



Religious Education Policy

DATE: Spring 2023

REVIEW: Spring 2026

Learning to live life in all its fullness.



Roundhay St John's CE Primary Induction Policy

Policy for Religious Education

Religious Education (RE) is an academic, non-confessional subject, which is taught across school from 3 to 11 years. Our aim for all pupils leaving Roundhay St. John's, is that they have developed a broad and balanced view of religion, have had the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and learned how to reflect on their own experiences of religion and those of others. We aim to grow respectful, responsible young people who understand how they and others can *'live life in all its fullness'* (John 10:10)

This policy was adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head Teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff.

Introduction

At Roundhay St. John's CE Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high quality RE curriculum that is challenging, rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. As a Church of England school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the *Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus for RE*, we learn about other religions and world views, ensuring that pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Links with our school's Christian values and vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Christian values permeate every area of school life and therefore, RE has a high profile. We have close links with the local Oakwood Church and the wider Christian community and are fortunate to have the faith commitment of governors and staff alike.

Aims and objectives of Religious Education

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- to know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with the biblical text.
- to know and understand about the five major world religions and a range of world views; to reflect on their impact on society and culture and to appreciate diversity.

- to recognise and understand the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and to reflect on continuity and change over time.
- to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose and to develop listening, questioning and debating skills.
- to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching and learning of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. Quality resources, local links with Oakwood church and other religious faith leaders, highly qualified staff and the monitoring of 'pupil voice' ensure that the subject is central to our curriculum.

The RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective and critical manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue and debate with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy
*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)
- enables pupils to acquire a deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs.
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs whilst listening to those of others.

Curriculum balance and time

The Diocesan Board of Education for Leeds strongly recommends a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE based upon the law and the Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office: Schools should aim to be close to 10% of curriculum for teaching RE, but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4. At Roundhay St. John's, RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two (reflecting the % allocation requirements above.) In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the teaching is planned within the EYFS framework for our nursery and reception pupils through Personal, Social and Emotional Development and The Understanding of the World. In addition, our reception cohort follow the 'Understanding Christianity' scheme as per the rest of school.

Parents and pupils are also entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of the allocated RE curriculum time. At Roundhay St. John's, Christianity is taught for 65% of the allocated time.

RE is delivered flexibly and in a range of ways using art, drama and music as well as writing. It also incorporates visits to different places of worship, RE days, projects and guided reflective afternoons e.g. at Easter. The allocation of time does **not** include collective worship.

Teaching and Learning

At Roundhay St. John's, RE is taught in a creative, enthusiastic and balanced way, which helps to generate respect for different views and interpretations. Our RE teaching challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All pupil contributions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Learners develop and use a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion. Key cross-curricular skills such as reading, writing, enquiry and debate are practised regularly. Pupils are encouraged to share their experiences of religion in a safe space and help others to understand what it means to be a person of faith living in Britain today.

The teaching of RE offers a wide variety of learning experiences, understanding that our diverse pupil population learn in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Listening to and asking questions of the teacher and each other
- Posing and discuss 'big' questions which may have no concrete answer
- Engaging in partnered or small group work and discussion
- Reading and analysing texts
- Interpreting information from other sources e.g. art, photographs or artefacts
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- Using a range of media such as music, drama and artwork
- Visiting the place of worship of each of the five major world religions
- Welcoming visitors to our school
- Taking time to reflect

Scheme of work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people

alongside this policy and is referred to in our Intent, Implementation and Impact statement on our website. It has been written in accordance with the Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan syllabus for RE and the Understanding Christianity scheme. Appropriate learning outcomes for each key stage ensure progression.

EYFS:

Nursery - EYFS themes emerging from the EYFS Framework through PSHE and Understanding our World

Reception – EYFS themes emerging from the EYFS framework and Christianity (creation and incarnation)

Children will begin to understand and value the similarities and differences between people in their community and beyond. They will use books, music, visitors and objects to begin their learning journey of other religions. Work, such as photographs, drawings and pupil comments will be recorded in whole class floor books which progress through school with the cohort. Specific, accurate and age appropriate RE vocabulary and terminology will be introduced in EYFS.

KS1:

Year 1 – Christianity and Judaism

Year 2 – Christianity, Islam and sacred places

During KS1, we aim to develop pupil knowledge of Christianity and to broaden their understanding of the Christian faith. Using subject-specific vocabulary, pupils are encouraged to ask questions and begin to express their own views.

Following the *Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus*, RE teaching and learning should enable pupils to:

- Identify the core beliefs and concepts studied and give a simple description of their meaning
- Give examples of ways in which believers put their beliefs into practice
- Give a good reason for the views they have and the connections they make.

Children continue to record work in floor books (particularly drama, visits and art.) In addition, individual RE books are introduced in Year 1.

KS2:

Year 3 - Christianity, Hinduism and humanism as part of our life journey topic

Year 4 - Christianity, Sikhism and the deeper meaning of festivals

Year 5 - Christianity, Islam and pilgrimage

Year 6 – Christianity and Judaism

During KS2, we aim to develop pupil knowledge of Christianity through an extended range of sources and vocabulary. Increasingly challenging and more open-ended questions are asked to encourage discussion and curiosity. Pupils are encouraged to share and explain their opinions verbally and in writing. Understanding Christianity aims to:

- enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts
- to enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians
- to develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

Following the *Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus*, RE teaching and learning should enable pupils to:

- Identify and explain the core beliefs and concepts studied, using examples from texts and to show awareness of different interpretations
- Show how and why people put their beliefs into practice in different ways
- Consider and weigh up how ideas studied in this unit relate to their own experiences and experiences of the world today

Children continue to record work in floor books (particularly drama, visits and discussion) in addition to their individual RE books.

