

Woodlands Schools



Religious Education Policy Hutton Manor

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Religious Education (RE) Policy

Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Woodlands Schools we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions and those who have no religious beliefs, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions. RE may be taught as a standalone subject or incorporated into a wider area of Faith education.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an understanding of Fundamental British Values and what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Great Britain valuing our community and celebrating diversity of the UK
- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition or not to be;
- 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 judgments about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views, including not being religious, and to celebrate the diversity in society.
- engage in respectful conversations and draw similarities and differences between religions.

The Legal Position of Religious Education

The school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the Head Teacher. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the Head Teacher. It makes contributions to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It also promotes education for citizenship. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions and none.

Teaching and Learning Style

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.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Eid, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking and an understanding of those who hold other views such as Humanists. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

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 working individually or in groups.

Curriculum

At Hutton Manor we introduced a revised curriculum in September 2025, coming away from a set syllabus of worksheets and dictated learning. Instead we have used the foundations of the Essex Agreed Syllabus to create a Religious Education and Worldviews Curriculum.

Foundation Stage

RE is taught in Early Years as part of the work covered during each year of the EYFS journey. Children are encouraged to use their imagination to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live. RE makes a contribution to personal, social and emotional development as well as understanding the world. Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception follow the requirements of the EYFS framework, incorporating all areas of development matters and learning outcomes and explore the religious backgrounds and at least one festival from the families in their class.

Key Stages 1&2

Each year group is presented with a question at the start of each half term. The teacher provides insight into the question and creates a discussion that encourages the children to explore and acquire the knowledge and understanding needed to answer the question. Within each question, the teacher will explore the viewpoints of the main religions: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism and those of humanism. Respect must form the basis of every discussion and children are taught to vocalise their thoughts and feelings whilst maintaining respect to both the opinions of their peers and the religious beliefs of others. Activities are used to supplement learning, and these are recorded in the children's Me and My World books. Each year group has a highlighted celebration/event that they study in detail. These appear in the academic calendar as accurately as possible to the celebration itself, thus enabling the pupils to explore these celebrations within our school community and the wider community. Trips, guest speakers, and parents are used to supplement their learning.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. 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.

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.

Teaching Religious Education to Children with Special Educational Needs

At Woodlands School religious education is taught 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.

When a child may have special educational needs, the teacher looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, adaptive learning – 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.

Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs may be raised and include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to religious education. 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 local church, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

More Able and Talented

We will use a range of strategies to identify More Able and Talented pupils with this subject and ensure that where there is evidence of a child having a particular ability or talent, we will ensure higher levelled activities of challenge are provided.

Assessment and Recording

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. The children are encouraged to record their own views and opinions within their "Me and My World Book" (HM). We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. The achievements of pupils in RE are reported to parents each year in the annual report in the PSHE and RE entry: this applies to all children from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education units. There is a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books. We use the Kapow Primary Scheme of Work.

Monitoring and review

The RE co-ordinator is 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. The RE co-ordinators discuss with the Head Teacher the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

FBV

We always teach RE within the context of a respect for Fundamental British Values, always teaching about mutual respect, the rule of law, tolerance and diversity.

Appendix A



Religious Education and Worldviews Curriculum

EYFS	Explore Christianity and one other religion based on the religious backgrounds of the children in your class. One festival or event should be covered each year e.g. Diwali Learning is shaped by KUW and is organised by the EYFS through regular meetings. All About Me posters provide insight into the different religious backgrounds, viewpoints and traditions of each family. Parents are invited to share their religious experiences with the class to broaden their knowledge and understanding.					
KS1	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	Who is important in our lives?	Why is Christmas an important festival/event for Christians? (Christmas Story)	What are the different places of worship?	What do religious people say God is like?	What do the stories from the Holy books teach us?	What do religious symbols represent?
Year 2	What does it mean to belong to a _____ community and part of a religious family?	Why is Hanukkah an important festival/event for Judaism?	Why is light an important symbol for many religious believers?	How do people decide what is right and wrong?	Who made the world?	What foods are important to different religions?

KS2	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 3	What do _____ believe about God?	How do people express their faith through the arts?	What kind of world should we live in?	Why is Eid an important festival/event in Islam?	How do different religions celebrate milestones in their lives?	How do people express commitment to a religion or worldview in different ways?
Year 4	What faiths are followed in the UK/modern Britain?	Why is Guru Nanak an important festival/event for Sikhs?	How do people make moral decisions?	What is the difference between believing and knowing?	Where do religious beliefs come from?	Can kindness/love change the world?
Year 5	Does religion bring peace, conflict or both?	How do _____ make sense of the world and it's creation?	Why is there suffering in the world?	What happened at Easter and the ascensions and can people come back to life?	Why is Wesak (Buddha Day) an important festival/event in Buddhism?	What do we mean by religions, and what makes a religion a religion?
Year 6	Why is prayer important for religious believers and what do they sound or look like?	What does it mean to be a humanist?	Are scientific arguments about the beginning of the world more logical than religious ones?	Why is Holi an important festival/event for Hinduism?	How do beliefs shape identity? (Physically, emotionally and socially).	What does it mean to be free, and what is a good life?