



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

“Building a life-long love of learning in a safe and happy school”

Philosophy

Religious Education allows children to experience and develop a range of values, attitudes and beliefs that may enrich their lives and deepen their respect for themselves and others. At Loughton Manor First School it is our intent that our RE curriculum will support children in gaining an understanding of different religions and beliefs and help them develop positive attitudes of respect and tolerance towards other people.

In line with our PSCHE and SMSC curriculum, we use Religious Education to encourage our children to develop an appreciation of the world in which they live and to reflect upon their responsibility towards it. RE also provides us with opportunities to enhance children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims of this Policy

Religious Education aims to help pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in our school and community;
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions for individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- encourage positive attitudes towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, living in a society of diverse religions;
- develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues;
- enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in cooperation with their home life.

Planning

Unlike subjects of the National Curriculum, Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Milton Keynes Locally Agreed RE Syllabus, (2017 - 2022), although we recognise that the primary religious educator is the parent. Where parents object in conscience to the religious education provided by the school, they may withdraw their children from part or all of the RE curriculum. Where withdrawal takes place, by law a parent takes personal responsibility for the religious education of their child. A pupil cannot be withdrawn from RE by a parent to support other areas of their learning. **Schools have a duty to keep pupils safe, but not to provide them with additional work.**

The planning, teaching, learning and assessment of RE should be informed by the age-related expectations outlines for each year group (see The Milton Keynes Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017 – 2022 for more information).

The age-related expectations are structured around the three strands of:

- believing – beliefs, teachings and sources, understanding of texts
- belonging – forms of expression, identity and diversity, self-realisation, participation in faith communities
- behaving – practices and ways of life.

Outdoor Learning

At Loughton Manor First School we pride ourselves in our school grounds and benefit from a community rich with learning opportunities. We recognise the importance of Outdoor Learning (OL) on our children's development and plan OL opportunities whenever possible.

Foundation Stage

In Foundation Stage, the Religious Education topics taught will be selected from the syllabus and designed to suit the children by the Foundation Stage teachers following MK Syllabus guidelines as part of Understanding the World lessons. The requirement to provide religious education does not apply to nursery schools or nursery classes. However, the syllabus guidance does support appropriate provision for children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development.

Key Stage One

In Years 1 and 2, the core units are:

- Christianity
- Humanism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Sikhism
- Judaism

When planning for children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development we are aware that for many children their family and faith community will have a major role in promoting values and attitudes. Activities are mostly planned to develop and enrich these areas during daily circle time opportunities. We aim for our wider planning to provide many varied opportunities where pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences and observe and value things of beauty. In addition we aim to be prepared for unplanned situations where the opportunity arises to develop pupils' spiritual and moral awareness.

Organisation

In Foundation Stage, the children work towards the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS framework, and their Religious Education work may often be an integral part of other subject areas, such as Understanding the World.

In KS1, Religious Education is taught in separate units of work, though they may link to other curriculum areas where appropriate. Issues of a moral, social or cultural nature are often addressed through regular assemblies in collaboration with external agencies, as part of regular PSCHE lessons or as the main focus of a Religious Education lesson.

In Key Stage One, weekly RE lessons take place where children will build on key skills relating to different RE subject areas, alongside understanding faith and different religions. This is complemented by half termly RE days whereby children throughout the school will take part in a whole day of RE activities relating to either a religion or a specific celebration, e.g. Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, etc.

Skills

By the time children leave Loughton Manor First School at the age of seven, they will be able to:

- understand the differences and similarities between people and how they live, based on their beliefs. Through Religious Education, children learn to reflect and respond to their own ideas.
- have a basic understanding of what they believe and begin to talk about it.
- have an understanding of the importance of religious stories and books, symbols, clothing, etc.
- have an understanding of what it means to belong.
- show respect and sensitivity to others.
- be aware of different religious celebrations and their importance.

See the Religious Education Curriculum Intent document for more information on progression throughout the different year groups.

Attitudes

- Commitment
- Enquiry
- Fairness
- Respect for others
- Self-respect
- Self-understanding

Pupils are encouraged to develop these skills and attitudes through a wide range of activities including:

Role play, art work, food technology, listening to and making music, singing, writing, discussion and debate, listening to others or to stories/poetry, using ICT resources, movement and dance, reading, visiting places of religious significance or welcoming visiting speakers.

Pupils take part in these activities independently, as part of a small group, as a whole class or even as a year group.

Assessment

Assessment in Religious Education is light touch, and almost all via observation. It is this observation that will inform differentiation.

At an age expected level, children should have the ability to reflect on, respond to and make links between the three aspects; believing, belonging and behaving. In deciding on a child's achievement at the end of the year, teachers should judge whether a child has independently met all or enough of the statements of expectation to demonstrate that the child is working at the appropriate level or that the child has progressed appropriately from their starting point. A child's ability to achieve the expected standard with decreasing support will contribute to the measure of their progression.

There are key outcomes for each year group upon which observations are built, in the form of 'I am a (age group) pupil and I can' statements, which can be seen in the RE Curriculum Intent document, but the requirement to note is summative at the end of the year, and only noted for those children whose skills and knowledge are emerging, or who are clearly exceeding (in KS1).

See the Religious Education Curriculum Intent document for more information on outcome statements with regards to each year group.

Resources

Our Religious Education resources include religious texts, books, videos, music, posters, art and religious artefacts, although this is not an exhaustive list. Resources are kept in the resources room in large storage boxes which relate to specific religions. We take care to store and handle special artefacts with due respect for their significance. Each box is clearly labelled and has a contents list on the lid. There are also several box files of resources on the RE shelf above the boxes, along with resources in the EAL cupboard located in the Year Two shared area.

School visits are an important and integral part of the Religious Education curriculum, enabling pupils to experience valuable and exciting aspects of their study. Likewise, we welcome and appreciate visiting speakers and regard them as an invaluable resource, including monthly visits from Bridgebuilder; a Christian schools work charity. They run assemblies for children within KS1 to enable them to explore positive values and the Christian faith, in accessible and memorable ways.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to our Religious Education curriculum in line with the school's Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality Policy.

Inclusion

RE can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. It has a role in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating differences in others. It enables pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. It can also help develop pupils' self-esteem. Effective inclusion requires the teaching of a lively, stimulating RE curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to RE.
- meets all pupil's learning needs, including those with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

The teacher, via observation, will make opportunities for children who need additional support to be supported, either by proximity to confident accurate pupils or an adult to enable participation. Some children with SEND will participate with the support of 1:1 adult, who gauges the appropriateness of the activity and modifies as needed. Opportunities for children to lead discussions on their own experiences and develop their ideas will contribute to enhancing learning for children at Greater Depth.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will be within the remit of the Humanities Team, a curriculum team which meets half-termly. Their annual SIP Action Plan will identify aspects for development/improvement that help to support and sustain our culture of positive relationships across our school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Religious Education Subject Leader is responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating the delivery and provision within the school. RE is taught by class teachers or a suitably trained and experienced teaching assistant. This includes supporting colleagues, purchasing suitable resources, keeping up to date with new developments and teaching strategies and cascading new developments to colleagues in school.