



Religious Education (RE) Policy

Agreed: Autumn 2021

Review: Autumn 2024

This policy was agreed by the Faith Committee, a sub-committee of the Full Governing Body of Twineham Church of England School.

Aims and objectives

Our vision is that everyone is a gift and everyone is gifted; all of God's children are unique, special and will grow to be even more special. Together we will create a nurturing environment where everyone feels secure and valued, remembering that we are all made in the image of God.

At Twineham Church of England School, we believe that Religious Education contributes fundamentally towards the development of children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural well-being. We encourage all children to learn about, respect and value the beliefs of others, whilst reflecting our Christian values and ethos.

Our Religious Education policy is intended to be a practical working document which sets out clear expectations for the teaching of Religious Education and ensures a consistent approach. The school follows the aims and objectives set out in the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus 2020-25 which explains what pupils are expected to know and understand about religion, and the skills needed to do this.

West Sussex Agreed Syllabus 2020-25

The West Sussex Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) of 2015 was subject to review in 2020 as is required by Law. The new Local Agreed Syllabus of 2020 reflects the changing religious landscape in the United Kingdom and the diversity of modern-day society. The syllabus is based upon enquiry-based learning and aims to raise expectations of both teachers and pupils in terms of the scholarly study of religion and worldviews. The Local Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact "that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking into account the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain" (Education Act 1996).

Within school, the RE curriculum is designed to support the whole school ethos and curriculum. The syllabus states the intent, appropriate implementation, and potential impact of RE on the lives of children and young people so that they can flourish in a changing world.

Why Religion and worldviews?

The nature of RE has changed over the past thirty years. Since the Education Reform Act of 1988, the local, national, and global religious landscape and academic understandings of the subject have changed significantly. According to the recent survey British School Attitudes (2017) over 50%

of adults identify as not belonging to a religion, with 41% identifying as Christian. This explains a fundamental need for our syllabus to reflect the changes in modern day society and the need to help pupils understand the different ways in which religion and worldviews can be understood, interpreted and studied.

The importance of Religious Education

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. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other religions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these. It provides opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices, and forms of expression, as well as the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities, and cultures.

Religious education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values, and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret, and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith, and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Pupils should also study how religion relates to them, recognising both similarities and differences within and between religions. Pupils should be able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religions and beliefs.

They should be encouraged to reflect on:

- ✓ the significance of interfaith dialogue;
- ✓ the important contribution religion can make to community cohesion;
- ✓ the reduction of religious prejudice and discrimination.

Statutory requirements for the provision of RE and Worldviews

The statutory requirements for RE were set out between 1944 and 1993. They were consolidated by the Education Act (1996) and the School Standards and Framework Act (1998). Circular 1/94 and the subsequent revision of guidance in 2010 (RE in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010) offered an interpretation of the legislation.

Curriculum Time

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents. Schools should allocate sufficient time to deliver RE successfully and to a high standard, enabling all pupils to make progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and associated skills. It is important to provide the time for pupils to explore the content in depth.

The expectation is that a minimum of 5% of curriculum time should be allocated to RE in school. This equates to the following:

Reception: 36 hours per year integrated into relevant strands of the EYFS

Key Stage One: 36 hours per year

Key Stage Two: 45 hours per year

A parent may request:

- that their child be either wholly or partly excused from receiving RE given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus;
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parents elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of the school session.

Resources

At Twineham CE School, we strive to deliver the RE curriculum in an exciting and dynamic way, including the use of books, artefacts, ICT, and video materials. Provision includes use of high-quality resources, educational visits out of school and visitors from faith communities. Resourcing of religious education is equivalent to the level that is provided for foundation subjects.

Aims of the Local Agreed Syllabus

The syllabus aims to provide pupils with the knowledge to understand the significance of religions and worldviews to allow them to develop their own personal insights, understanding and the skills required to engage with the subject matter.

Religions Studied

The WSCC Agreed Syllabus requires that:

- ✓ Christianity should be studied throughout each key stage;
- ✓ the other principal religions represented in Great Britain (here regarded as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) should be studied across the key stages;
- ✓ other religions and worldviews and traditions represented in Great Britain such as the Bahá'í Faith, Jainism and Zoroastrianism may also be studied.

Learning across the Curriculum and the contribution of Religious Education

RE and British Values should actively promote the British values of:

- democracy;
- the rule of law;
- individual liberty;
- mutual respect;
- tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

RE lessons should be a safe place for pupils to learn, safely express ideas, opinions, promote debate and discussion. Excellent teaching of RE will enable pupils to learn to think for themselves about British values.

In RE pupils learn the skills and develop attitudes which support them to overcome intolerance leading to respect which allows them to celebrate diversity.

