# Religious Education Policy

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| **Staff Responsible:** | **Mrs Charlotte Murray** |
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# Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

**Subject Identity: Religious Education**

**Fingerprint Statement**

Religious Education explores beliefs, values and worldviews. It develops respect, reflection and critical thinking. RE encourages enquiry into meaning, purpose and morality. It uses comparison and discussion rather than persuasion and it supports pupils' personal and social understanding.

**Core Concepts and Themes**

Religious Education is rooted in a set of core skills that underpin all learning within the subject. These concepts allow pupils to develop a coherent understanding different religions as well as a tolerance and respect for others and their beliefs.

The key skills are:

- **Compare-** Children will make comparisons between different religions to deepen their knowledge as well as building their tolerance and respect for others.
- **Discuss-** RE is a discussion based subject and children have the opportunity in their RE lessons to discuss, debate and build on others thoughts and ideas.
- **Retell-** The children learn a range of different religious stories from the religions that they learn about. Children have the opportunity to retell those stories using a variety of different activities such as role play.
- **Reflect-** Children are encourages to reflect on what has been taught throughout the lesson, as well as a comparison plenary at the end of the lesson. Children are encouraged to reflect on how the religion taught links to their life and beliefs.
- **Respect-** Children are taught to show tolerance and respect towards any religious or non-religious belief, this is woven throughout RE lessons to enable children to have a solid understanding of respecting others.

Together, these skills support pupils in developing an understanding of a range of different religions and their beliefs. Children will explore religious and non-religious views using these skills, building their appreciation for our diverse world.

**Disciplinary Ways of Thinking**

These foundations are brought together through religious thinking, which represents the disciplinary approach at the heart of Religious Education. Pupils are taught to make sense of religion and worldviews by applying the key ways of thinking used by theologians, philosophers and social scientists.

- Exploring questions of belief, meaning and purpose.
- Considering a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Examining how beliefs, values and practices influence individuals and communities.
- Analysing different interpretations, perspectives and sources of authority.
- Reflecting critically on ethical issues and the impact of religion and belief in the contemporary world.

Religious Education enables pupils to think critically, ask thoughtful questions and engage respectfully with different beliefs and perspectives. It supports them in developing informed, reasoned judgements about religion, worldviews and their significance, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to understand the diverse society in which they live.

**Teaching and Learning Documentation**

In order to communicate effectively each of our subject areas, key documentation is established by the Subject Leader and shared with all relevant teaching staff. This documentation includes: -

1. Subject Policy
2. Curriculum Rationale
3. Unit of Study Overview
4. Knowledge and Skills Overview
5. Working Plans

Together, this documentation collates the coverage and implementation of each of the Wider Curriculum Subject Areas.

**Subject Leadership Documentation**

In addition, Subject Leaders are required to monitor the effectiveness of their subject throughout each academic year. In order to do this with effect, the following documentation is established and updated regularly.

1. **Subject Audit** – An audit of the subject is completed annually RAG rating the effectiveness of the subject, whilst informing key priorities moving forward.
2. **Subject Action Plan** – A three-point action plan is derived from School Development Plan priorities and the subject audit to establish next steps as we continue to strive to improve each subject area.
3. **Learning Enquiry** - As part of our monitoring cycle, our Learning Enquiry approach ensures the monitoring of each subject area through scheduled book looks, learning walks, planning/ resource checks, pupil voice and staff voice. All findings are collated, feedback is shared and next steps are actioned.

**Delivery of Religious Education**

RE is timetabled to be taught once a week across the school for an hour. We follow the agreed RE syllabus for County Durham. A proportion of the curriculum is focused upon Christianity, however multi-faith links and comparisons are woven throughout with specific focuses identified below:-

- Year 1 and 2 – Buddhism
- Year 3 – Hinduism
- Year 4 – Hinduism and thematic links
- Year 5 – Judaism and thematic links
- Year 6 – Islam and diversity

**Lesson Content**

In support of foundational understanding of RE, key components of lessons have been established in conjunction with teaching proformas to support class teachers with consistent delivery lesson-by-lesson.

These key components include:-

- **What is statement –** As each RE lesson commences, children will be reminded of the definition of the subject – "RE stands for Religious Education. RE helps us to understand and learn about the world's religions. We learn about different practices and beliefs".

- **Reference to skills in RE –** Children are reminded of key skills that are commonly used in this subject area i.e. retelling, showing respect, discussing, reflecting, sharing, reflecting and comparing.
- **Recapping faiths-** At the beginning of each lesson children will recap the faiths they have learnt previously. In KS1, they will match the religion, follower and symbol and in KS2, they will match the religion, follower, symbol and God.
- **British Values-** At the beginning of each lesson, children will highlight the importance of the British Values around tolerance and respect.
- **Key vocabulary –** Relevant and focused vocabulary for the lesson are shared, discussed and defined with support of teachers encouraging clear and purposeful discussion throughout.
- **Teaching Toolkit strategies –** Ensuring High Quality Teaching, our teaching toolkit strategies are employed where appropriate encouraging effective modelling, retrieval strategies, motivating teaching, accurate assessment and purposeful reflection from learners.
- **Plenary reflection-** At the end of each lesson children to reflect on the religion they have been learning about and see if they can make any links to other religions.

**Performance and Learning Evidence**

Evidence collation is key to support the learning process and the monitoring of Teaching and Learning by Subject Leaders and Senior Leaders. In order to evidence RE effectively, the following strategies have been implemented: -

- All year groups use a class floor book to collate ideas and evidence. Children will still complete individual tasks which will then be documented in the class floor book. KS2 children will be able to take ownership of their floor book. All discussion tasks, quotes, opinions and photographs will be well documented in the floor book.
- Use of Earwig to evidence activities.

**Please note: - Earwig is an online storage system used to evidence in class discussions and activities that contribute to the evidence of knowledge and skills of our learners**

**Assessment**

As per our Marking and Feedback policy, adults are encouraged to formatively assess throughout the entire learning sequence, ensuring proactivity and responsivity to the needs of all children. This feedback can be verbal or written feedback.

At the end of each half-term, pupils' retention and depth of knowledge are assessed through two key approaches:

- a retrieval quiz, focused on knowledge recall
- an open-ended 'connections' task, enabling pupils to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their understanding across the unit

Children 'working significantly below' curriculum expectations are noted in our Wider Curriculum Assessment grids, with a brief description of why, to monitor the gaps in learning of our children across the wider curriculum. Additionally, children who are 'working significantly above' curriculum aims are noted to highlight real flare between class teachers and subject leaders.

**End of Unit Comparison**

At the end of each unit the class teacher will select a different religion to compare and contrast their learning with. Use of thinking maps (double bubble) to get the children to think about what is the same and what is different about the two religions.

**Parental Right to Withdraw from Religious Education**

Parents/carers have the legal right to request that their child be wholly or partly withdrawn from Religious Education (RE) lessons, in accordance with the Education Act 1996. The school respects this right and will discuss any request with parents/carers to ensure they are fully informed about the nature, content and educational purpose of the RE curriculum. Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Following receipt of the request, a meeting may be offered to discuss the reasons for withdrawal and any alternative arrangements. While the school will supervise pupils who are withdrawn from RE, it is not required to provide alternative teaching during this time. Parents/carers may withdraw their child from all or part of RE and may rescind this request at any time by notifying the school in writing.