Visits and visitors

During their time at school, our pupils will visit and receive visitors in to their class every year. We are fortunate to have strong links within our local community and wider region enabling faith leaders and other members of the community to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE.

Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school:

Year 1: Church

Year 2: Church

Year 3: Hindu temple

Year 4: Sikh temple

Year 5: Leeds Grand Mosque or York mosque

Year 6: Jewish Heritage Centre and synagogue

In addition, the local Oakwood church is visited regularly by all classes throughout the academic year. The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits and has pre-visited the sites.

Cross-curricular links

Cross-curricular work is encouraged and celebrated, in line with our whole school policy for teaching and learning. RE supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, analysis, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. The subject can enhance the attitudes which are at the core of Roundhay St. John's such as responsibility, respect, kindness, acceptance, tolerance and understanding.

RE lends itself naturally to the development of skills required in other subjects and these links are fostered by all teaching staff. Some examples include:

History - discussion about continuity and change over time and links made with significant periods in the past e.g. WW2 when studying Judaism

Geography – use of maps to plot pilgrimage or refugee journeys

English – reading of texts and analysing meaning

Art – reflecting pupil thoughts when creating their own art as well as observing or critiquing art found in religion e.g. stained-glass windows

Music – listening to and appreciating different styles of religious music and plotting them on our school music timeline

Computing – using learned skills to research aspects of religion or to present information

Assessment

We use a variety of strategies to evaluate and assess the knowledge, skills and understanding that our children gain as they progress through school. These include, but are not limited to, targets in line with the expectations of 'Understanding Christianity' and the *Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan syllabus for RE*; summative assessments, ongoing informal professional judgements, book scrutinies and floor book evidence.

Attainment in RE is recorded on the school tracking system (O-Track) on a termly basis. Parents are entitled to expect an annual pupil report, which describes the progress and achievement of their child for this core subject.

Assessment in RE will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Be directly related to the expectations of the *Dioceses of Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus*
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Differentiation and Inclusion

The same high expectation, that children will reach their full potential applies to all children in keeping with the school's values and ethos. We have due regard for our duties under equality legislation that covers all the protected characteristics. Teachers understand that all children have differing abilities and meet children where they are by providing learning opportunities which match the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. All children will be given equal access to RE. Teachers should be aware that some children have a special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Lessons are planned to include more stretching work for pupils whose ability is significantly above the expected standard as well as those who come from lower starting points and need more structured support. We remain vigilant about removing barriers to success; particularly for children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or have special educational needs or disabilities. Additional resources are provided to support individual children when required.

Resources

To support our RE teaching, we have a wide range of resources including books for teachers, pupils and the library, posters and artefacts. These are purchased as budget allows within the financial year. The school makes use of resources produced by the Diocese and we continue to use the Understanding Christianity scheme with all of its resources.

All resources are labelled and stored in a cupboard outside Year 3. A set of Bibles is kept in the Hive.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of RE and that curriculum time is sufficient.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Produce an Annual Subject Leader Report to share with governors. This report will clearly reflect the strengths of the subject and the current key areas for further development which will form the basis of the subject action plan.
- Prepare and regularly update a subject action plan, including short- and long-term targets
- Take the lead in implementing schemes of work and identifying topics and religions for each year group to ensure progression and continuity across the school
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in RE, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Devise appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupil progress through meetings, lesson observations and regular 'pupil voice' sessions.
- Monitor planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation
- Monitor trends across school and within particular groups such as EAL, SEN or previously higher ability pupils.
- Ensure SEN, EAL and gifted and talented school policies are promoted in RE
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school as well as promoting RE to parents on the school website.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities, support sessions and staff meetings.
- Support non-specialist teachers and staff
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary
- Promote RE with a dedicated display in school to showcase pupil work and progress.

Role and responsibilities of the governors

The Governing Body has a dedicated group (SIAMS Committee) who monitor and evaluate the school's work as a church school including the delivery of RE throughout the school. This group ordinarily aims to meet once per term.

We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny. The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development and will report to the SIMAS Committee. This will be in line with SIAMS guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in RE on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food

- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances. All educational visits are undertaken in accordance with the school's Educational Visits Policy. The Educational Visits Coordinator is Mrs C. Sutherland, School Business Manager. There is a safeguarding protocol in place for inviting visitors into school and this must be adhered to when inviting visitors into school for the purposes of curriculum delivery or enrichment.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next three years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and any needs for support or training, all staff are asked to make a copy of the planning for RE available on the school network for each half term.

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

Legal Requirements

RE must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to RE for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 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.

Right to Withdraw

Our school complies with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject at Roundhay St. John's, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum, which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers must refer any questions from parents about withdrawals to the head teacher. We ask that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the head teacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept.

Approved by: SIAMS Committee

Date: April 2023