Promoting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development through religious education.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote spiritual development through:

- ✓ discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, beliefs about God and values such as justice, honesty, and truth;
- ✓ learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and other traditions and practices;
- ✓ considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts and related to the human and natural sciences thereby contributing to personal and communal identity;
- ✓ considering how religion and other world views perceive the value of human beings, and their relationships with one another, with the natural world, and with God;
- ✓ valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging;
- ✓ developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote moral development through:

- ✓ enhancing the values identified within the curriculum particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice, and trust;
- ✓ exploring the influence of family, friends, and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts, and guidance from religious leaders;
- ✓ considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice;
- ✓ studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice and creation to promote racial and religious respect and personal integrity;
- ✓ considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote social development through:

- ✓ considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns;
- ✓ investigating social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions as well as the common ground between religions;
- ✓ articulating pupils' own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote cultural development through:

- ✓ encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts, and resources from differing cultures;

- ✓ considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices;
- ✓ promoting racial and interfaith harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion, and promoting awareness of how interfaith cooperation can support the pursuit of the common good.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) should explore a variety of religious and worldviews by identifying special people, books, times, places, and objects, and (where appropriate) by visiting places of worship. Pupils should listen to, discuss, and ask questions about stories from a variety of sources, religions, and worldviews. Pupils can be introduced to subject specific vocabulary and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices, and forms of expression. Pupils should be encouraged to ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. Pupils should use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation for the world in which they live.

Religious education is a legal requirement for all pupils on the school roll, including those in the Reception year.

Pupils are assessed against the EYFS Profile in all Areas of Learning at the end of their Reception year. Religious education can be woven into all seven Areas of Learning, through a creative and inspiring curriculum which reflects the demographic of individual cohorts. Religious education is not currently assessed as a stand-alone subject (in most schools) for Reception pupils.

Key Stage One

During Key Stage One (KS1), pupils should be taught the knowledge and skills in order to understand:

Christianity;
at least one other principal religion.

And where appropriate:

a religious community with a significant local presence;
a secular worldview.

We consider the following points when deciding upon a second principal religion:

the connections between the Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam;
understanding of non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism or Sikhism;
the local context and local faith communities;
coherence and progression for KS2.

We also consider:

visiting places of worship;
inviting visitors from local faith communities;
opportunities to extend pupils learning by encouraging creativity;
using ICT imaginatively;
exploring religion and worldviews studied.

During KS1, pupils learn about the key characteristics of the religions and worldviews studied and their significance and impact in Britain. Pupils should be able to communicate their understanding using specific vocabulary, apply their learning, ask questions, and share their own ideas.

Teachers may plan a unit of work which explores several themes or may focus a unit around one particular theme.

A unit of work might ask, '*What do Christians say God is like?*' (core beliefs) or '*What do Muslim families do the celebrate the birth of a baby?*' (identity/daily life) or '*Why is learning to do good deeds important for Jewish families?*', which will focus on aspects from several themes. However, over the key stage pupils should cover all the themes. Pupils should be given the chance to demonstrate their learning and apply their knowledge in creative and expressive ways.

2.3 Key Stage Two

During Key Stage Two (KS2), pupils should be taught the knowledge and skills to understand:

- ✓ Christianity;
- ✓ at least two other principal religions.

And where appropriate:

- ✓ a religious community with a significant local presence;
- ✓ a secular worldview.

We consider the following points when deciding upon which religions to study:

- ✓ the connections between the Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam;
- ✓ understanding of non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism or Sikhism;
- ✓ the local context and local faith communities;
- ✓ how learning builds on KS1 and coherence and progression for KS3.

We also consider:

- ✓ visiting places of worship,
- ✓ inviting visitors from local faith communities,
- ✓ opportunities to extend pupils learning by encouraging creativity,
- ✓ using ICT imaginatively to explore religion and worldviews studied.

During KS2, pupils learn about the key characteristics of the religions and worldviews studied and their significance and impact in Britain and globally. Pupils should be able to communicate their understanding using subject specific vocabulary (Tier 3 vocabulary), apply their learning, ask questions, share their own ideas, and make connections between religion and worldviews studied and wider learning. They should be able to reflect critically on the relevance of their learning, relate this to their own experiences and personal worldview. They should develop the knowledge and skills to hold informed and balanced conversations about religion and belief and the critical thinking skills to approach and question this substantive knowledge as a 'religious education specialist'.

Teachers may plan a unit of work which explores several themes or may focus a unit primarily on one theme. For example, a unit of work might ask '*What is the Bahá'í belief on the Oneness of God,*

oneness of humanity and oneness of religion?’ (beliefs) or ‘Why is Rosh Hashanah an important time of the year for the Jewish community?’ (practice), or combined themes for example ‘How does belief shape identity for Muslims?’ (beliefs and identity), ‘How do Sikhs express their beliefs in modern Britain?’ (beliefs/practices/ identity/ social action). Pupils should also be given the opportunity to explore big questions such as ‘What does it mean to be human?’ (philosophical). However, over the key stage pupils must cover all these themes. Pupils should be given the chance to demonstrate their learning and apply their knowledge in creative and expressive ways.

Assessment of RE

School based assessment is an essential part of monitoring pupil progress and is the sole means of statutory assessment throughout key stage 1, 2 and 3. At the end of each key stage pupils should show that they know, understand and can apply the concepts, skills and processes specified in the themes of study.

In deciding on a pupil’s achievement at the end of a key stage, teachers may judge which description in the assessment criteria best fits the pupil’s performance. When doing so, each aim should be considered alongside the bullet points descriptors.

It is important to note that not all aspects of religious education can be assessed. For example, pupils may express personal views and ideas that, although integral to teaching and learning, would not be appropriate for formal assessment.

Further information

For further details about our curriculum, please visit

https://twineham.eschools.co.uk/website/our_curriculum_at_twineham/25262

Please contact the Headteacher if you have any questions about Religious Education at Twineham.