



Religious Education Policy

Subject Leader(s): Colette Robinson, Hamish Malcolm

The importance of the subject

We deliver RE in line with the Sheffield City Council Locally Agreed Syllabus and use the Discovery RE enquiry based programme as our scheme of work.

Religious Education is vital for our children to develop into global citizens who are knowledgeable, open minded and curious about our world. Pupils need to learn, express, respect and understand diverse beliefs and opinions held by people today. Walkley children discover, explore and consider many different answers to questions about human identity, meaning and value. They learn to weigh up for themselves the value of wisdom from different communities, to disagree respectfully, to be reasonable in their responses to religions and world views and to respond by expressing insights into their own and others' lives. Through this our children will leave our school with enquiring, creative and respectful minds and a hunger to understand further religions and world views. Finally, our enquiry based approach does important work in encouraging Walkley pupils to value themselves and to fully appreciate the diverse communities within Sheffield.

Intent: what is our curriculum aspiring to achieve?

The Sheffield Agreed Syllabus states that:

'In describing progression in RE, the syllabus pictures how pupils will develop increasing understanding of wide areas of RE subject knowledge, and also how pupils can develop religious literacy, including the skills of:

- investigating religions and world views through varied experiences and disciplines;*
- reflecting on and expressing their own ideas and the ideas of others with increasing creativity and clarity;*
- becoming increasingly able to be reasonable in their responses to religions and world views.'*

By following Discovery RE at Walkley Primary school we intend that Religious Education will meet the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus by:-

- **Increasing children's RE subject knowledge**, through a comprehensive and progressive scheme of work
- **adopting an enquiry- based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **provoking challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **encouraging pupils to explore their own beliefs** (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.
- **enabling pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **teaching pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- **prompting 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.
- **developing a sense of awe, wonder and mystery**
- **nurturing children's own spiritual development**

Implementation: what do we do to deliver our intent?

The units chosen from Discovery RE span all 6 religions and include references to non-religious worldviews.

The law requires that RE in schools that are not designated with a religious character "*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.*"

In addition, The Sheffield Agreed Syllabus states that over 50% of the RE curriculum should relate to Christianity. With this in mind, units from Discovery RE have been chosen to reflect this. We have also chosen a slightly higher emphasis on Islam than the remaining 4 religions, to reflect the current religious demographic at our school. Discovery RE provides medium term planning, from which teachers plan out individual lessons, with success criteria.

KS1 and KS2 chosen units

Year 1:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied:
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem?	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity

Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children?	Judaism

Year 2:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world?	Christianity
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life?	Islam
How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion?	Christianity
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim?	Islam

Year 3:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions Studied
Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?	Hinduism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
What is "good" about Good Friday?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? OR Do Sikhs this it is important to share?	Hinduism Sikhism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu? OR What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Hinduism Sikhism

Year 4:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible for everyone to be happy?	Buddhism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
Can the Buddha's teachings make the world a better place?	Buddhism
Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Buddhist to lead a good life?	Buddhism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

Year 5:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion?	Sikhism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
Are Sikh stories important today?	Sikhism
How significant is it for Christians to believe God intend Jesus to die?	Christianity

What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Sikhism
What is the best way for Christian to show commitment to God?	Christianity

Year 6:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother? OR Do Christmas celebrations and traditions help Christians understand who Jesus was and why he was born?	Christianity
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Christianity
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

Each RE unit has an overarching key enquiry question. It spans one half term and follows the same structure across the school:

Step 1: Engagement

The human experience underpinning the key question is explored here within the children's own experience, whether that includes religion or not.

Step 2: Investigation

The teacher guides the children through the enquiry, children gaining subject knowledge carefully selected to assist their thinking about the key question.

Step 3: Engagement

This lesson draws together the children's learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry. This is an assessment task, which the teacher can assess by using the age-related expectation descriptors at the end of each enquiry.

Step 4: Expression

Children are taken back to Step 1, their own experience, to reflect on how this enquiry might have influenced their own starting points and beliefs.

Structure of Subject Lessons

Pupils across FS2, KS1 and KS2 are taught RE weekly. In FS2 this amounts to 30 minutes per week, in KS1 50 minutes per week and in KS2 one hour per week. RE is taught in discrete sessions across the school.

RE lessons at Walkley Primary School have many creative links, such as drama, art and English. Adaptive teaching ensures that all children can access learning by ensuring the outcome can be achieved often without an emphasis on reading and writing. Whole class, partner and group discussions form a large part of most lessons.

Displays

Teachers may choose to celebrate the learning that has taken place with a display, which will also serve as a reminder of the learning, which can be referred to in later units.

Homework

There is no specific homework for RE but teachers may choose to include RE tasks as part of our half termly wider curriculum homework.

RE in Foundation Stage

There is no requirement by the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus to teach RE in FS1, although FS1 do take part in religious celebrations at Walkley Primary School, such the Christmas Nativity and Eid parties.

FS2 are taught RE once per week and also follow Discovery RE. The structure consists of 15 minutes of teacher input and access to related continuous provision activities throughout the week. Each lesson follows the same structure and is aligned to the Early Learning Goals:

Interest me: use of a stimuli such as photographs or a video to engage children in today's learning

Help me Learn: teaching new learning or knowledge linked to the enquiry or theme

Let's think: reflection on today's learning. This could include a whole class activity or discussion.

The F2 overview for RE is as follows:

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Theme: Special People Key Question: What makes people special? Religions: Christianity, Judaism	Theme: Christmas Key Question: What is Christmas? Religion: Christianity Christian concept: Incarnation	Theme: Celebrations Key Question: How do people celebrate? Religions: Hinduism	Theme: Easter Key Question: What is Easter? Religion: Christianity Christian concept: Salvation	Theme: Story Time Key Question: What can we learn from stories? Religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism	Theme: Special Places Key Question: What makes places special? Religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism

Impact: how do we ensure that children are learning?

Across KS1 and KS2 each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in assessing whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it. Children are assessed over three aspects of learning:

- a personal resonance with or reflection on the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- knowledge and understanding of the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question

These are available so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly. In line with non-statutory guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 descriptors of these aspects utilise age-related expectations of working towards, working at the expected attainment and working beyond. Teachers will use their judgement from lessons and from end of unit assessments to inform their judgement of each key objective on the PiTA grid.

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, there is an overview sheet for each enquiry on which to record the progress of the whole class.

Responsibilities

- Teaching staff have a responsibility to ensure RE sessions are planned, delivered and assessed as outlined in the Discovery RE scheme of work and in the policy.
- Teaching assistants have a responsibility to deliver planned sessions and provide feedback to teaching staff regarding the progress, engagement, misconceptions and achievements of the children.
- Supply teachers have a responsibility to ensure RE is planned, delivered and assessed as instructed by teachers in line with the maths policy.
- Subject leaders and SLT have a responsibility to monitor whole school application of the RE policy by all staff and ensure observed practice is effective. They will also deliver CPD when necessary.

Monitoring and review

The RE leaders monitor delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.

Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

As a school it is our duty to inform Sheffield Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

Policy to be reviewed September 2023.