

	Offley Endowed Primary School and Nursery	Reviewed October 2023 Next Review: December 2025	
Policy Title:	Religious Education	Users:	Staff, Governors Parents

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious Education (RE) occupies a special place in the curriculum of this school. It is a subject which must by law be included in the basic curriculum of the school. As this is a Voluntary Aided school, the RE curriculum is required by law to be determined by the Governors in accordance with the Trust deed of the school. The Deed for our school states that religious education shall be given in accordance with the established religion of The Church of England.

This is the basis for determining the RE Policy and although times and society have changed since the founding of the school and the formation of the Trust Deed, we believe that we should positively set standards of behaviour and values which are informed by the teaching of Jesus and not merely accept or reflect existing social and moral standards.

Our Scheme of Work for Religious Education is based on the Discovery RE enquiry-based approach to Religious Education. We also include units produced by charities such as Christian Aid and CAFOD. Each Christianity enquiry in Discovery RE has the underpinning Christian concept/core belief made explicit. These are aligned with the 'Understanding Christianity' materials.

As a church school we expect all children to participate in RE lessons. While parents do have a right to withdraw their children from lessons in RE, this would normally only happen after consultation with the Headteacher.

2. PHILOSOPHY

We do not attempt to convince children of the truth of any particular religion, but to inform them of the beliefs and practices of followers of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and in particular, Christianity. We endeavour to teach the children accurately about other cultures and people so they may understand and respect their differences, learning from the faith concerned.

We believe that RE provides valuable opportunities for children to learn more about other religions in an atmosphere where they are free to question, reflect and analyse differences.

3. INTENT

- To help the children develop a sense of awe and wonder, and also an understanding of spiritual experiences.
- To understand the important influences Christianity has had on our British heritage and culture.

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- To gain some knowledge of, and respect for, the beliefs and religious practices of followers of major world religions other than Christianity.
- To learn not only about, but also from, Christianity and other world religions and apply this knowledge to children's own lives.
- To provide opportunities for quiet reflection, including during Collective Worship and RE lessons.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Work is planned to cover all the aspects outlined in the Syllabus:

- Where possible, work is linked to other aspects of the curriculum.
- All Year groups learn about Christianity for at least three half terms. In addition, Year 3 learn about Hinduism and Sikhism. Year 4, Judaism and Buddhism; Year 5 Sikhism and Hinduism again and Year 6 learn about Islam.
- We also learn about Hinduism and Sikhism through celebrations, planned visits to places of worship and visitors to the school.
- Children in Key Stage One will focus on Christianity, with reference to other major world religions through celebrations and festivals, symbols and artefacts
- In Foundation Stage Christianity will be the main focus, with other faiths being introduced through stories, birthdays and learning about important religious people
- Where possible, visits and visitors will be used to enhance the learning in RE: eg. Visit to St Albans Abbey, Islamic Centre in Luton. Participation in other events is also encouraged, eg. Lifepath Newton in Olney and Lifepath Bunyan in Elstow.
- ICT based resources will be used in RE.
- Music, dance and drama will feature in RE lessons.

The school aims to meet the recommended time of 5% of curriculum time for classroom RE across the year. This may be spread across the school year with greater emphasis when the church is celebrating major festivals such as Christmas and Easter. Time spent on school productions is additional to recommended and allocated time. RE is taught throughout the school by class teachers.

5. RESOURCES

Resources are located in the cupboard in the hall. The Diocesan Education Centre in St Albans has a range of suitable resources and artefacts which may be borrowed when studying particular faiths and festivals.



6. ASSESSMENT AND MARKING

Teachers assess the children's understanding mainly through observation of participation in discussion and written and illustrative work. Children are encouraged to take part in self-assessment. Assessment takes place every term across the whole school, with staff working together to level the children's work. We use the Discovery RE assessment criteria to understand whether the children are working towards, at or beyond the expected standard. Children's work is marked regularly and comments are added as appropriate. We encourage the children to write freely about their beliefs and feelings, therefore we feel it is important to respect the child's views, and encourage dialogue by writing positively about their work, and engage them in further thought and discussion.

7. MONITORING

In line with other core subjects, the Headteacher (subject leader) and linked Governor will monitor the implementation of this policy. In addition they will monitor standards of achievement and progress as well as the quality of teaching through data analysis, lesson plan and work scrutiny, pupil interviews and lesson observations. A folder containing samples of children's work and the outcomes of any monitoring is held by the Subject Leader.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential in RE in accordance with the statements in the school policy for equal opportunities.

Ethos statement proposed for inclusion in the DfEE guidelines as recommended to be adopted by governing bodies of Church of England schools.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Collective Worship policy.



Appendix 1

Non-negotiables of RE

RE Books

- Cover sheet for all new units.
- Clear learning objectives linked to the key question for the enquiry.
- Must see clear progression between exploration of text, making connections, impact and deeper understanding.
- Photocopy a sample of work from HA, MA and LA of children to be handed in with the assessment sheet every term. If completing two units in one term, choose only one unit of work to provide samples of work.

RE Displays / Prayer space

- Prayer space should include table cloth, school prayer, class prayer or class prayer book, cross, candle, Bible, a prayer box with post-it notes.
- RE displays should be treated as a working wall with a unit title, key questions that the children want to find out, work created each week to be added.
- Each class should display our vision statement; 'Be all you can be; with God all things are possible' – Matthew 19/26