

Wingate Primary School

Policy for
Religious Education

April 2022

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Policy and Guidelines for Religious Education

This policy is written with consideration to our school commitment to the Rights of the Child and our achievement of becoming a Rights Respecting School and it complies with Article 28 of the UNCRC 'Every child has the right to an education' as well as Article 29 'Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.' Although reference to this is not continuously made the policy has been written with full awareness of our responsibility and commitment to children's Rights.

The rights and dignity of our children are at the heart of everything we do, every decision we make and every driver for making progress and helping our children to develop as responsible, valued global citizens who want to make a positive contribution to their and our world.

In our school it is our intent that we help children to develop resilience, perseverance, autonomy and focus. Our children learn that they are valued and valuable, they are independent people in their own right and they have the power to do wonderful, amazing things at every stage of every day.

Every one of our children is a unique individual with their own strengths, aptitudes, interests and dreams. As a school community we will endeavour to support each child to make the most of every opportunity we offer.

We provide enriching experiences to engage learners and in designing and developing our curriculum we have taken into consideration

- how children learn and remember; progress means knowing more and remembering more
- what our children need to succeed in life; cultural capital they need to make aspirational choices and succeed beyond their time at Wingate Primary School.

The key drivers for our curriculum

Ambition and aspiration

Resilience and courage

Autonomy and independence

Perseverance and solution finding

RE is taught according to the Durham Agreed Syllabus 2020 and the four concepts of belief, authority, expressions of belief and impact of belief. The RE curriculum intends to provoke challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Its intent is to promote children's understanding of and respect for belief and beliefs through encouraging them to ask questions, think critically and reflect on their learning and their own experiences and attitudes. This is implemented through introducing and studying a range of world religions across Early Years, Key Stage 1 and 2 where children are not only taught about specific features, beliefs and practices of these, but they are given opportunities to ask questions, give opinions and compare across religions, to reflect on their own beliefs, values and feelings in relation to what they have learnt and to develop their understanding of the role the values play in our community and the wider world. The impact of this will be that children will have a more detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts across several religious and nonreligious worldviews and how these connect to form a framework for understanding religious and non-religious worldviews. Children will be able to show appreciation of different perspectives, recognising the reasons given to support these viewpoints and will be able to raise controversial questions, express their opinions and use sound reasons to back these up.

Purpose of Study

Religious Education contributes dynamically to pupils' education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE pupils learn about religious and non-religious worldviews in order to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to interpret,

analyse, evaluate and critically respond to the claims that religious and non-religious worldviews make. Pupils learn to express their insights and to agree or disagree respectfully. Teaching therefore should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of what is meant by the terms 'religion' and 'worldview' as well as systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Teaching should enable pupils to appreciate that worldviews are complex, diverse and plural and have influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.

Religious Education offers opportunities for personal reflection and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as it encourages pupils to examine the significance of their learning in relation to themselves and others. It enables pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or not), ideas, feelings, experiences and values in the light of what they learn. Religious Education encourages empathy and respect. It enables pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging. It also promotes respect for the right of others to hold different beliefs, values and ideas.

Religious Education should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religious and non-religious worldviews. Religious Education enables pupils to have a nuanced and informed understanding of political, social and moral issues that they will need to face as they grow up in an increasingly globalised world. It helps pupils deal positively with controversial issues, to manage strongly held differences of belief and to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. As such Religious Education is central to good local, national and global citizenship. It makes a significant contribution to the active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance of others' faiths and beliefs, a fundamental British value. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.

Teaching in Religious Education must promote therefore openness, respect for others, scholarly accuracy and critical enquiry.

Intent of R.E.

Through teaching Religious Education using the Agreed Syllabus we aim to help children to:

- develop deepening knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and nonreligious worldviews so that they can:
 - describe and explain beliefs and theological concepts
 - describe and explain some sources of authority and teachings within and across religious and non-religious traditions
 - describe and explain ways in which beliefs are expressed
 - know and understand the significance and impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, communities and societies
 - connect these together into a coherent framework of beliefs and practices
- gain and deploy deepening understanding of specialist vocabulary and terms
- know and understand about religious diversity within the region, as well as nationally and globally
- know and understand how religion can be defined and what is meant by the term "religious and non-religious worldviews" and with increasing clarity know that these worldviews are complex, diverse and plural
- gain and deploy skills that enable critical thinking and enquiry in relation to the material they study
- reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values and beliefs with increasing discernment
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions (RRSA)

