
Rationale

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

In the King Alfred Trust, we do not promote any religion or religious beliefs. We seek to inform children and encourage the logical thinking skills needed to evaluate the beliefs and lives of others as they make sense of the world around them and try to make it a better place.

Aims

At King Alfred Trust we aim that Religious Education will:

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop an understanding of and respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery

This will be achieved by learning **about** religion [knowledge] and learning **from** religion [understanding], applying values to the pupils' own lives.

Our approach to teaching RE in King Alfred Trust schools.

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, video clips, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

How RE is organised in King Alfred Trust schools.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that RE is usually taught as a discrete subject, with links made to topic work and humanities where and when relevant.

Pupils study Christianity and major world religions including Sikhism, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. As Academy Schools, we have a certain amount of choice about the content of study and may wish to bring in other religions if they are more relevant to the children, link well into a class topic or illustrate a religious aspect more effectively.

In King Alfred Trust schools, we will celebrate the main Christian festivals and make reference to festivals in other faiths and cultures. This may be carried out through class activities or through Collective Worship.

RE should be allocated the correct amount of time in the timetable (i.e. approximately 1 hour) keeping in mind its core subject status.

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the delivery of the subject, keeping up to date with RE Curriculum developments, ensuring progression across the Year groups and maintaining resources. Resources are stored in the staff room resource cupboard, labelled by religion.

Assessment and Recording of RE

Teachers will use their professional judgement to monitor pupil progress in knowledge and understanding of religions and religious beliefs. Assessment guidance is provided through the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for each unit taught. Assessment of RE is not a judgement of English reading or writing skills and should enable children to demonstrate their understanding of a concept through re-telling, drawing, role-play, reasoning etc. as appropriate.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The RE Subject Leader will monitor RE through analysis of the assessment data and may also use pupil interviews or monitor pupil's individual RE books or the class floor book / RE book.

Responsibilities for RE within a King Alfred Trust school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The right of Withdrawal from RE

In King Alfred Trust we wish to be inclusive communities but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head of School to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at a King Alfred Trust School.

Date Agreed _____

Head Teacher _____

Chair of Governors _____