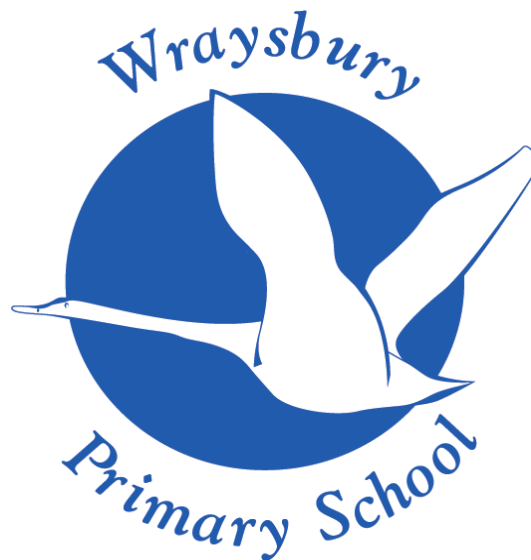


Religious Education Policy



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Religious Education

Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’. Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

“a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world”. (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted, 2013).

The RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010

RE: Realising the potential Ofsted 2013

A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC, 2013

Intent of Religious Education

Discovery RE meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above. By following Discovery RE at Wraysbury Primary School we intend that Religious Education will:

- Adopt an enquiry-based approach as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children’s own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion
- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging.
- Develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Encourage 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.
- Enable pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice.
- Prompt 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.

- Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Nurture children's own spiritual development.

Religious education should help pupils to:

Learn about religion by:

- Acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- Developing an understanding of the influence beliefs, values and traditions have on individuals, communities, societies and cultures

Learn from religion by:

- Developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain
- Developing a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs and towards living in a society of diverse religions.
- Enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and how religious teachings can relate to them
 - Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their understanding and experience
 - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

(From The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education Pan Berkshire 2012-2017 p3)

Implementation

Discovery RE covers all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion in each group forms the pattern. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	Christianity Key Question: Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity Key Question: What gifts might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem?	Christianity Key Question: Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity Key Question: Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity by the crowds on Palm Sunday?	Judaism Key Question: Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism Key Question: Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children?
Year 2	Christianity Key Question: Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity Key Question: Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world?	Judaism Key Question: How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?	Christianity Key Question: How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion?	Islam Key Question: Does going to a mosque give Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam Key Question: Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim?
Year 3	Hinduism Key Question: Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?	Christianity Key Question: Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity Key Question: Could Jesus heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity Key Question: What is 'good' about Good Friday?	Sikhism Key Question: Do Sikhs think it is important to share?	Sikhism Key Question: What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?
Year 4	Buddhism Key Question: Is it possible for everyone to be happy?	Christianity Key Question: What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Buddhism Key Question: Can the Buddha's teachings make the world a better place?	Christianity Key Question: Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	Judaism Key Question: What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Christianity Key Question: Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?
Year 5	Sikhism Key Question: How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion?	Christianity Key Question: Is the Christmas story true?	Hinduism Key Question: How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Christianity Key Question: How significant is it for Christians to believe God intended Jesus to die?	Hinduism Key Question: Do beliefs in Karma, Samsara and Moksha help Hindus lead good lives?	Key Question: What is the best way for a Christian to show commitment to God?
Year 6	Islam Key Question: What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Christianity (2nd question) Key Question: Do Christmas celebrations and traditions help Christians understand who Jesus was and why he was born?	Christianity Key Question: Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity Key Question: Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Islam Key Question: Does belief in Akhiraah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives?	

Planning and Delivery

Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. Discovery RE is taught in all year groups in blocks throughout each term.

Differentiation/SEN

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout RE. Therefore, 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 discussion and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher with their assessment.

Links to British Values

The Discovery scheme of work supports the promotion of British values. Although it does not teach UK law, it teaches children the law of that religion so they can understand what a law might be. The most prominent British value linked throughout the RE curriculum is mutual respect. As with any RE curriculum the main purpose is to promote tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. This detailed scheme of work is not planned as individual lesson plans but in the form of medium term planning and because of this many of the values may be covered by the way the teacher/practitioner explains the concepts included and the language used. In Appendix 3 there is a chart representing the most feasible connections that can be made although the teacher may well be able to make further connections to the British values.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

Parents may withdraw their children from religious education but must provide written notification to this effect.

Teachers may exercise their right to withdraw from teaching Religious Education.

SUGGESTED LEARNING FROM RELIGION QUESTIONS RELATED TO EACH OF THE KEY STAGE 1 KEY QUESTIONS

These questions are intended as a guide only. Teachers will need to select, amend and add questions which fit well with their approach to particular topics

Overview of the key questions for Key Stages 1-3

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Belonging

Does it feel special to belong?

- To what groups do you belong?
- How do you show others you belong to these groups?
- How does it feel to be part of a family, class, group etc?
- Do you belong to anyone?

Are religious celebrations important to people?

- What times are important/special to you?
- Why and how do you celebrate special times?
- Why might other people celebrate different times?
- How can we help other people celebrate their special times?

Are symbols better than words at expressing religious beliefs?

- How can symbols help us understand things?
- What symbols do you use often? How and why do you use them?
- How can clothes, colours and movements be symbols?
- Can you think of a symbol for yourself that would tell others something about you?

Believing

Who do I believe I am?

- What makes me like other people?
- What makes me different from other people/unique?
- What am I good at?
- Where do I come from?
- What ideas and things are important to me?
- How do I want to get along with others?
- Do I recognise how special other people are?

Is God important to everyone?

- Who is most important to you and why?
- What ideas have you heard about God? What do you believe about God?
- Does your family believe in God?

Does the world belong to God?

- What is your prized possession? Was it a gift or did you make/create it?
- How/why do things belong to you?
- What are the things that amaze you most about the world?
- Does the world belong to anyone?

What can I learn from stories from religious traditions?

- What are your favourite stories? Why do you like them? Do you learn anything from them?
- Have you learned anything about qualities like honesty, loyalty, courage in stories you have read?
- What ideas have you learned from the stories we have heard from the Bible and other religious teachings?
- What things/books are most special to you? Why are they special? How do you show they are special?

Behaving

Should people follow religious leaders and teachings?

- Whom do you admire and why?
- Who are the people who help you decide what is right and wrong?
- How do they help you decide what is right and wrong?
- How can these people help you even when they are not with you?
- Why do you think it is important to be kind and thoughtful towards other people? Are you kind to other people? How are people kind to you?
- How can we tell if a person is a good person?
- Do you always do what you think is right? Why?

Should people take care of the world?

- Why do so many people think it is important to look after the world?
- Do you think it is important to look after the world? How could you help to look after the world? Do you do things to help look after the world? What sort of things?

SUGGESTED LEARNING FROM RELIGION QUESTIONS RELATED TO EACH OF THE KEY STAGE 2 KEY QUESTIONS

These questions are intended as a guide only. Teachers will need to select, amend and add questions which fit well with their approach to particular topics

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Belonging

Does participating in worship help people to feel closer to God and their faith community?

- Can you think of a place that has inspired you spiritually? What impact did it have on you?
- Why do people find it important to meet with others who share similar ideas?
- When have you felt closest to others who share similar ideas to you?
- Are there times when you value being alone? Why? What do you gain from these times?
- How do people express important feelings like thankfulness, joy, appreciation, love etc?
- How do you remember/commemorate important events?
- What have been the turning points in your life and how have they been marked?
- Is it important to mark significant times in people's lives? Why?

How well do funeral and mourning rituals tell you what a religion believes about what happens after death?

- Do you think it is important to mark a person's death?
- In what way do you think a person's death should be marked?
- How should people be remembered?

Can the arts help communicate religious beliefs?

- How do you express ideas that are most important to you?
- Are there some ideas and experiences that are too difficult to express in words?
- How could you express who you are without words?
- Do you think it is important for people to be able to express their ideas and beliefs in a wide variety of ways? Why?
- Which piece of art/music has personal significance for you?

Believing

Do religious people lead better lives?

- How do your beliefs about God (which might be that there isn't one) influence your life and the way in which you choose to live it?
- What do you think matters most in life?
- What do you think is the purpose of life?
- Is it important to live a good life?

Do sacred texts have to be 'true' to help people understand their religion?

- Can things be true in different ways?
- How and from whom/what do you learn what is true?
- How do you know you can rely on these sources of authority?
- How do we decide what to believe?
- Is it important for religious teaching to be written down?

Should religious people be sad when someone dies?

- Would you want people to be sad when you die or should they celebrate your life?
- What do you believe happens to a person when they die? Why?
- What does the word 'heaven' mean to you?

Behaving

Is religion the most important influence and inspiration in everyone's life?

- Who/what inspires you and why?
- What or who has been the most important influence on your life?
- Has being inspired or influenced by someone/something changed you in any way? How?
- How and why might it be helpful to have an example to follow?
- In what ways could you be a role model?
- Do you think God guides people? Why?

Do all religious beliefs influence people to behave well towards others?

- What are the values, beliefs and ideas that guide your life and why?
- How do you decide how to behave?
- Must we always behave well towards others?
- What do you see as being the value of the rules and codes?
- How can we make amends for things we do wrong?

Does living out parents' religious beliefs/traditions eg Kashrut or Ramadan take away someone's freedom or add to his/her sense of identity?

- Do you hold the same beliefs as your parents?
- How does your family life influence the way you live?
- Should children be free to make their own decisions about religion?
- Are there any family traditions that give you a sense of identity?

Is it possible to hold religious beliefs without trying to make the world a better place?

- Is it possible for you to feel strongly about something and not act on it?
- How do you respond to worldwide issues that affect the lives of others? How can you help? Do you think it is important to help? Why?