Implementation of RE

- RE is planned and taught in accordance with the Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. (Revised 2020). Lessons are planned to ensure pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed through critical thinking and personal reflection. They take into account the four concepts of belief, authority, expressions of belief and impact of belief using one or more of the five areas of enquiry.
- Enquiry questions are at the heart of RE at all key stages. They enable pupils to build on previous learning and deepen and broaden their understanding through increasingly sophisticated and complex systematic and thematic enquiries and are used for units of work at all key stages.
- Throughout the key stages pupils have opportunities to develop a range of skills as well as positive attitudes to their own and others' beliefs, ideas, experiences and values. Pupils study Christianity at each of the Key stages. During the Foundation Stage and KS1 children become familiar with the following religions: Christianity and Buddhism. In KS2 children become familiar with: Christianity (taught in every year in Key Stage 2), Hinduism and Judaism (core religions) and some aspects of Islam.
- Over the course of KS1 and 2, children make links between religions by studying Diversity and Thematic units of work, including finding out about their local faith communities.
- Pupils in each year group have the opportunity to build up their knowledge and understanding of the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter by studying different aspects of these festivals each year, building on the previous year's enquiry question to ensure children find the work stimulating and that their breadth of knowledge and understanding is increased, as well as deepening their critical thinking skills and personal reflection.
- Aspects of other religions are taught through festivals and celebrations.
- Planning for RE follows a yearly cycle, with a long term plan for each year group specifying the 'Big Questions' to be studied to ensure coverage
- RE is taught weekly in discrete blocks. Further opportunities arise through Assemblies, related topic work such as Creative Arts, festivals, visitors to the school and through educational visits to places of worship.
- Religious Education does not aim to indoctrinate children to any particular faith, but aims to reflect the spiritual, moral, cultural and social aspects of the major religious traditions in Great Britain.

Teaching and Subject Content

Lessons are planned to ensure pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed through critical thinking and personal reflection. They take into account the four concepts of belief, authority, expressions of belief and impact of belief using one or more of the five areas of enquiry. Enquiry questions are at the heart of RE at all key stages. They enable pupils to build on previous learning and deepen and broaden their understanding through increasingly sophisticated and complex systematic and thematic enquiries and are used for units of work at all key stages. Throughout the key stages pupils have opportunities to develop a range of skills as well as positive attitudes to their own and others' beliefs, ideas, experiences and values. Pupils study Christianity at each of the Key stages. Pupils in each year group have the opportunity to build up their knowledge and understanding of the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter by studying different aspects of these festivals each year, building on the previous year's enquiry question to ensure children find the work stimulating and that their breadth of knowledge and understanding is increased, as well as deepening their critical thinking skills and personal reflection.

Foundation Stage

Much of the religious education to be taught in Reception is within the area of Understanding the World, with activities across the year. Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community, including People and Community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, places of worship, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and religious leaders. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. In Reception, children have access to some aspects of religion through continuous provision. The children will explore places of worship both virtually and physically and fully explore them in 'areas' such as the 'block area'. Special times and festivals will be taught at meaningful times in the children's year through discrete teaching sessions. These will mostly take their starting points from the children's experiences.

- Talk, listen to and tell stories, pose questions
- Make and do, e.g. making festive food, role play
- Directly experience religion through visitors, visits, artefacts
- Learn through the five senses, e.g. smelling incense, tasting foods, hearing sounds such as bells, chimes, chants, seeing and touching artefacts
- Have times of quiet and stillness
- Reflect and use their imagination and curiosity to develop a sense of awe, wonder, mystery, joy, peace etc.

In Reception, we draw on Christianity plus aspects of the other principal religions as appropriate and Religious Education follows the Durham Agreed Syllabus using the themes of 'Special' and 'Belonging'. Children explore these ideas through topics such as special times, special objects, special people, special books, how we show belonging, the natural world, new life and new places. Stories provide excellent opportunities for RE foundation work in Nursery and Reception and can be successfully built on at Key Stage 1.

Examples for exploration in Religious Education:

- Let's find out about the Christmas story
- Let's find out about Raksha Bandhan/Diwali etc.

Key Stage One

Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews. As part of this they will learn about the place of religion and beliefs in their local community recognising diversity.

The RE plan also enables pupils to develop their understanding of one other religion or non-religious worldview. It also enables pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of religion in the local area through a study of the different religious communities which exist in the local area surrounding the school (including different Christian denominations). Pupils will learn about the key features of this religion and learn stories, celebrations and places of worship. This allows pupils to explore the significance to the followers of that religion.

Pupils must be taught about:

- Christianity - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.

