



Religious Education Policy

Spring 2024

Unlocking Every Child's Potential
as a Unique Child of God

Agreed by staff: January 2025

Ratified by Governing Body: February 2024

Review Date: January 2028

Vision of the School:
Unlock every child's potential as a unique child of God

"May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."
Ephesians 3: 17-19

Introduction and Aims

At Mountnessing we believe that Religious Education (RE) in its broadest sense embraces the whole way of life of the school. This is evident in the way we talk to the children, our sensitivity to their needs, our concern for their well being and our trust and confidence in them. Each child and member of the teaching and non-teaching staff must feel that they are valued and important members of our school community. From this arises the awareness of the value and importance of others in the community at large.

Within RE lessons we aim to ensure that the school's Christian Values are identified in every religion and demonstrate similarities and differences between them all.

Our school includes children from a variety of backgrounds and faiths and as a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils.

RE is taught in accordance with the aims of the Essex Agreed Syllabus.

Our RE curriculum aims to:

- To know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews by learning to see these through theological, philosophical and human/social science lenses.
- To express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews through a multidisciplinary approach.
- To gain and deploy skills rooted in theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences engaging critically with religious and non-religious worldviews

The legal requirements are:

1. RE must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request
2. • The law relating to RE for pupils who are not yet in Key Stage One is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As RE must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.
3. RE must be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus in Community schools, Foundation schools and Voluntary Controlled schools. However, in Foundation and Voluntary Controlled Schools with a religious foundation, parents may request RE in accordance with the school's trust deed, or in accordance with the beliefs or denomination specified in the designation of the school.
4. A Locally Agreed Syllabus 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'.
5. Recent case law requires that different religious convictions and non-religious beliefs should be accorded equal respect. This means that both religious and non-religious perspectives should be studied to some extent at every key stage.

6. In schools where an Agreed Syllabus applies, RE must be non-denominational, but teaching about denominational differences is permitted.
7. The Head Teacher, along with the governing body and the Local Authority, is responsible for the provision of RE in Foundation and Community Maintained schools and in Voluntary Controlled schools.

Our Curriculum

Our Religious Education curriculum follows The Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2019 document, which outlines the expectations of the Church of England Education Office in relation to Religious Education. Our curriculum follows the Essex Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. This syllabus reflects significant developments in education in religion and worldviews, offering challenge and depth for all students. It embodies an approach that values lived experience and diversity within and between religious and belief traditions, and encourages children and young people to engage critically with the big questions in life.

RE supports the aims of the school curriculum, which is to be balanced and broadly based.

This curriculum must:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- Prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The purpose of RE is to develop religious literacy. The essential outcomes for RE are therefore related to the knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews. There are many other desirable outcomes for RE. For example, the subject may also contribute significantly to the following broader educational aims but is distinct from and not reducible to these:

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Personal, social, health and citizenship education
- Reading and writing
- Vocabulary development
- Spoken language
- Numeracy and mathematics
- British Values
- The Prevent Duty

RE is about developing religious literacy, therefore this syllabus promotes an understanding of religion and worldviews which best fulfils this purpose. This is one rooted in a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject. This provides a balanced diet ensuring that pupils are seeing religion and worldviews through different lenses, and places RE within a strong, and well-established academic tradition. In this curriculum we assert that RE is rooted in three key disciplines or disciplinary fields. These are theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences

Our INTENT in the RE curriculum:

Through the teaching of religious education in our school we hope that our pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society.

We aim to ask challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It will develop our children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other religions, other religious traditions and worldviews.

Our intent is that RE will contribute to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

Curriculum Overview:

ENQUIRY TERM	1 Autumn 1	2 Autumn 2	3 Spring 1	4 Spring 2	5 Summer 1	6 Summer 2
	Christianity focus (but incorporating ideas from other faiths) <i>Creation / Fall</i>	Christianity <i>Incarnation</i>	Judaism	Christianity <i>Salvation / Gospel / Pentecost</i>	Hinduism	Islam
Reception	Who is God and why is he important to Christians?	How do festivals and celebrations bring people together?	Do different people have different beliefs?	Who is Jesus and why is he special?	Where is religion around us?	What is 'good' and what is bad?
Year 1	Who made the world? How can we look after God's world? CHRISTIAN	Why does Christmas matter to Christians? CHRISTIAN	How do festivals and celebrations bring people together? JEWISH	What questions does the Easter story make us ask? CHRISTIAN	Why do people have different views about the idea of God? Why are there lots of different Hindu Gods?	What happens in the daily life of a Muslim?
Year 2	How did the universe come to be? CHRISTIAN/HINDU	What does the nativity story teach Christians about God and Jesus? CHRISTIAN	What does it mean to belong to the Jewish community? JEWISH	Why does Easter matter to Christians? CHRISTIAN	What happens in the daily life of a Hindu? HINDU	What do my senses tell me about the world of religion and belief?
Year 3	How can Christians be a steward of God's creation? CHRISTIAN	What do Christians believe about GOD? CHRISTIAN	How do people make moral decisions? How do the 10 commandments help Jews inform their everyday life?	Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? CHRISTIAN	Why are symbols and artefacts important to some people? HINDU	How do the five pillars of Islam shape a Muslims life?
Year 4 (Year B)	Can kindness and love change the world? CHRISTIAN/MUSLIM	What is the Trinity? CHRISTIAN	Where do Jewish people worship (synagogue), do they have special customs and objects?	What difference does being a Christian make to daily life? CHRISTIAN	How do Hindus express their commitment to their religion? HINDU	What are the prayer rituals that Muslim people honour today, how do they impact their day to day lives?
Year 5 (Year A)	Is believing in God reasonable? CHRISTIAN AND HUMANISM	Was Jesus the Messiah? CHRISTIAN	What are the key similarities and differences between Judaism and Christianity?	What difference does the resurrection make to Christians? CHRISTIAN	Does karma help Hindus live a 'better' life? How does karma help Hindus in their daily life? HINDU	What kind of world do Muslims believe we should live in? MUSLIM
Year 6 (Year B)	Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? CHRISTIAN AND HUMANISM	What does it mean to be part of a global religious community? CHRISTIAN	What is a monotheistic faith? Can you compare Jewish beliefs to other faiths (Islam, Christianity)?	Are angels real? Can people come back to life? CHRISTIAN	How do Hindus respond to issues of poverty and injustice?	Does religion bring peace, conflict or both? Compare Muslim, Christian and Jewish faiths

Theology (thinking through believing)	
Philosophy (thinking through thinking)	
Human & Social Science (thinking through living)	

Teaching and Learning

Our IMPLEMENTATION in the RE curriculum:

The main emphasis of RE in our school is on Christianity, as we are a Church of England Christian school. We are required to devote more time to the teaching of Christianity than to any other single religion and this is reflected in the amount of content specified for Christianity. We have carefully considered which other religions to teach based on the context of our school and have focussed our learning on Hinduism, Islam and Humanism. Our planning links to the main Christian celebrations and ideas. Our RE lessons are taught weekly and have a main focus on philosophy, theology or human and social science. We start our RE topics with an enquiry question and find out what the children already know and make connections to prior learning where possible. The lessons are sequenced over the term to build on their knowledge and end with an assessment using the enquiry question again. This shows good progress. We have planned in school trips and visitors to school to enhance the children's understanding and experiences further.

You can see our whole school planning above.

A variety of teaching styles and processes are employed in order to develop the children's experiences, attitudes, abilities and understanding. As a means of drawing upon the children's own experiences, some of the RE curriculum is delivered in the form of integrated topic work. In this way, we hope to convey the fact that religious experience cannot be marginalised, but affects many aspects of our lives. RE is an area of study that spans cognitive and imaginative skills and therefore delivery will utilise several different curriculum areas, including music, drama, art and language. A variety of teaching and learning methods will be employed such as whole class and group discussions and debates, collaborative work and individual work. The children will also have opportunities to share their work with other members of the class.

The children will have access to a range of religious resources which include books, artefacts, posters and videos. When appropriate the children will visit local places of worship and have visitors from different religions to supplement their existing knowledge of religious belief and practice. They will be encouraged to develop skills in observation and investigation, whilst exploring buildings, artefacts, symbols and atmosphere.

Entitlement

We believe that every pupil is entitled to a full range of RE learning experiences, irrespective of their gender, ethnic background, age or disability. We take into account that children learn in different ways as well as their different abilities and differentiate according to their individual needs.

Withdrawal from RE

A parent of a pupil may request:

- that their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving RE given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of a school session.

- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.
- Schools should have procedures in place to facilitate such withdrawals when required.

A teacher may not be:

- discriminated against for their religious opinions or practices.

Assessment

The IMPACT of our RE curriculum:

You will see the impact of our curriculum in the progress the children make across the whole school. By looking at the work in their books and by speaking to the pupils, their learning and achievement will be clear. The children are encouraged to ask and answer bigger thinking questions about religion and this often shows the depth of their understanding.

We assess the children in RE formally once a term and the results of this are given to the RE leader in school to monitor and analyse.

Pupils' progress is assessed in relation to the purpose and aims of the subject. Therefore, this primarily concerns how well pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and worldviews. In other words, are pupils becoming more religiously literate? Attainment and progress are therefore linked to the multi-disciplinary approach to RE advocated throughout this syllabus.

The assessment of pupils will enable teachers to plan future learning in order to ensure progression and continuity.

Assessment of pupils' learning in RE is an ongoing process and a variety of strategies are employed such as observation, discussion and questioning, written and pictorial work. All these provide us with valuable information about the pupils and will assist with future planning. This will be recorded termly in our data management system. .

Management

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE subject leader, in collaboration with Senior Management.

The subject leader will have termly release time in which monitoring will take place. This will involve planning scrutiny, sampling children's work and pupil perception surveys. Subject leaders need to follow the guidance in their subject leader handbook to ensure that RE is monitored and assessed accurately. This will be done through lesson observations, book and planning scrutiny and pupil perceptions.