

# Oatlands Junior School Religious Education Policy



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## Contents

Philosophy	2
Background to RE at our school	2
Parental rights to withdraw children from RE	2
Purpose and Aims	2
Learning	3-4
Teaching	4-5
Contribution of RE to the teaching of other subjects	5
Assessment, Recording and Reporting	5-6
Resources	6
Monitoring and Review	6

## **Philosophy**

Oatlands Junior School follows the North Yorkshire RE Agreed Syllabus, of which the principle aim is:

*To engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, to that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions as well as develop responses of their own.*

RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others. RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

## **Background to Religious Education at Our School**

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all registered pupils. As RE is not nationally determined, the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2019-2024, which we have used as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE.

RE is concerned with "learning about religions and beliefs" and "learning from religions and beliefs" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

## **Parental rights to withdraw children from RE**

Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE programme. Where parents have concerns about their children taking part in RE, they are asked to discuss their concerns first with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. She will be able to discuss the RE programme and teaching methods in greater detail and give parents access to the RE unit materials and resources used. Agreement on alternative provision for the children would need to be reached should they be withdrawn from the RE programme.

## **Purpose and Aims**

RE has two main aims: to enable children to learn about religions and to learn from religions. The teaching of RE within Oatlands Junior School reflects the value which we place on the development of the whole child including their spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual wellbeing is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, as well as non-religious denominations such as Humanism, each of which is represented in North Yorkshire;
2. Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;
3. Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. Enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
  - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
  - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
  - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
  - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. Recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

## Learning

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Religious Education has three closely related aspects:

1. Know and understand a range of religions and worldviews;
2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews;
3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

These three aims with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum. RE is at its most effective when these three aims are closely related in the learning experience.

### **1. Know and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so they can:**

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.

- Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses, offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
  - Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- 2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so they can:**
- Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.
  - Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teaching about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.
  - Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.
- 3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**
- Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.
  - Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
  - Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

## Teaching

Teaching the programmes of study should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

1. Beliefs, teachings and sources - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
2. Practices and lifestyles - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
3. Expressing meaning - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
4. Identity, diversity and belonging- e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
5. Meaning, purpose and truth - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
6. Values and commitments - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between the three aims underpins the teaching of RE at this school.

Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils build on their understanding of Christianity and other key world religions.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. Visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith.
2. Role play and drama; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters.
3. Artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in Religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge
4. Music and the arts; enabling children to experience elements of religions in a sensory way
5. Parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community

### Contribution of RE to the Teaching of Other Subjects

**English** ~ RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts used in school have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and this, is a way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening.

**ICT** ~ ICT is used where appropriate in RE. The children may find, select and analyse information, using a range of multimedia resources. ICT is also used to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

**PSHE** ~ through RE lessons, children are taught about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. By promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, children are able to appreciate what it means to be positive members of a pluralistic society.

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** ~ through teaching RE, opportunities are provided for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. Children are helped to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in doing so; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

### Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Through activities, for example discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against the statements of attainment in line with other areas of the

curriculum. At this school we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

As a staff we have undertaken moderation exercises to ensure that we are familiar with the statements and what they mean in the context of a pupil's work (North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education: A Progression Overview)

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

## Resources

Sufficient resources are kept in school to be able to teach all NYCC RE teaching units. Resources for RE are kept in a central store (Year 5 corridor). There is a set of Bibles (LIBRARY) and a collection of religious artefacts which are used to enrich teaching in RE. An appendix of resources is available. *ICT resources are kept in the ICT Suite, with iPads in each classroom.*

## Monitoring and Review

The member of staff responsible for co-ordinating RE (RE SUBJECT LEADER) provides support and advice for other members of staff and, with the support of the Head, monitors quality of teaching and is responsible for evaluating and reviewing the programme and provision for RE across the school.

**DATE:** February 2021

**REVIEW DATE:** February 2026

