Religious Education

at Whittaker Moss Primary School



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Religious Education develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of religion and their ability to respond to different religions presented in Great Britain. By exploring issues within and across faiths, pupils learn to understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions and their influence on individuals, societies, communities and cultures.

Rochdale’s Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2019-2024 seeks to support children in Rochdale reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes through an exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in the contemporary world.

In order that such an aim is fulfilled, the syllabus for Religious Education will provide pupils with an opportunity to:

* Develop principles for distinguishing right from wrong.
* Promote equality of opportunity and enable pupils to challenge discrimination and stereotyping.
* Develop pupils’ ability to relate to others and work for the common good.
* Respond positively to opportunities and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change throughout their lives.
* Approach with sensitivity and respect the beliefs, actions and feelings of other believers.
* Appreciate relationships between personal and shared religion.
* Develop appropriate ways of communicating their own thoughts, feelings and responses.
* Apply the insights derived from the process of Religious Education to the development of their own beliefs, values and attitudes.
* Develop pupils’ skills of enquiry and response through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy.

## Aims and objectives

* Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Whittaker Moss School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, where do we belong? What does it mean to belong to a faith community? We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.
* Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children:
* to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
* to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems in the UK;
* to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
* to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
* to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
* to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
* to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

**Teaching and learning**

* We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good 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 enables children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali, Eid, etc. to develop their religious thinking and respect for other faiths and cultures. 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 investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.
* We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, e.g. by:
* setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
* setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
* grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
* providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
* using teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

**RE curriculum planning**

RE is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus 2019-2024. The syllabus runs alongside our cornerstones topics and ensures the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

* The Rochdale Agreed syllabus 2019-2024 divides the subject into 3 main strands:
* Believing
* Expressing
* Living
* Each key stage develops different skills with the subject;
* EYFS – discovery
* KS1 – exploring
* KS2 – connecting
* The learning is further divided into key questions which address the different objectives within Religious Education, the key questions are specific to the different key stages, each year group covers three key questions throughout the year, each term covers a different key question.
* The class teacher uses the key question for the main stimulus for the lessons throughout the term. Each year group received a bank of activities and lessons for each question.

**The Foundation Stage**

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In reception classes, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

## Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

Literacy

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is RE's way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

HRE/PSHE and Citizenship

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

## RE and ICT

ICT enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children research, select and analyse information, using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children use PowerPoint to help them to make presentations on various topics, such as sacred symbols in different world religions. Younger children can take photographs of the class acting out a Bible story. They can then make a class storybook of it, by adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text.

## RE and inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable ALL pupils to make good progress. We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Church/ Mosque, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

**Assessment**

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will constantly assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. Judgements are then inputted onto O Track – colour coding is used against each objective within the different unit’s specific to the year group. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Practical activities are recorded on the school pro-forma, a brief outline of the activity and any notes about children’s understanding are made, there will also be a note to highlight if photos are available for further evidence.

The RE subject developer keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. There is also a RE subject board which displays examples of work from every year group within school.

## Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each religion taught. There is a set of Bibles for both Key Stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in RE. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.

## Monitoring and review

The development and overview of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject developer, who also:

* supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping them informed about current developments in RE and the syllabus.
* gives the curriculum leader a summary in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates areas for further improvement;
* collates evidence of children’s work
* monitors O Track for the subject

This policy will be reviewed yearly.

### Signed: A Hilton (October 2022)

*Appendix 1*

*Key questions for each year group.*

*Year 1*

*Autumn Key Q: Who is christian and what do they believe?*

*Spring Key Q: What makes some places sacred?*

*Summer Key Q: What does it mean to belong to a faith community?*

*Year 2*

*Autumn Key Q - Who is muslim and what do they believe?*

*Spring Key Q - How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?*

*Summer Key Q - How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter?*

*Year 3*

*Autumn Key Q - What do different people believe about God?*

*Spring Key Q - Why are festivals important to religious communities?*

*Summer Key Q - What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today?*

*Year 4*

*Autumn Key Q - Why is Jesus inspiring to some people?*

*Spring Key Q - Why do some people think that life is like a journey and what significant experiences mark this?*

*Summer Key Q - What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong?*

*Year 5*

*Autumn Key Q - What would Jesus do?*

*Spring Key Q - If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship?*

*Summer Key Q - What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?*

*Year 6*

*Autumn Key Q - What do religions say to us when life gets hard?*

*Spring Key Q - Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity?*

*Summer Key Q - What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa (harmlessness), grace and/ or Ummah (community)?*