflect and develop their deeper thinking. We are preparing children to live in a diverse world in which different cultures and religions are celebrated. Finally, we focus on the importance of reflection and prayer; how important it is for children to understand and use religious terminology and confidently share religious ideas. Planning is informed by and aligned with both the Leicestershire syllabus, Understanding Christianity and NATRE’S planning.

Children will be taught in a range of ways including multi-faith trips, stories, visitors and exploration of artefacts. Consideration is given to how all learners will be ensured access to the curriculum at a suitably challenging level, therefore making learning accessible for children with specific needs or extending those working at greater depth. Outcomes of work are regularly monitored to ensure that teaching is effective and that it reflects a sound understanding of each unit.

The R.E. curriculum reinforces the importance of religious education as an academic discipline. It will enable understanding of concepts and the development of skills and attitudes so that our pupils can explore wider issues of religion and belief in religiously literate ways. This curriculum prepares our children for active citizenship in a diverse and rapidly changing world, exploring some aspects of British values in relation to religions and world views. Through our planning we make space for all of our children to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions, and those of others, in engaged and engaging ways. We aim to support children to develop positive attitudes of respect towards people from all religions and worldviews. We are committed to providing the teaching of RE in a manner that is coherent, progressive, pedagogically and

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philosophically sound, and that will promote the cognitive, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners.

We aim to help them become literate and articulate about religions and beliefs, and to be thoughtful members of a plural society, so that in learning from religion they are able to make informed choices about how they want to live their lives whilst also understanding more about the faith of other people they meet. We provide opportunities for them to raise questions of spirituality and identity as well as questions of morality, such as poverty, discrimination and the use of limited resources as well as raising ethical questions about human reproduction, racial and religious prejudice and the role of politics in everyday life. They discover, explore and consider many different answers to questions about human identity, meaning and value. They learn to weigh up for themselves the value of wisdom from different communities, to disagree respectfully, to be reasonable in their responses to religions and world views and to respond by expressing insights into their own and other people’s lives. They think rigorously, creatively, imaginatively and respectfully about their ideas in relation to religions and world views.

Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that outstanding teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences of religious festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Harvest, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children. Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers to extract information and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in collective worship assemblies. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities and backgrounds, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities accordingly. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.

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- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks).
- providing resources of different complexity.

Statement of Impact

Through this approach, our school provides a fun, engaging and high-quality R.E. education rooted in our Christian ethos. We provide rich opportunities to explore a range of faiths and religions, which helps develop children’s personal ability to form their own opinions of the world around them, guided by our Christian Values. Our engagement with the church and the wider community ensures that children learn through first hand experiences. So much of R.E. lends itself to reflective thinking, so we provide a range of opportunities within lessons to explore this with the children through key questioning, artwork, drama and song. Through various trips, visitors and charities, our children are able to reflect on our diverse community and a range of religious beliefs extending from the children’s own community to the world as a whole.

We have designed our R.E. curriculum to show progression ensuring that every child has the opportunity to achieve and to build upon their prior skills and knowledge. We use a mix of NATRE’S planning and our own planning. Through our marking, feedback and assessments we are able to monitor and track the progress of each child. The teachers provide children with regular opportunities for retrieval practice where they can recall and use their prior learning. We endeavor that by the time our children leave us, they will:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences.
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain.
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition.
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today.
- have respect for other peoples’ views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

The legal position of Religious Education

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Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. Our school R.E. curriculum is based on the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the R.E. syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions. In line with the law, our Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education expects that we will enable pupils to explore Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, as well as Christianity. It also encourages the consideration of secular world views.

The time allocation of RE will equate to:

5% of curriculum time 36 hours for Key Stage 1

45 hours for Key stage 2

This may be timetabled on a weekly basis or blocked during themed activities.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach R.E. to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. It can contribute particularly to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In our Reception class, R.E. is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year.

Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

At our school, ALL members of the learning community will care for and support all children through the teaching of Religious Education regardless of academic ability, disability, age, race, gender, religious belief, faith, no faith, home language, socio-economic background or sexual orientation. Offering an inclusive curriculum is a key part of our school vision. R.E. forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational

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needs. Our monitoring process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child’s needs. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning R.E. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a Sikh temple, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Monitoring, assessment and recording

In line with the school policy on assessment and monitoring, a range of methods will be used. The learning intentions are shared with the children and regularly throughout each unit of work tasks are set which are linked to the learning intentions. These tasks take a variety of styles, for example: creative work, drama, writing, mind-mapping. The children are encouraged to develop skills to enable them to assess their own progress in RE. Parents receive an annual written report on their child(ren)’s attitudes and development in RE.

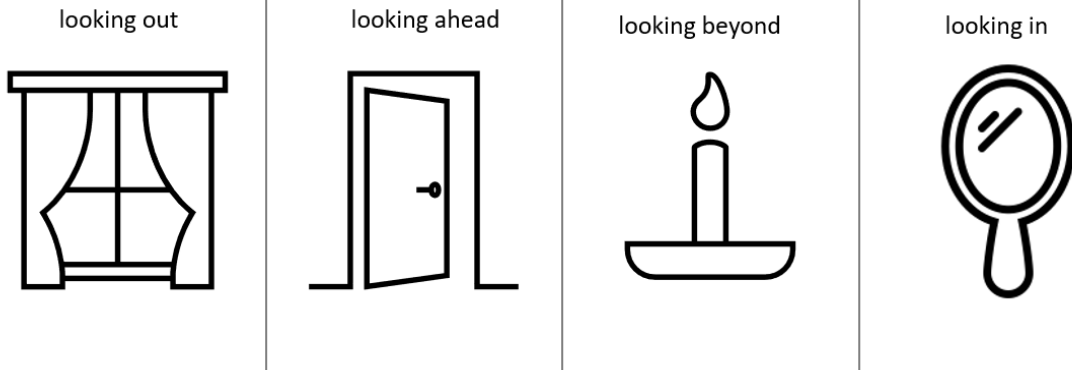
We assess children’s work in R.E. by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the expected attainment. We record the attainment grades, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

During each learning session using the NATRE planning children complete Sticky Knowledge Quizzes. This ensures teachers can assess children’s learning based on retrieval practice to reinforce learning and enhance retention.

At the end of each session children complete a windows, mirrors and doors sheet to encourage spiritual thinking by using the following:

- Windows – to learn about life
- Mirrors – to learn about ourselves
- Doors – to live out our Christian values in the wider world.

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We have recently agreed to trial a new assessment grid which is currently being used by all teachers who deliver RE lessons. The RE subject records children’s attainment at the end of each unit on an excel unit.

Review

The Local Governing Body will review this policy, formally, 3 years from the date of its adoption. Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required.

Reviewed Autumn 2024

Signed _____ Chair of Governors