



Lawnside Academy

Religious Education (RE) Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Lawnside Academy, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and address fundamental questions. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children to make sense of beliefs in religion; make connections between religions and to their own lives, and understand the impact of these beliefs.

1.2.1 Our objectives in the teaching of RE are to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems;
- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop tolerance of and respect towards others' beliefs and views, and to celebrate diversity in society;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;

2 The legal position of religious education

2.1 RE is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all pupils as part of a broad and balanced curriculum (The National Curriculum in England Key Stages 1 and 2 Framework Document, Department for Education, 2013). The Education Reform Act (1988) allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from all or some religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors/principal. The Education Reform Act (1988) also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors/principal. The Education Act (1996) states that RE syllabuses must reflect that 'the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Central Bedfordshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus. Our RE curriculum meets all of the requirements set out in the syllabus.

3 Teaching and learning

3.1 We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and

promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

3.2 Our teaching in RE enables children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. When possible, we organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to talk to the children.

3.3 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- sometimes grouping the children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

4 RE curriculum planning

4.1 RE forms part of the 'basic curriculum', alongside the National Curriculum. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the requirements of the Central Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit of work, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.2 Our RE curriculum is planned across two years, as part of a rolling programme of units. The curriculum plan maps the RE units studied in each term during each key stage to ensure full coverage of the syllabus and progression between key stages.

4.3 Teachers plan the individual lessons of the units, working towards the intended outcomes for each key stage. These are based on the guidance in the Central Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus. RE lessons are taught discretely on a weekly basis.

5 The Early Years Foundation Stage

5.1 We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

5.2 In reception classes, RE forms part of the topic work covered during the year and the classroom provision. Children have opportunities to explore festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Diwali and Hanukah through stories, visitors and practical activities. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we relate the RE aspects of the children's learning to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals. Specifically, this relates to the People, Culture and Communities Early Learning Goal: 'Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps; Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.'

6 Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1 English

Many of our RE lessons involve the teaching of religious stories, which enables the children to develop their speaking and listening skills, as well as reading and writing.

6.2 Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of society.

6.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual 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. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

7 RE and ICT

7.1 ICT enhances RE in all key stages. Videos and audio clips are used in teaching to enable the children to hear and see real examples of what is being taught. The children may also use ICT to record their RE learning. For example, through creating posters, typing up their written work, taking photographs of artefacts, recording videos of religious story enactments etc.

8 RE and inclusion

8.1 At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language. Separate policies on these areas of need can be found on the school website.

8.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

8.3 Work done in RE may contribute to meeting targets set out in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Teachers will have regard for these targets when planning and designing tasks for RE lessons.

8.4 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

9 Assessment

9.1 Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. During or

on completion of a piece of work, the teacher gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. The teacher will record the attainment at the end of the year. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9.2 We follow the assessment outcomes set out in the Central Bedfordshire RE Agreed Syllabus. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each key stage. At the end of a whole unit of work and academic year, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected level of attainment. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9.3 The RE subject leader keeps samples of children’s work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each key stage of the school.

10 Resources

10.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store, where there is a box of equipment dedicated to each religion taught. There are several Bibles, suitable for both key stages, and several other RE books to further enhance teaching.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the principal an annual action plan which indicates areas for further improvement.

11.2 The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the principal as part of the school’s agreed cycle of monitoring and review.

11.3 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

Version	Date	Author	Notes on revision(s)	Date ratified by LGB
1	08.03.2021	C. Whorrod	New policy written for adoption.	17.03.2021