Example of Unit Question

- *How do Christians celebrate Easter?*

- Buddhism – introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact.

Example of Unit Question

- *How do Buddhists worship?*

- Religious diversity - introduction to the diverse religious and non-religious landscape in the local area (including differing denominations).

Example of Unit Question

- *What can we find out about our local faith communities?*

Key Stage Two

Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils will build up an increasingly clear and detailed picture of:

- Christianity (taught in every year in Key Stage 2)
- Hinduism and Judaism (core religions) and some aspects of Islam.
- Religious diversity
- Similarities and differences within and between religions through thematic studies

These religions are mainly taught in separate units so that pupils do not become confused. Pupils do study some units which help them look at a theme across more than one religion:

- Christianity – beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.

Examples of Unit Question

- *Why are Good Friday and Easter Sunday the most important days for Christians?*

- *So, what do we now know about Christianity? (Statutory Bridging Unit)*

- Hinduism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities

Example of Unit Question

- *What do Hindus believe?*

- Judaism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities

Example of Unit Question

- *Why do Jewish people go to the synagogue?*

- religious diversity - the diverse religious and non-religious landscape across the region, including a special study of a local Muslim community

Examples of Unit Questions

- *What can we find out about diversity in our region?*

- *What can we find out about a local Muslim community?*

- similarities and differences within and between religious and non-religious worldviews through at least one thematic study e.g. about ritual, the environment, care for others

Examples of Unit Questions

- *How do people show care for others?*

- *Why do people use ritual in their lives?*

Impact of RE

The impact of the R.E. curriculum will be that children at Wingate Primary School enjoy R.E. and discovering more about religious and non-religious worldviews in a respectful manner. They will be confident learners and play an active role in the community of enquiry to enable them to have a more detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts across several religious and nonreligious worldviews. They will have knowledge of how these connect to form a framework for understanding religious and non-religious worldviews and be able to compare and contrast these, asking relevant questions and discussing their ideas and opinions with dignity. The aim of our R.E. curriculum is that children, as global citizens and part of a multicultural and diverse society, will be able to show appreciation of different perspectives, recognising the reasons given to support these viewpoints and will be able to raise controversial questions, express their opinions and use sound reasons to back these up, in a respectful and considerate manner.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment in Religious Education takes place at the end of each unit through formative rather than summative approaches. The children are assessed against benchmarks expectations at different stages throughout Key Stage 1 and 2. When assessing work in RE teachers give careful consideration to children's verbal responses particularly in class and group discussion, their willingness to contribute relevant material and the quality of their written work.

Children's knowledge and understanding of specific religious and non-religious world views is assessed alongside their ability to analyse and evaluate questions raised by religious and non-religious world views (critical thinking) but not their personal reflections as these are essentially private and subjective.

P.S.H.E.

Religious education contributes to the development of PSHE and the understanding of their Rights and Responsibilities by giving children the opportunity to:

- Recognise the importance of feelings and emotions
- Understand different points of view
- Listen to others
- To take part in discussion and debate
- To make judgements based on their knowledge of moral rules
- To recognise the effects of actions for good or ill

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

We are committed to providing an environment which promotes the education progress and achievements of all pupils irrespective of origin, religion, culture or gender.

In accordance with the 1988 Education Act we acknowledge the RE should be taught to all pupils in full-time education except for those pupils who are withdrawn at the wish of their parents. For children with special educational needs we recognise the value of a variety of teaching approaches, learning experiences and resources. This will include:

- Carefully planned and differentiated work/activities
- Individual support where necessary
- Practical and oral work
- Use of the computer to aid written work

We recognise that some children may have had varied experiences of religion at home and that many may have had none. Similarly, it is important to take into account the variety of spiritual and moral

heritage that children bring into school. To reflect this, Religious Education does not promote one faith over another, but rather identifies common themes such as Creation, Special Times, Belonging, Places of worship and caring for each other and the environment.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Educational visits to places of religious value will be used to support the pupils' work in R.E. where appropriate. These can also include video calls with or visits to school from members of religious communities. Pupils will be encouraged to discover more about the 'Big Question' for the particular unit they are studying and to reflect on the impact of the visit or visitor on religious and non-religious world views as well as their own beliefs, values and experiences.

Resources to complement and inspire questioning and critical thinking in children can be borrowed from Durham Learning Resources to supplement the ones already in school.

Useful Websites:

<http://www.reonline.org.uk/>

<http://www.dottieandbuzz.co.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/>

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/re/contents.htm>

<http://www.thebrickbible.com/>

http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/re/re_Hinduism.htm

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