



Religious Education Policy

Approved by RA on 26.11.18

Subject leader: Rachael Rollinson
Reviewed by: Helen Miller 22.10.18

Introduction:

Religious education has a unique place as a subject in the school curriculum. It is part of the basic curriculum for all pupils in maintained schools alongside national curriculum subjects, yet it is the only one in which what is taught is decided locally. At Holmwood School we teach RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus for Middlesbrough (SACRE) and the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The purpose of this syllabus is to enable children and young people to grow and develop into religiously educated young people and to show how religious education contributes to the personal development of pupils.

With this in mind, the syllabus has been structured around key questions. This approach is consistent both with the needs of high quality RE and the concerns central to religion. The exploration of fundamental questions will encourage pupils to develop and use their skills of reflection, interpretation, analysis and application, as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

We teach RE as part of the basic curriculum in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform act, the 1993 Education Act and the locally agreed syllabus 'SACRE' (2014-2019) The 1998 Education Reform Act confirms the right of withdrawal of both teachers and children from RE. The curriculum is balanced and broadly based to promote the spiritual, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils. RE is a subject in its own right, taught against educational criteria and not as a religious instruction. Learning about and from religion will enrich and extend the understanding of pupils about the world in which they live, even though religious practice may not be part of their direct experience outside the school environment.

Principal aim:

To engage pupils in enquiring into and exploring questions arising from the study of religion and belief, so as to promote their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In meeting this principal aim, teachers will also achieve a broader range of goals:

- To provide learners with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions and beliefs represented in Great Britain.

- To develop their understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and outlook.
- To enable learners to apply the insights of the principal religious traditions to their own search for identity and significance.
- To enable learners to become aware of their own beliefs and values and to have a positive attitude to the search for meaning and purpose in life.
- To encourage learners to develop a positive attitude towards other people who hold religious beliefs different from their own.

Entitlement:

Holmwood School acknowledges and believes in the statutory entitlement to learning through the Agreed syllabus. However, because of the special needs of many of our pupils, we sometimes need to differentiate and modify the curriculum in order for it to be accessible and appropriate.

Foundation Stage:

Religious Education is a statutory requirement for all registered pupils on the school roll (except those withdrawn at parental request). This includes pupils of four or five years old in Reception (Foundation Stage 2) or mixed Reception/Year 1 classes. RE should be delivered in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. During the foundation stage, children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, stories, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship.

Key Areas to be covered:

- **Special People**
- **Special Times**
- **Special Places**
- **Being Special**

Key Stage One:

By the end of KS1 pupils will have had the opportunity to experience some of the aspects of Christianity and Judaism, whilst also taking into account the beliefs, viewpoints and ideas of children and their families.

Key Questions

Believing: What do creation stories teach about God?

Leaders and teachers: Why are Jesus and Moses important for Christians and Jews?

Story: Why are holy books special?

Celebrations: Why is Christmas/Easter/Pesach special for believers?

Symbols: Why and how do special places, symbols and actions help people to show what they believe?

Belonging: What does it mean to belong to a faith community?

Myself: Why should we care for others?

Key Stage Two:

By the end of KS2 pupils will have had the opportunity to experience some of the aspects of Christianity plus at least two from Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, whilst

also taking into account the beliefs, viewpoints and ideas of children and their families.

Key Questions

Beliefs and questions:

- What is God like and how does believing in God influence people's lives?

Inspirational people:

- Who was Jesus and why do people follow him today?
- Who was Muhammad and why do people follow him today?
- Who was Guru Nanak and why do people follow him today?

Teachings and authority:

- What makes some books sacred and what influence do they have on believers' lives?

The journey of life and death:

- Why do believers often see life as a journey and what significant experiences mark this?

Symbols and religious expression:

- How and why do people celebrate religious festivals?

Worship, pilgrimage and sacred places:

- What is worship and how is it expressed?

Religion and the individual:

- How do we decide what is right and wrong? What do religions say?

Religion, family and community:

- How do families practise their faith and how does it influence their lives?

Beliefs in action in the world:

- How and why do religions teach that people should care for others and for the natural world?

Right of Withdrawal:

Parents have the right to request that their son or daughter be excused from all or part of the RE provided at Holmwood School. In these circumstances parents should be made aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus, and that much has changed in RE since the right of withdrawal was enshrined in law. The emphasis in RE is the open exploration of ultimate questions and the examination of a range of religious and non-religious responses to these questions, including the views of pupils. Parents should also recognise that pupils may encounter religion and belief in other parts of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal.

At Holmwood School we recognise the value of promoting social cohesion and this includes helping pupils understand ideas about identity and diversity, including within a religious context and a context of nonreligious beliefs. This learning may take place in other parts of the curriculum.

Where parents do choose to withdraw their child from RE, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wishes their child to receive. More details are available in the DCSF Non-statutory Guidance (2010, p27-29).

Planning:

At Holmwood School we have developed a creative curriculum using Focus Education, The Learning Challenge Curriculum. This process puts high emphasis on learners being involved in their own learning. It also focuses on improving learner and teacher questioning and uses a key skills system to guarantee continuity and progression in learning across the whole school. It is the focus of the creative curriculum to combine subjects where possible and link to the terms topics. This is linked with the recommendations from Middlesbrough Agreed Syllabus to ensure breadth of study and coverage. As part of the planning process, particular

consideration is given to the pupils cognitive and emotional capabilities, so that pupils are given maximum opportunities to access the curriculum.

Time:

At Foundation Stage an allocation of 36 hours per year (both teacher-led and child-initiated activities). At Key stage 1 a minimum of 36 hours per year will be allocated and at Key Stage 2 a minimum of 45 hours a year. It is not anticipated that these hours will always be allocated weekly as we may on occasion derive benefit from teaching RE as part of a concentrated block of time. Throughout the year focus days will be dedicated to exploring a specific aspect of the RE curriculum, for example, Diwali and Eid celebrations. On these occasions, the day's lessons will be linked to RE in a whole school cross curricular approach to learning.

Teaching Methods:

We believe that the use of artefacts, stories, pictures and visits will stimulate children's interest and curiosity. We as teachers will be then able to assist children in extending their opportunities for spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and emotional development through RE.

Assessment:

Although there is no statutory requirement for assessment in RE, it is important that teachers are able to identify evidence of pupils learning in order to monitor progress and assist future planning. To help with this process assessment sheets are available for teachers' use. Where appropriate, marked RE work will refer to individual learning targets for literacy and numeracy with next steps for learning identified. Annual reports will be sent to parents to inform them of pupils' progress and experiences in this subject.

Resources:

All RE resources are kept centrally in the RE resource cupboard. Each year RE is given an allocated budget to replenish resources. If staff need additional resources to support the teaching of their individual lessons they should speak with the coordinator at the beginning of the school year to ensure these can be purchased from the budget.

The use of the school minibus will also be used to allow the children to experience learning of RE through field work opportunities. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure a risk assessment has been completed and the procedure for arranging school visits has been followed. The learning objectives for the visit must also be clearly identified.

The role of SACRE:

The school will liaise with the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, (SACRE) to inform them of the implementation of the Agreed syllabus and any related problems.