



WHITEHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

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1. Rationale

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

"a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

This fits with our school ethos of Religious Education being taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values, and philosophy of the school vision of nurturing students who have aspirations, are curious learners who think critically and make meaningful connections and are independent in thought and in action. At Whitehall Primary, Religious Education plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas, particularly PSHCE in promoting and enhancing the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of our children.

RE makes a key educational contribution to pupils' explorations of British Values, and through excellent teaching of RE, it can enable pupils to learn to think for themselves about them.

The subject offers opportunities to build an accurate knowledge-base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. This in turn supports our students so that they are able to move beyond attitudes of tolerance towards increasing respect, so that they can celebrate diversity.

Whitehall Primary School is a community school. We follow Leicester's Local authority Locally Agreed Syllabus; One Leicester: Harmony and Diversity (2019- 2024) and use the scheme **Discovery RE now Jigsaw RE** to help sequence the curriculum from EYFS to year 6.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
- RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential)
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)

2. Intent of RE

Here, at Whitehall Primary School, the aim of Religious Education is to help children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the principal religion here in the UK (Christianity) as well as the other major religions across the world and those represented within our school community. We aim to facilitate children's appreciation of the way that religious beliefs shape life and our behaviour through developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues which raise challenging questions

The children at Whitehall Primary enjoy learning about other religions and why people choose, or choose not to follow a religion. Through their R.E. learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. R.E. acts as a hub, therefore, between social aspects of learning, history and geography. Through R.E. our children are developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life, which they are then able to communicate to the wider community. As such, R.E. is an invaluable asset to our overall school curriculum.

3. The aims of RE at Whitehall

Here at Whitehall, we use Discovery RE/ jigsaw RE as an aide to sequence our curriculum as it meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non- statutory guidance described above.

At Whitehall Primary school, we intend that Religious Education will:-

- **Adopt an enquiry- based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **Provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- **Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **Teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- **Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.**
- **Nurture children's own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** alongside other subjects by making children aware of what they are learning in RE and how this links to SMSC.

4. Implementation

For RE, a curriculum progression map from Nursery to Year 6 outlines the composites we aim for our children to reach by the end of each year and phase. These are sequential and ensure knowledge and skills are built up over time. The composites are further broken down into components which are detailed in the curriculum progression map and in more detail on the medium-term plans. These are then broken down even further into weekly plans for every half term.

4.1 RE Content

RE at Whitehall covers all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion is taught in each year group. There is a range of Abrahamic, Dharmic and non-religious world views taught across the key stages. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group.

Foundation Stage 1/2:

Enquiry	Religions studied:
What makes people special?	Christianity, Judaism
What is Christmas	Christianity
How do people celebrate?	Islam/Judaism
What is Easter?	Christianity
What can we learn from stories?	Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism
What makes people special?	Christianity, Islam, Judaism.

Year 1:

Enquiry	Religions studied:
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem?	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity
Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Does celebrating Chanukah make Jewish children feel close to God?	Judaism

Year 2:

Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world?	Christianity
What do Humanists believe?	Humanism
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?	Judaism
How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion?	Christianity
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism

Year 3:

Enquiry	Religions Studied
Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?	Hinduism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
What is “good” about Good Friday?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Hinduism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu?	Hinduism

Year 4:

Enquiry	Religions studied
How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God? OR Is it possible for everyone to be happy?	Judaism Buddhism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? OR Can the Buddha’s teachings make the world a better place?	Judaism Buddhism
Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? OR What is the best way for a Buddhist to lead a good life?	Judaism Buddhism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

Year 5:

Enquiry	Religions studied
How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion? OR What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God?	Sikhism Hinduism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
Are Sikh stories important today? OR How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Sikhism Hinduism
How significant is it for Christians to believe God intend Jesus to die?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God? OR Do beliefs in Karma, Samsara and Moksha help Hindus lead better lives?	Sikhism Hinduism
What is the best way for Christian to show commitment to God?	Christianity

Year 6:

Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother? OR Do Christmas celebrations and traditions help Christians understand who Jesus was and why he was born?	Christianity
How do inspirational people impact on how Humanists live today?	Humanism
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Christianity
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

4.2 Teaching and learning in RE

RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive way of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for adaptation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

At Whitehall Primary School, RE is taught discretely with weekly lessons being held across the school from foundation stage all the way to Year 6. It is taught by the class teacher or cover teacher in some instances.

