

FRONT STREET COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



RE POLICY

September 2024



This policy links to articles: 2, 12, 13, 14, 28, 29, 30, 31

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching and learning of all aspects of the Religious Education curriculum at Front Street Primary School.

Why teach RE?

RE is not just taught because it is a legal requirement for us to do so. The aim of RE teaching is *not* to tell children what to believe. It is to allow them to explore and learn from different beliefs and worldviews for themselves. Children enjoy developing their understanding of a range of beliefs and viewpoints. They explore their own and other people's ideas about ethics, morality and the 'big questions' of life. They can articulate and reason about these ideas. They are respectful British citizens, who recognise and work against discrimination and understand their role in the community and are ready to be part of wider society. RE supports children in developing our values: to be happy, healthy, caring and curious. As a Rights Respecting school, we believe that RE is central to the education and development of our pupils. RE allows children to:

- develop and reflect on their own understanding of the world;
 - develop and reflect on the beliefs of others, and how this affects their lives;
 - develop 'soft skills' such as empathy and communication;
 - explore ethics, morality and the 'big questions' of life;
 - become tolerant British citizens, who recognise and work against discrimination.
- (articles 2, 12, 14, 29, 30)

The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum includes the legal requirement that:

'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- **promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and**
- **prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.**

All state schools ... must teach religious education'.

(National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)

Although there is not a National Curriculum for RE, all maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. All maintained schools have a statutory duty to teach RE.

The RE curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Agreed Syllabuses used in schools which are not designated with a religious character must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

By following guidance and information provided by the SACRE, the RE subject leader ensures that curriculum coverage is appropriate. Children learn about Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and non-religious world views. Their knowledge and understanding are developed and built upon each year, through a progressive, ambitious curriculum.

Learning in RE is divided into 6 main strands within two general attainment targets, AT1 and AT2.

AT1 covers learning about religion. It gives children the opportunity to **EXPLORE** religion. Its main strands are:

- Learning about beliefs, teachings and sources (for example, looking at religious texts)
- Practices and ways of life (for example, learning about ceremonies and prayer)
- Forms of expression (for example, how people express their faith through art)

AT2 covers learning from religion. It gives children the opportunity to **ENGAGE** with the big questions about life. Its main strands are:

- Identity and belonging (for example, looking at which communities we belong to)
- Meaning, purpose and truth (for example, looking at the meaning of life)
- Values and commitments (for example, exploring how people make moral decisions)

In addition to these two areas, Gateshead's agreed syllabus also includes a third section: looking at living in a diverse world. This aims to allow children to **REFLECT** on diversity in society, and on how to live well by accommodating difference. These skills are all included in the curriculum. (article 2, 12, 28, 29)

RE relates to a range of Early Learning Goals, notably in Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding of the World. It is taught through a cross-curricular approach, with a range of activities developing children's skills and understanding. Learning is adapted to match children's interests and experiences. Teachers assess children on each goal and liaise with the RE lead on skills and content coverage.

The Objectives of RE Teaching

All children should:

- Learn in a safe, positive, inclusive environment which builds upon achievements;
- Experience a range of activities and approaches;
- Express their own ideas and beliefs through discussion, writing and the arts;
- Be given opportunities to listen to staff, to each other and to practitioners of different faiths and worldviews;
- Gain an understanding of different faiths, worldviews and cultures, and learn to look at things from other people's perspectives. Show awareness of similarities and differences between peoples and appreciate the diversity of beliefs within the school and wider community;
- Learn to think critically about the 'big questions', such as the meaning of life, how we know what is right or wrong, and what happens when we die;
- Develop specific knowledge of the main faiths (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism) as well as non-religious worldviews, and explore connections and differences.
- Understand that some questions have no agreed answer. (articles 2, 12, 13, 14, 28, 29, 30, 31)

SMSC

Schools are expected to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes:

Spiritual: Explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect. (This is central to all three strands of RE skills taught.)

Moral: Recognise right and wrong; respect the law; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views. (This is addressed by the ENGAGE strand of RE skills taught.)

