

Policy Title **R.E. Policy**

Adopted: September 2021
For Review: September 2023

Aims

Religious Education is an important element in the broad and balanced curriculum we aim to provide at Upton Meadows Primary School. Through our R.E. curriculum we provide opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding of world religions and reflect on the challenging questions that it provokes.

The aims of religious education are:

- To develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions and consider how the beliefs of others impact on their lives and the lives of others.
- To encourage children to ask and reflect on challenging questions.
- To provide opportunities for personal reflection where children can explore their own beliefs (not necessarily religious).
- To encourage children to appreciate and respect the different cultures in today's society.

At Upton Meadows, we believe a quality R.E. curriculum creates another space for respect, exploration and understanding of the diversity of world views and belief systems.

"R.E. is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and it also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion."

(Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010)

The aims and purposes of R.E. teaching are:

- to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied,
- to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience,
- to recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places,
- to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking,

- to show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning,
- to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none, and to reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

The R.E. curriculum has been carefully constructed to ensure children acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of belief and practise, thus enabling children to make connections between differing faiths and beliefs and their own lives and ways of understanding of the world.

During KS1, children will **explore** and develop their knowledge and understanding of beliefs and practices of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They will be encouraged to raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

During KS1 (Year 1 and 2), the following areas of focus have been selected:

- Who am I and what does it mean to belong?
- Why is Christmas important to Christians?
- What do Christians believe God is like?
- What is Jewish life like?
- How should we care for the world and for others, and why does it matter?
- What is Muslim life like? (Part 1)
- What are the messages of Christmas?
- What is Muslim life like? (Part 2)
- Why is Easter important in to Christians?
- What can we learn from stories Jesus told?
- What makes some places sacred to believers?

During KS2, the RE curriculum provides opportunities for children to make **connections** between their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the religious traditions and beliefs in Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and those of no faith. They will be provided with learning opportunities to make connections between the beliefs of others and their own lives and their way of understanding the world.

During Lower KS2 (Year 3 and 4), the following areas of focus have been selected:

- What does the creation story teach Christians about God?
- How are light and love important to the festival of Christmas?
- What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Part 1)
- How are different festivals celebrated?
- How did Jesus show he was loving and caring?
- What are the sacred books?
- How are promises explained in the Old Testament and where do we see them in Christianity today?

- Why are Diwali and Christmas important festivals?
- What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Part 2)
- Why is Holy Week important to Christians?
- Why is Pentecost an important festival?
- How and why do people show their commitments during the journey of life?

During Upper KS2 (Year 5 and 6), children continue to make connections in the following areas of focus that have been selected:

- What kind of role model is Jesus?
- Why is peace important?
- How is Christianity expressed through the Arts?
- What is important to Jewish people?
- How is the Christian Holy Book used?
- Buddhism
- What does it mean for a Muslim to follow God?
- What is important to Muslims?
- Why is the book of Exodus important to Christians and Jews?
- What does it mean to be a Sikh in Britain today?
- Does it matter what we believe about Creation?
- Why is pilgrimage important to some religious believers?

The following high dividend concepts have been identified as part of the NPAT RE curriculum:

- 1. Belief**
- 2. Worship**
- 3. Festivals**
- 4. Community**

These will form the 'Big Ideas' through which all RE will be taught. Teachers will make explicit reference to where children have met these concepts before in the curriculum.

As a child progresses through school, core concepts are expanded upon and explored in greater depth. Some units are thematic and these units refer to more than one religion to explore a religious concept such as a sacred books, worship of life as a journey. The R.E. curriculum has been carefully constructed to ensure children acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of belief and practise, thus enabling children to make connections between differing faiths and beliefs and their own lives and ways of understanding of the world.

Horizontal links will be explicitly made, e.g. in Year 1 the 'Creation' unit begins with 'Who made the world?' and ends with 'How should we care for the world and for others and why does it matter?'

Vertical links will be made where knowledge and understanding are built upon from previous R.E. units, e.g. in Year 4 'What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?' will build upon

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knowledge and understanding from the Year 3 unit of the same name. Likewise, in Year 4, 'Why is Holy Week important to Christians?' will build on the Year 2 unit 'Why is Easter important in the Christian calendar?'

Diagonal links will be made where appropriate, e.g. links between R.E. and Geography such as 'Environmental Change' (Science) with 'Rainforest' (Geography) and the story of Creation.

Strategies for teaching RE

Our curricular activities are structured so that we can provide time for:

- Promoting each child's spiritual awareness and development.
- Encouraging children to develop individual knowledge, skills and ideas, where every contribution is valued within a secure, caring environment.
- Providing children with a thorough knowledge and understanding of subject matter, to enable them to gain self-confidence and self-esteem as active members in both the classroom, and in our school community.
- Developing regard for the needs, feelings and views of others.

Inclusion and RE

Upton Meadows will ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met and that the RE curriculum is adapted as required to support those pupils who may need it, so that all our children are able to have equitable access to the programmes of study.

The Modes of Working in RE

These are individual, group and class activities, appropriate to the task and ability/maturity of the children. RE particularly lends itself to *collaborative* learning where pupils need to discuss and reflect upon many aspects of the RE curriculum.

Children are encouraged to have relevant first-hand experience including visits to places of worship and inviting visitors to school to talk about their faith and the effects it has on their lives.

- Music, Drama, Art and ICT are an integral part of our R.E. curriculum. Play is used in the FS/KS1 curriculum and is a valuable activity to explore a variety of subjects.
- Pupil participation in spiritual activities such as Easter Experience and Christmas Experience at St Peters Church, and Reflective Space in school based on particular themes such as mindfulness are key.
- Discussion is actively encouraged to allow children to express their views and develop the ability to value the opinion of others.

Assessment and Recording

The standard of work in R.E. is expected to reflect the targets of children in the core subjects. Displays of children's work in R.E. are also encouraged.

We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We acknowledge a piece of work once it has been completed

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and we give feedback as necessary. Teacher use the outcomes of each lesson to inform future planning and note any areas of particular interest shown.

Legal requirements

The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils to a particular religion. The Upton Meadows RE curriculum achieves these aims.

Right of Withdrawal

According to the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1988, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of Religious Education lessons. Parents wishing to withdraw their children from R.E. will be asked to complete a withdrawal form and meet with a member of SLT to discuss their reasons for this so that all parties are absolutely clear on agreed actions. The request to withdraw will be reviewed with parents at the beginning of each academic year.