4.3 Differentiation and Adaptation

RE is as a universal core curriculum with provision for all children. Inclusivity is an important part of teaching RE here at Whitehall. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support students learning, teachers may adapt work to meet learning outcomes or altogether differentiate work so all abilities of students are able to achieve. Many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. To further help teachers differentiate or adapt learning for children in KS1 and 2, each enquiry has exemplars for those children working towards the learning objective, at the expected level for this age group and those working beyond the expected level of achievement.

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in assessing whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it. Children are assessed over three aspects of learning:

- A personal resonance with or reflection on the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- Knowledge and understanding of the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- Evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question

These are tracked throughout the planning stage so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly. In line with non-statutory guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 (cited on page 1) descriptors of these aspects utilise age-related expectations of working towards, working at the expected attainment and working beyond.

4.4 Knowledge Organisers

RE at Whitehall has a knowledge organiser for each unit, which is used as a learning aid and is referred to during lessons as it has an overview of what will be covered during the unit. Time is given to revise from knowledge organisers from past terms for the benefit of repetition and understanding of key vocabulary to embed this knowledge into long term memory.

5. Assessment and Recording

- Teachers to use the red and blue dot system to show children whether or not they have achieved the learning intention.
- Teachers to give verbal feedback during class teaching to push the children's work in the direction that it needs to go.
- Comments need to be made which directly relate to the learning intention and if children have not met it, the comment must provide pupils with clear targets for improvements.
- Comments should not be made on the English skills rather they should be made about the RE specific subject knowledge.
- For children who achieved the learning intention, feedback needs to allow children to think more about the topic i.e. with a challenge question.
- Marking and feedback is more important for the knowledge based lessons and does not need to be done same extent for the engage and express lessons.

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, we use end of unit evaluation sheets which are completed by the children. These in essence show children's progress in their personal resonance, knowledge and understanding and critical thinking skills. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation.

6. Reporting to Parents/Carers

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers. Our RE enquiries give teachers meaningful evidence to cite in reports.

7. Impact

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience

- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

8. External contributors

RE gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. The British Values agenda is intrinsic to RE at Whitehall with the aid of the Discovery/ Jigsaw RE scheme, a map of coverage is available on request. RE is an important subject in contribution to the school's development as a Rights Respecting School.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc. make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Year group visits:

Nursery/Reception- Choice between Church, Mosque or Synagogue

Year 1- Leicester Cathedral

Year 2- Synagogue

Year 3- Hindu Temple (Mandir)

Year 4- Nagarjuna Kadampa Buddhist Centre

Year 5- Sikh Gurdwara

Year 6- Mosque and Church for comparison

Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

9. The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

10. Involving parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- * Curriculum newsletters
- * Displays
- * Topic based homework

11. Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.

The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

12. Safeguarding

In RE lessons, discussions can be sensitive in nature as it challenges views on extremism and radicalisation. If there is any safeguarding concern picked up in lessons or during discussions, teachers are required to report concerns immediately to the DSL and follow school procedures as reported in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

13. Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Collective Worship Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- *SMSC Policy*
- *British Values*
- *Prevent Strategy*
- *Marking and Feedback policy*

14. Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

15. Link Governor

The named link governor, Julie Nesbitt , is responsible for:

- Monitoring the impact of the subject across the school and on pupils
- Monitoring teacher workload and professional development
- Ensuring subject action plans are suitable
- Monitoring the quality of resources
- Keeping a track of pupil and parent engagement with the subject
- Keeping up to date with the curriculum (what's taught, why it's taught, and how it's taught)

16. Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

17. Links to other policies

The policy links to other policies and procedures:

- SEND policy
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy