

THUNDERSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy



Member of staff Responsible	<i>Sharon Ellis</i>
Policy produced	<i>Spring 2018</i>
Policy agreed/last reviewed	<i>Summer 2023</i>
To be reviewed	<i>Spring 2026</i>
Other Policies Related	<i>Teaching and Learning Curriculum Policies, Equal opportunities Policy, PREVENT, PSHE Policy including British Values and Citizenship</i>
Other Paperwork Attached (appendix)	

Collective Worship

Under the Education Act 1996, all maintained schools, except maintained special schools, must provide daily collective worship for all registered pupils. The DfE published non-statutory guidance on collective worship in 1994. This guidance remains current. The guidance explains in paragraph 60 that collective worship in schools without a designated religious character will be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature". Paragraph 61 adds that collective worship should not be distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.

The legal position of religious education

Our 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. RE is part of the basic curriculum. It makes contributions to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE is not taught to propagate religion in general or a particular religion, it is not to nurture or convert. It is an academic discipline.

Religious Education is a compulsory subject and forms part of the national curriculum. At Thundersley Primary school we teach RE following a scheme that builds on prior knowledge and deepens understanding. Each year group works from clear medium term planning with clear learning intentions, outcomes and high quality teaching activities which enable pupils' time to reflect and embed their learning.

Elements of collective worship could include:

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder about the world
- Affirming positive values, such as honesty or self-sacrifice
- Encouraging responsibility for making personal decisions
- Celebrating achievement and special occasions
- Readings from the Bible
- Stories
- Singing
- Video clips
- Prayer
- Quiet reflection
- Drama
- Art
- Artefacts

Pupils who follow the RE programme in our school gain a deep awareness of their own and others' identities; they wrestle with the mysteries of life and the answers given by a wide variety of religions and beliefs; they develop a clear sense of what is of real value in world today. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others. It is important for young people to acquire a better understanding of the role that religions play in today's pluralistic world. The need for such education will continue to grow as different cultures and identities interact with each other through travel, commerce, media or migration. Although a deeper understanding of religions will not automatically lead to greater tolerance and respect, ignorance increases the likelihood of misunderstanding, stereotyping, and conflict. Toledo Guiding Principles for Teaching about Religions and Beliefs, 2007, p.9

Religious education at Thundersley Primary School asks about meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end. It gives space for individual reflection and wondering who and why; it explores Christianity, other principal religions and world views, and how they affect the fabric of personal and social life; it identifies the reality of evil, injustice and suffering and it opens up visions of how life for all the world's citizens may be transformed by truth, beauty and goodness. Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2004

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups. UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Thundersley Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major faiths. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn about religions.

- To foster the development of positive attitudes in order to encourage pupils to see themselves as an equal, valued and valid part of the school and the community;
- To awaken and develop an awareness of the spiritual side of life and that this is equally important as the physical and intellectual sides;
- To know and understand the beliefs of others and respect their right to believe and to understand how religious beliefs and practices affect people's lives;
- To discover the significance of commitment to a personal faith and to understand that a religious faith helps some people in considering and coming to terms with basic human questions;
- To examine the questions relating to human existence and purpose;
- To become responsible for one's own behaviour and to develop a willingness to act according to moral rules and to regulate behaviour for the good of another individual or the group;
- To develop a willingness to see that others have a right to a point of view.
- A variety of teaching methods should be used to teach RE, such as role play/drama, stories and music. Visitors to school should also be encouraged to give children the opportunity to listen to and ask questions about another person's experiences of living/celebrating through different faiths.
- The Foundation Stage and KS1 forms the basis of children's future understanding and therefore should begin with children's own experiences and feelings, particularly around 'special times, people, places and objects/symbols. Many opportunities should be given for thinking, talking, listening and responding to others respectfully. Much emphasis should be placed on valuing and caring for other people in our local community and also for children to relate their understanding to a wider/global community.
- In KS2, similar opportunities should be offered and children should be encouraged to openly discuss their understanding, opinions and attitudes about religion. They should be given time to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them and promote their own spiritual growth and development.
- It is likely that a teacher may have their own religious beliefs/faith. The teaching of RE must not be used to indoctrinate or challenge children's faiths/beliefs which may be different from their own. Teachers must be sensitive about the language that they use, for instance swapping, 'I go to church on Sundays' to, 'Christians go to church on Sundays'.
- RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We use texts with religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, which promotes speaking and listening.
- Through our RE 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 society.
- Through RE and assemblies in school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development.
- Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognize 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 multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Aims of the RE Curriculum

Religious Education is taught as part of a cross-curricular approach. Through this, we aim to promote the spiritual, moral, and cultural development of all pupils. RE is an important part of the school curriculum and is taught relevant to the child's stage of development and experience. We seek to provide a clearer idea of what religion is about, the importance that it plays in many people's lives and how that faith is expressed in their daily lives and routines.

- That all children form their own opinions about religious beliefs and customs and that they develop an understanding and tolerance of people who hold a strong faith.
- That children enjoy learning about religion because it is taught in a stimulating and interesting way that arouses their curiosity and develops positive skills and attitudes.
- That children develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them.
- To help pupils understand some of the impact of religion throughout the world, its influences on the lives of individuals and communities and its effect on the cultural diversity of their own and other societies both presently and in the past.

- To support pupils spiritual, moral social and cultural development by encouraging self-awareness and self-respect.
- To help pupils develop their social and moral development by encouraging a positive attitude and valuing the beliefs of others, however different from their own.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of Christian and other major religion in Britain as a whole and in the local community.

Our objectives in the teaching of RE are:

- To study the festivals and ceremonies, traditions and rituals that mark the stages of life;
- To link basic religious concepts to practices of everyday living and to examine the roles of family life in religion;
- To appreciate the similarities and differences between religions and to enrich their understanding of religious vocabulary;
- To respond imaginatively to religious ideas and consider the different ways in which individuals may come to a personal faith and commitment;
- To study the beliefs, instructions and organisations of particular faiths;
- To be sensitive to the feelings, beliefs and actions of others and to explore the ideas that caring should come before personal interests;
- To help children explore the awe, wonder and joy of life in all its forms, particularly new life and growth;
- To help children with experiences of encountering change such as death, suffering, inequality and conflict;
- To examine ideas of right and wrong and to discover the importance of silence and reflection;
- To distinguish between religious and other forms of understanding, for example, scientific, historical;
- To reflect on their own experiences and to develop a sense of religious understanding;
- To appreciate the value of their own personal faith/beliefs and have confidence to be able to discuss them with others.

Equal Opportunities

Every child is entitled to be taught RE regardless of their age, culture, gender, background or special need or disability. RE develops a balanced view of the multi-cultural society which we live in without compromising the faith, non-faith or cultural background of any pupil.

The teaching of RE is approached sympathetically to all religious beliefs and teachers must remain mindful of the PREVENT and British Values Policy throughout their planned approach to teaching RE.

Assessment

As RE involves a process of personal development and emerging/changing views, it is difficult to formally assess all but the ability of children to recall facts and to be able to express a view about religions. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is monitored and evaluated by the Subject leader