

### Religious Education

Religious education asks about meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end. It gives space for individual reflection and wondering who and why; it explores Christianity, other principal religions and world views, and how they affect the fabric of personal and social life; it identifies the reality of evil, injustice and suffering and it opens up visions of how life for all the world's citizens may be transformed by truth, beauty and goodness.

(Draft non-statutory national framework for RE p3).

Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum by developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practices, language and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. It enables pupils to consider and respond to a range of important questions related to their own spiritual development, the development of values and attitudes and fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.

(The National Curriculum Handbook DFES: 2000)

### Aims

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Judaism;
- develop an understanding of what it means to belong to a religious community;
- learn from key ideas and practices in religious traditions and relate it to their life;
- develop skills such as investigation, expression, interpretation, reflection, empathy, application, discernment, analysis, synthesis and evaluation;
- develop attitudes such as curiosity, enquiry, commitment, fairness, respect, self-awareness, open-mindedness and critical-mindedness;
- develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally;
- prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the present and future;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and begin to ask some 'ultimate' questions;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

### Legal position of RE

We follow the Nottinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus, 2003 and recognise that there is now a National Non-statutory Framework for RE. We provide RE to all children in full time education, including those in Reception. A parent may request to remove their child from the formal provision of RE on religious grounds. As recommended in the Locally Agreed Syllabus, we provide 36 hours of Religious Education a year.

### Teaching and learning styles

We base our learning and teaching 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 learning and teaching styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and try where possible to invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

We endeavour to show all religious traditions studied as *living* religions. To help us in this, we use as many real life experiences as we can, talking with members of faith communities, visiting places of worship, and communicating with faith communities through the internet.

Wherever possible, we use artefacts from religious traditions to engage children’s interest and bring the subject to life. Children are encouraged to explore the artefacts and ask questions about them. We recognise that pupils have varied and different learning needs. Therefore we plan lessons to include a variety of visual, aural and kinaesthetic activities.

Content

Concept and ideas within RE fall into 4 areas:

- Beliefs and Identity (B)
- Authority (A)
- Worship, meditation and celebration (W)
- Human lifestyles and the environment (H)

Our 2 year cycle of RE topics ensures there is a wide variety of approaches to religious key concepts and ideas through these 4 main areas. As recommended, the main religion studied throughout the school is Christianity. Judaism is also covered during Key Stage 1.

Reception:

Autumn	Ourselves
	Christmas – preparations for birth of a baby, Mary’s journey
Spring	What does it mean to belong?
	What stories do Christians and Jews love to tell?
Summer	Special People
	Celebrating: what do we do and how do we feel?

Key Stage One:

	Year 1	Year 2
Autumn	Respect for everyone: What does 'respect' mean and how can it be built? (H)	The Good Earth: Giving thanks (H)
	Christmas – angels and shepherds (A)	Advent – preparing to celebrate Christmas (W)
Spring	What does it mean to belong in Christianity? (B)	What is the Torah and why is it important to Jewish people? (A)
	Signs, Symbols and special things (B) - incl the cross at Easter	The Bible & Stories of Jesus (A) – incl Easter
Summer	Celebrations: how do members of two different religions celebrate their festivals? (W)	Beliefs and Actions: How do Jewish people express their beliefs in practice? (B)
		What can we learn from visiting a church and synagogue? (W)

Assessment and monitoring

We use the 8 level scale as in the Locally Agreed Syllabus as a means of assessing children's achievement at the end of a topic. The statements in the scale are transferred into 'I can' statements to which the children can then relate. A possible assessment task for each topic is suggested after the medium term planning. This task can be used to assess children's learning during the topic. Samples of work are taken from each ability range in each class to provide an insight into learning achieved, to monitor standards across school and to inform future planning.