

Rakegate Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Rakegate Primary School
Religious Education (RE) Policy

1 The Legal Position of Religious Education

1.1 Rakegate Primary School's curriculum for Religious Education meets the legal requirements set out in the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) which were confirmed by the Education Act 1996 and Education Act 1998.

1.2 It is based on the Wolverhampton LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship and British Values.

1.3 The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children of compulsory school age. It allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes provided they give written notification to the school. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right will be encouraged to speak to the Head teacher and/or RE Co-ordinator who will explore any concerns so they will be able to make a more informed decision. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school.

2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Governors and the head teacher will fulfil their duty to ensure that RE is provided as part of the school's basic curriculum and provide an annual report to parents or carers giving brief particulars of progress and achievements in all subjects including RE.

2.2 The governors and head teacher will also ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the school's RE curriculum.
- The teaching of RE is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact in promoting an understanding of community cohesion and British Values.
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations regarding RE and pupils can make good progress.
- Information is provided to parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.

3 Intent of Religious Education at Rakegate Primary School

3.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people, such as the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. At Rakegate Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. Children will be encouraged to express their own ideas and insights into the significant human questions which religions address. They will gain and employ a wide range of skills needed to study religion. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other religions and worldviews, especially those that are the main beliefs of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith, to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding and to consider the viewpoint of those with no faith connections. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

3.2 The aims of religious education are to help our children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major religions and world views found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.
- to adopt an enquiry – based approach, beginning with the children's own life experiences before moving into learning about and from religion

4 Implementation of Religious Education at Rakegate Primary School

4.1 We base our teaching and learning 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.

4.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and then to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

4.3 Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies.

4.4 Amongst other things, children will have opportunities to handle artefacts, read stories, watch appropriate material using the internet to help develop their understanding. They have the opportunity to respond to what they have learnt in a variety of ways such as through poetry, report writing, drama, crafts, food preparation, music, speaking and listening.

4.5 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children. We achieve this in a variety of ways by, for example,

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- presenting tasks in different ways that appeal to different learning styles
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- mixed ability groups and partner work
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

4.6 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Wolverhampton LEA's Agreed Syllabus (AS). We ensure that the units studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.7 The long-term planning indicates the units that are to be taught in each year group through the year. The units ensure breadth and balance across the age ranges. Each year group will cover 3-4 units across the year. Lessons may be taught as discrete weekly lessons, as a block of lessons over a shorter period and may also be taught in conjunction with other subjects where that is appropriate.

4.8 Medium-term planning gives guidance on objectives and teaching strategies that can be used when teaching each topic. They have been created taking into consideration Wolverhampton LEA's Agreed Syllabus as well as the children's needs and interests and provide

- Learning objectives which focus on RE skills
- Expected learning outcomes
- Activities
- Key questions

4.9 Teachers may use their discretion as to how best to plan their individual lessons as the detailed medium-term plan, suitably annotated where appropriate, is sufficient evidence. However, if teachers prefer to plan in extra detail that is acceptable.

4.10 The focus for RE in KS1 enables the children to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews. They find out about different examples of religion and learn to use some subject specific vocabulary. They learn to raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to what they have discovered and their ideas. The curriculum is engaging and interactive using story, music, drama, activity, teamwork, thinking structures and language work to enable deeper engagement from every learner.

4.11 The focus for RE in KS2 enables pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews and the relevant subject specific vocabulary. RE encourages pupils to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, beliefs, values and human life. Pupils learn to express their own ideas thoughtfully and creatively in response to their learning. They are increasingly able to give reasons to support their ideas and views.

5 Impact of RE at Rakegate Primary School

5.1 The outcomes in books, through discussion and practical activities is evidence of a balanced curriculum which demonstrate children's acquired knowledge.

5.2 RE makes an important contribution to the school's duty to promote community cohesion and British Values. The children learn about other religions and why people choose or choose not to follow a religion and through this they are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. 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. R.E. offers our children the means by which to understand how other people choose to live and to understand why they choose to live in that way.

It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values, tolerance and respect of others and their beliefs and to challenge racism and discrimination. RE promotes community cohesion at four levels

The school community – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored within the school community. This is explored during assemblies, special school days eg Diwali, Eid, Christmas.

The community within which the school is located – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in our local area. Contacts have been established with a local church and parents have been invited into school to talk about their own faith and how it effects their lives. Speakers from a range of organisations and charities also visit the school.

The UK and global - a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life. At a global level, RE recognizes the how diversity of religion and belief impact on world issues.

6 Foundation Stage

6.1 Whilst recognising the statutory requirement for RE does not extend to children under compulsory school age it can form a valuable part of the educational experience of children in the EYFS. It can contribute particularly with

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication and language
- literacy
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

6.2 Consequently we teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in nursery class.

6.3 Religious education in the Foundation stage is taught as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year and related to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning in the EYFS. In particular, the requirement that pupils should know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country and be able to draw upon their experiences and what they have learnt in class. The focus is on a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, their own community and their place within it.

7 Contribution of Religious Education to the Teaching of other subjects

7.1 Literacy - Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of drama/role play, reading, writing, speaking and listening. On occasion we may use texts in literacy lessons that have a religious theme or content.

7.2 D/T , Art, Music and PE - Religious Education contributes through a consideration by the children of religious art, symbols, the handling of artefacts, studying the design of buildings, clothing, the use of food in expressions of faith and during special times. The use of music as an expression of faith and belief

can also be considered. PE allows the expression of feelings and faith to be discussed through the art of dance.

7.3 Science and Geography- Religious Education contributes through consideration of environmental issues and our responsibility to the planet and in any consideration of ourselves and the difference and similarities between us. Further study can incorporate understandings of our local communities and the faiths and beliefs that are represented. This can then extend to look at national and global issues.

7.4 ICT

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation and to communicate with others.

7.5 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

7.6 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7.7 British Values

Through teaching religious education in our school, we promote and teach the children about the importance of British values. They learn about and engage with

- the values of democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty and mutual respect
- tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Through this teaching and learning, pupils will demonstrate skills and attitudes that will enable them to participate and contribute positively to life inside and outside of the school community.

8 Special Educational Needs

8.1 At our school we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

8.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

9 Assessment and Recording

9.1 We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed in line with the school marking policy.

9.2 Each unit of RE study has a set of objectives. As each unit is completed, teachers assess the achievement of their pupils against these objectives and provide a copy for the RE subject leader.

9.3 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

10 Health and Safety

10.1 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a Sikh temple, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

10.2 When visitors from religious communities are invited into the school, current legislation relating to child protection procedures are adhered to and relevant safeguarding policies are followed.

11 Resources

11.1 Resources for the reaching of religious education are kept in a central store where there is a box of artefacts and resources for each of the major faiths. Bibles and topic books relating to different faiths are kept in the RE cupboard. The school library also has a good supply of RE topic books to support the children's individual research.

12 Monitoring and Review

12.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Signed:

Date: