



Snodland Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Policy

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Policy Statement for Religious Education

Introduction

At Snodland Church of England Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the Rochester Diocesan syllabus we learn about other faiths and world views, fostering respect for them and promoting a sense of peace amongst all people. Links with our Christian values of love, peace, joy, faith, hope and unity, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Why is learning about religion important?

For thousands of years, religion has been the vehicle through which morals, ethics and values have been taught; for three quarters of people around the globe, it provides a framework for living, a sense of purpose and a place in a community. To be able to understand and live peacefully alongside others, it is essential to understand a range of faiths; through deepening this understanding, our children discover how similar the underlying values and beliefs are, as well as viewing the different ways people express these beliefs positively. Whether an individual has a personal faith or not, learning about the faiths of others is key to creating a tolerant society where different faiths are celebrated and treated with respect.

As well as learning *about* religion, we aim to learn *from* religion, exploring those moral and ethical lessons to help children establish their own values and beliefs about right and wrong. Discussion and debate are key aspects of Religion Education, helping children to develop their skills at listening, thinking for themselves, expressing themselves clearly and presenting their thoughts respectfully. Faith stories, scripture and people can help children to explore their own worldview, growing spiritually as they establish what they personally believe, what is important to them and how they fit into the world.

Aims

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, religious education in this school aims:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living, global faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world faiths and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights on this topic and to acquire intelligent respect for all people.
- To develop respect and promote love for people of all faiths and world views, understanding the fundamental importance of equality in Christian teaching and the right for people to hold to their own beliefs with integrity.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual and philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values and so nurturing their own world view.

Objectives

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, appropriate to age at the end of their RE education in our school, the expectation is that all pupils:

-Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs, using an approach that critically engages with scripture.

-To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.

-To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.

-To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.

-To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

The Religious Education Curriculum

As a Church of England school, we follow the planning recommended by Rochester Diocese. This includes units from the Understanding Christianity resource and units about the other most prevalent religions in the UK which are written and provided by the Diocese.



Suggested Long Term overview for C of E Primary Schools in Kent Kent Agreed Syllabus incorporating Understanding Christianity September 2023



	AUTUMN		SPRING		SUMMER	
EYFS	CREATION Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	OLD TESTAMENT STORIES Which stories are special and why? INCARNATION Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas?	NEW TESTAMENT STORIES Which stories are special and why?	SALVATION Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?	WORLD FAITH STORIES Which stories are special and why?	WORLD FAITH STORIES Which stories are special and why?
Year 1	GOD What do Christians believe that God is like?	INCARNATION Why does Christmas matter to Christians? <i>CORE/ DIGGING DEEPER</i>	GOSPEL What is the good news that Jesus brings? <i>CORE & DIGGING DEEPER</i>	SALVATION Why does Easter matter to Christians? <i>CORE LEARNING</i>	JUDAISM Who is Jewish and what do they believe? (Part 1)	JUDAISM Who is Jewish and what do they believe? (Part 2)
Year 2	CREATION Who made the world?	UNIVERSAL How should we care for others and the world and why does it matter?	HUMANISM What is Humanism?	SALVATION Why does Easter matter to Christians? <i>DIGGING DEEPER</i>	ISLAM Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (Part 1)	ISLAM Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (Part 2)
Year 3	PEOPLE OF GOD What is it like to follow God?	INCARNATION What is the Trinity? <i>CORE LEARNING</i>	SIKHI What is important for Sikh people?	SIKHI How do Sikh people worship and celebrate?	KINGDOM OF GOD When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	HUMANISM What is Humanism?
Year 4	CREATION What do Christians learn from the Creation story?	INCARNATION What is the Trinity? <i>DIGGING DEEPER</i>	GOSPEL What kind of a world did Jesus want?	SALVATION Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? <i>CORE & DIGGING DEEPER</i>	HINDU DHARMA What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Part 1)	HINDU DHARMA What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Part 2)
Year 5	GOD What does it mean if God is loving and holy?	INCARNATION Was Jesus the Messiah? <i>CORE LEARNING</i>	PEOPLE OF GOD How can following God bring freedom and justice?	SALVATION What did Jesus do to save human beings?	ISLAM What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Part 1)	ISLAM What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Part 2)
Year 6	CREATION Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?	GOSPEL What would Jesus do?	HUMANISM What is Humanism?	JUDAISM What does it mean to be Jewish in Britain today?	UNIVERSAL What can be done to reduce racism? Can religion help?	KINGDOM OF GOD What kind of king is Jesus?

A Worldviews Approach

Following the publication of “Developing a Religion and Worldviews Approach in Religious Education in England” by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, we are taking part in a pilot project involving the creation, testing and evaluation of new RE planning which the Diocese will then provide to other schools. We strongly believe that this approach better reflects the cultural and religious landscape of the UK and the world, and will help pupils to develop their own worldview by making sense of those of others, regardless of whether they have a faith.

The key ideas behind a Worldviews approach are:

- Not everyone has a faith, but everyone has a worldview – their own view of the world, their own beliefs about right and wrong, their own opinions about what matters.
- There is enormous diversity within religions, and enormous overlap between religions; this is not reflected in the current RE curriculum.
- Teaching should engage children by starting from their own personal views, not treating them as an add-on; then it should look at the lived practise and beliefs of real people before looking at religion as a whole. Very little in RE applies to all followers of a faith.
- History, geography and culture have an impact on faith and how it is expressed by different people in different places.
- We should be teaching our children to be theologians, philosophers and sociologists just as we teach them to be mathematicians, scientists or writers – the teaching of skills is just as vital in RE as in every other subject.

What an RE Lesson looks like

An RE lesson in our school...

- Is pacey and interactive throughout
- Engages children by starting with their own views and experiences
- Involves plenty of opportunity for discussion
- Includes group or paired activities
- Encourages children to find things out for themselves using real sources: artefacts, photographs, scripture, videos, art, music
- Uses 'windows, mirrors, doors' to explore and reflect on beliefs
- Allows children freedom of expression
- Makes connections between faiths

Visits and Visitors

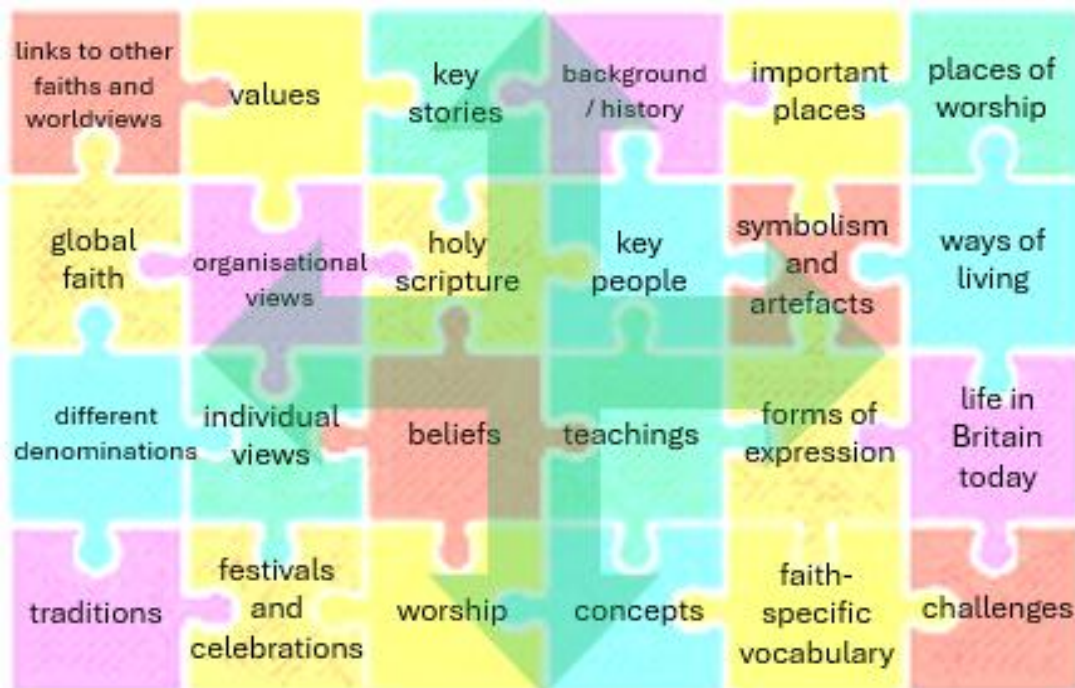
In our school we recognise that a key element of helping children understand a faith is to explore places of religious importance and to meet and talk to real people of faith. Our children have at least one opportunity every year to visit a place of worship, and we invite visitors to school to speak to the children about their beliefs and practises. These visits do not involve any form of worship by the children, but enable them to see and experience others worshipping in their own way. An overview of RE trips can be seen below, but we are constantly adding to our program to broaden the children's horizons further.

Autumn Terms	Spring Terms	Summer Terms
Year 1: St Pauls' Cathedral	FS: Local churches walk	Year 1: Chatham Synagogue
Year 5: Guided walk around Maidstone churches, including visit to Catholic church	Year 1: Church tour at The Friars, Aylesford	Year 2: London Central Mosque
Year 5: Big Bang event at Rochester Cathedral	Year 2: Rochester Cathedral	Year 4: Neasden Hindu Temple
	Year 3: Gravesend Gurdwara	Year 6: All Saints Church, Snodland
	Year 5: Performance at Rochester Cathedral	

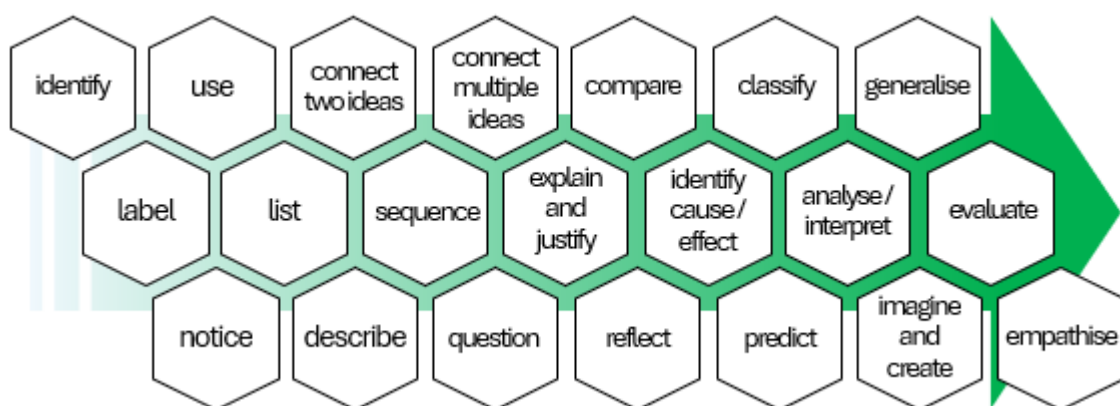
Assessment

We assess children three times a year in RE. Assessment is based partly on the learning in their books, but is also complimented by a 'hexagons assessment' where children are invited to talk freely about the ideas they have learned about; making their own connections, showing the depth of their knowledge and demonstrating their skills. Although progress in RE is not linear, we articulate our expectations of how children will progress through two diagrams, shown below.

Substantive knowledge (what children know about religion)



Disciplinary Knowledge (RE skills)



Teaching and learning

RE has a high profile within our school curriculum and is comparable with other core curriculum areas. Quality teaching in RE helps generate respect for different views and interpretations, with a focus on discussion and discovery. Learners develop and use a wide range of disciplinary skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and world views as lived by believers.

Rigorous assessment based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts shows that attainment is high and progress is significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a range of other world faiths and world views, as appropriate. Rigorous assessment informs teachers of children's abilities and provides children with the knowledge of how to achieve and fulfil their potential, as laid out in the RE assessment policy.

RE offers a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences, understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Using a range of stimuli such as diverse images, artefacts, artwork, scripture, songs, quotes and stories.
- Seeking information for themselves using video, websites, books and interviews with people of different faiths and world views.
- Working in pairs, small groups and whole classes to discuss and debate philosophical, theological and social ideas.
- Responding in different ways, including art, drama, poetry, diagrams, leaflets, posters... the children are also given increasing opportunities to present their understanding in their own way.
- Visiting a wide range of places of Worship and meeting with visitors.
- Using the Windows, Mirrors, Doors approach the spirituality to look outwards at the beliefs and practises of others, look inwards to reflect on their own feelings, thoughts and experiences, and take action to use what they have learned.

Differentiation and Special Educational Needs

Policy and practice in religious education reflects whole school policy and encompasses the full range and ability of all pupils. All pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs. A range of teaching and learning strategies to achieve differentiated learning are used, including adapted tasks, resources, support, scribing and pupil grouping. There is particular focus to ensure that all tasks are challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils whilst extending the most able. Every lesson is planned to be 'low threshold, high ceiling', enabling every child to achieve to their full potential.

Breadth and balance

Although work on Christianity will predominate, there will be in-depth work on the major world religions and on other world views as appropriate. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes, and develop respect for diversity. This year we aim to develop a worldviews approach in RE by working closely with the Rochester Diocese to develop new planning and resources.

Equal Opportunities

Religious education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. It seeks to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity and to ensure a high regard for all people as made in the image of God and worthy of love and respect. All questions, views and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.

Relevance

Teachers will establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching will enable pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice; for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives. This will be done through engaging pupils in an enquiry based style of learning and by posing challenging questions to and by pupils. This year we are adapting the lesson structure to start from the child, with an initial reflection question which will help them engage with the lesson theme before starting to learn about other people and faiths.

Cross-curricular links

Religious Education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development, in particular spiritual development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, drama, history, geography, computing and music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions, for example when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances. Where necessary, staff will adhere to or take any risk assessments required.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education. (Statement of Entitlement February 2019 The Church of England Education Office) ([RE Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools \(2\).pdf](#))
- Produce and regularly review the subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date
- Ensure all teachers are aware of what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage, through a clear progression document for RE.

- Plan and resource RE teaching to ensure high standards, reflection of diversity and progression across the school.
- Support colleagues and help develop their subject expertise
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and planning, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of RE, pupils' progress and standards.
- Liaise periodically with the HT and Governors
- Seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff
- Ensure planning follows the Rochester Diocese syllabus for Religious Education and follows the Understanding Christianity resource.
- Order resources
- Monitor end of term assessments and children's books
- Observe the teaching of RE in school, providing support and guidance for teachers
- Make adjustments to planning and resources based on monitoring activity, to ensure continuous improvement.

Resources

Religious Education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books (for teachers, pupils and the library), posters, artefacts and website subscriptions. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate. Termly planning and powerpoints to support staff in teaching RE will be provided by the subject leader.

Legal Requirements

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their children from religious education. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the headteacher before making this decision.