Social: Use a range of social skills; participate in the local community; appreciate diverse viewpoints; participate, volunteer and cooperate; resolve conflict; approach sources and statements critically; engage with the 'British values' of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance. (This is addressed by the REFLECT strand of RE skills taught, and by a range of activities which link the school to the wider community.)

Cultural: Appreciate cultural influences; appreciate the role of Britain's parliamentary system; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity. (This is addressed by the REFLECT strand of RE skills taught, and through other opportunities across the curriculum.) (article 2, 14, 29, 30)

British Values

Learning about British values forms a key part of children's spiritual, moral, cultural and social education. As part of this learning, all children are expected to develop respect for and tolerance of those with different beliefs, faiths and worldviews, and to know the importance of working to stop discrimination. This is central to RE teaching at Front Street, and this ethos is supported by the children's work on the UNCRC. Pupil voice is developed through RE ambassadors from years 2-6 working with the subject lead. (article 2, 14, 30)

Cross-Curricular Links

RE lends itself to cross curricular links with all other subjects, particularly in these areas:

- Literacy: Speaking and listening, due to the focus on discussion and articulation of ideas, and drama activities.
- Literacy: Reading and writing, for example through the learning, ordering and retelling of stories.
- History: The faiths of different cultures of the past, and how they have influenced the modern world, for example the advent of Christianity in Britain.
- Geography: The main faiths of different countries, the location of key religious sites and buildings.
- MFL: The main faiths of different countries, how festivals are celebrated around the world.
- PHSE: Tolerance and understanding of different faiths, beliefs and cultures. Knowing how to make moral decisions and where to look for support and guidance.
- Art: The role of art in expressing and celebrating faith.
- Music: Learning songs related to specific faiths or festivals. (articles 2, 12, 13, 31)

Organisation and time spent on teaching:

RE is taught in mixed ability classes. The children receive regular lessons delivered in a way that is most appropriate to their year group. Visitors and class visits are also organised where possible.

Equal Opportunities

The RE policy supports the Equal Opportunities Policy of the whole school by regarding all pupils as equal. Activities and resources take into account multicultural issues, therefore ensuring that children receive the same education regardless of their own faith or background. (article 2, 14, 30)

Inclusion

The teaching of RE gives children the opportunity to explore the beliefs, values and experiences of themselves and others. Tasks are adapted where necessary to meet the needs of all pupils, and extra support, or extension, is given when necessary.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that RE and collective worship are provided across the school. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE provision. This is given in the curriculum policy, available on the school's website. Parents wishing to withdraw their child will be given the opportunity to discuss the provision so that they can make an informed decision. (article 2, 12, 14, 30)

Teaching Methods

- RE is taught through a range of different methods and approaches in order to maximise children's understanding and enjoyment.
- Children will work individually, in pairs, in small groups and in whole class situations.
- Teaching will include sessions where RE is taught through or alongside the arts, for example drama and the visual arts.
- Children will be given opportunities to listen to staff, visitors, each other and to practitioners of different faiths and worldviews.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in open-ended and philosophical discussions. It will be made explicit to them that some questions do not have an agreed answer.
- Where appropriate, children will participate in visits to different religious buildings, such as Churches, Mosques, and Mandirs, or receive visits from representatives of different faiths and non-religious worldviews. (article 2, 12, 13, 14, 29, 31)

Planning and resources

The Gateshead syllabus was devised by the Gateshead SACRE. This longer document has been précised so that each year group's coverage is clear. Each year, children revisit and build on previous learning. Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam are taught across Key Stages 1 and 2, alongside non-religious worldviews. Children are encouraged to make links and comparisons between different belief systems. Artefacts and related items are available for use in lessons. Teachers are supported by the RE lead in selecting reliable, good quality resources.

Assessment and Recording

- Assessment is part of all lessons, through questioning, discussion, observation and marking. At the end of a series of lessons, teachers will also use specific tasks to further assess knowledge and understanding.
- Books and floor books are monitored by the subject leader.
- RE is included in the school's annual reports to parents on their children's progress. This states each child's attainment and approach to learning.
- Re ambassadors from years 2-6 provide pupil voice in regular meetings with the subject lead.