



Believe, Achieve, Succeed

Religious Education Policy

Responsibility for this policy lies with	Headteacher
Policy approved date	December 2022
Policy due for review on	December 2026

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

OVERVIEW

We aim to help all children to develop an understanding of the place that religion plays in people's lives and how it has influenced history and the growth and development of society. Our schemes of work are based on the Ealing Agreed Syllabus; in addition we make meaningful links with the other curriculum subject areas. Our aim is to ignite a curiosity to learn about religion that will help children understand about faiths, beliefs and how religion has influenced the development of mankind and the society in which we live. Through the teaching of RE, we aim to promote the spiritual moral and cultural development of all pupils. We help children to learn both from and about religions.

1. Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to ensure that pupils:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its impact on our local community, and on our society today.
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the other principle religious and non-religious belief traditions represented in Great Britain today.
- Develop a sense of respect for traditions, beliefs and practice.
- Grow in their spiritual development.
- Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Develop skills and attitudes that will support their personal, moral, social and cultural development.
- Explore some questions of meaning and consider the different ways humankind has responded to them.
- Think about their beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others—both religious and non-religious—and the values of our school community.

2. Teaching and learning style

At Vicar's Green, we base our teaching and learning of religious education on the key principle that children should learn both **about** and **from** religion.

We believe that discussion is a key aspect of learning particularly when thinking about what we can learn from different religious traditions. It promotes the development of critical thinking skills, and enables the children to consider what religious ideas and concepts mean to them and others.

We maximise first hand and practical experiences of religious education by using as many resources (objects, artefacts, people, places) as we can find.

We recognise the cultural and religious diversity of our school community as one of our greatest resources, and encourage children to draw on their own and others' experiences of spirituality, faith and religious beliefs and practices to enhance their understanding of the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Where possible we think that pupils should have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith or belief communities to the school.

We understand that our children are unique individuals, with different talents and different ways of assimilating knowledge and understanding. In order to make religious education relevant, interesting and accessible to all, we employ a variety of approaches to teaching and learning, including the use of ICT and research, art, music, drama, artefacts, pictures and stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

3. Curriculum planning and teaching in Religious Education

Planning sets out learning in a logical and coherent way from EYFS to Y6.

We use as a basis for our planning the programmes of study of the local agreed syllabus, "Sowing the Seeds of the Future: an exploration of human beliefs and values." All units in this syllabus are mandatory.

We carry out curriculum planning in religious education in three phases: long term, medium term and short term.

Long term planning provides an overview of learning throughout the school during each academic year. This plan is developed by the subject leader in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group.

Medium term planning provides details of each unit of work outlined in the long term plan. The plans include the main objectives for the unit, and possible teaching and learning strategies.

Short term planning is completed by the class teacher. These personalised plans include specific learning objectives, and detail the differentiated learning styles and activities designed to enable the children to meet the objectives.

The school uses an enquiry based learning approach where possible and in many subjects the units and lessons will start with a question. All subjects have outlined the intent, implementation and impact in a 3 I's document (found on the staff drive).

We have the following in place:

- A curriculum map for each subject outlines the units to be taught in each year group throughout the year. Consideration has been given to the content and sequencing of learning so that components build within the lesson sequence, within the topic, within the year and the key-stage.
- A long term map with objectives details the specific learning intentions for each unit
- Detailed unit plans outline the sequence of lessons, vocabulary, key assessment opportunities and prior learning.
- Skills and knowledge are carefully defined so that children build on their progress from previous units/years.

Teaching

- Teachers have been trained in Cognitive Load theory so have an understanding of how memory works. They endeavour to apply the principles of the theory to support pupils' long-term retention.
- Knowledge organisers are used to support the pupils in remembering key learning.
- A range of retrieval and recall tasks are used in lessons to support children's retention of key learning into long-term memory.

4. Early Years Foundation Stage

We deliver teaching and learning in religious education to all children in the school, including those in the EYFS (Nursery and Reception).

In the EYFS, children are introduced to a range of religious traditions and practices. Their exploration of religion forms an integral part of development and learning in the areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), and particularly the 'Communities' strand of Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW), as outlined in the EYFS curriculum guidance.

5. Contribution of religious education to other curriculum areas

At Vicars Green we employ a thematic approach to learning. Therefore, we seek to establish and promote **meaningful** links between learning in religious education and other subject areas, while at the same time recognising the need to deliver religious education in a way that honours its particular aims and content.

Literacy

Religious education contributes significantly to teaching and learning in literacy by actively promoting speaking and listening, reading and writing. Younger children enjoy stories, and older children read a range of texts on religious themes. They communicate their knowledge, understanding and personal views about religion through a variety of written forms. In particular, the integral role of discussion and debate in religious education enables children to develop skills in speaking and listening.

Information and communication technology

In religious education, children use the internet to find, select and consider information related to their learning. They use a range of ICT programmes to create, modify and improve written responses to their learning.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through religious education, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. Teaching and learning in religious education enables our pupils to become well-balanced and mature young citizens who make informed choices about belief and behaviour, respect people and their right to their beliefs, and contribute positively to society and the environment. In general, by promoting tolerance, respect and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Humanities and Arts

Teaching and learning in religious education enables children to understand how religion has shaped the culture of Britain past and present.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Religious education provides myriad opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions, and we provide opportunities for them to develop their own moral sensitivity through discussion and role play. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. As they explore issues of religious faith and values, they develop a deeper understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

6. Inclusion: Teaching religious education to children with special needs and abilities

We recognise that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, including those with special educational needs, and those who are gifted and talented, and so, within the richness of learning opportunities available to them, to ensure that all children are included in teaching and learning, we differentiate activities and challenges by providing:

- open-ended tasks which allow for a variety of responses and outcomes
- tasks which have been simplified or extended
- different resources to help them
- different levels of support by the teacher, teaching assistants and other children
- opportunities to work in a variety of groupings

We take into account the targets set for children in their individual education plans (IEPs)

In particular, the philosophical and discursive nature of religious education challenges our gifted and talented children to develop higher level thinking skills and oracy as they consider and communicate their own personal responses to the fundamental questions in life addressed in religious education.

7. Equal Opportunities

All children study the content of the programmes of study of the locally agreed syllabus. Planned and differentiated learning opportunities enable the children to access the curriculum at an appropriate level, to achieve and succeed to the best of their abilities.

The learning process is broken down into manageable steps. Children are therefore aware of their own success and progress, and this increases their self esteem.

8. Assessment and recording

- We assess children's learning in religious education by making informal judgements about their progress against learning objectives as we observe their responses during lessons. We also make judgements about the work of each child in relation to the national curriculum and the specific expectations related to individual units of work. We use these judgements to ensure that learning is sufficiently challenging.
- Children's recorded work may take the form of writing and drawing, artwork (paintings, 3D artefacts, collage), and digital imagery. The work is marked once it has been completed, and feedback is positive and includes next steps for progression. Evidence of children's recorded work may be in their individual folders and books, on display, or saved on the school network.
- Key assessment questions are used to ensure pupils have an opportunity to recall and apply knowledge and for teachers to check key learning.
- RE has clearly defined end points for EYFS, Y2, Y4 and Y6. These end points have been carefully identified to include the core knowledge and skills that the children have to know, understand or do. End points are assessed through: book looks, pupil groups and ongoing discussions in class. Teachers plan specific assessment activities to check pupils are on track to meet the end points at each stage.
- Pre and post unit assessments are used to check prior learning and new understanding.
- Every parent/carer receives a statement of attainment regarding RE in their children's annual report.

9. Resources

We have well stocked boxes of resources for each world religion, including photos, artefacts, books and videos. We keep resources for religious education in a central store. There is a set of bibles for each key stage. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books to support children's individual research. We also access to online resources like Espresso.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The RE subject leader and the senior leadership team are responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in religious education. Learning walks, planning monitoring, work scrutiny and pupil interviews enable them to see what teaching and learning looks like, and identify strengths and areas for development.

The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

11. Right of withdrawal from religious education

Vicars Green Primary School encourages the development of an inclusive school culture. However, we recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher, to discuss any concerns or anxieties they may have about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.