



RE Policy

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In a world of confusion and shifting values, children need accurate information and a helpful environment in which they can explore and form their own values and develop skills to deal with life's joys, sorrows and questions.

Religious Education provides opportunities for our pupils to:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture.
- To enable pupils to know about and understand other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world.
- To enable pupils to develop a sense of respect for religious traditions, beliefs and practices.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.
- To enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging.
- To enable pupils to be religiously literate, able to express knowledge, questions, ideas and insights.
- To enable pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder, mystery and joy,

CONTEXT OF OUR ACADEMY

Within our Academy Trust we believe in a Christian ethos whilst providing everyone with the opportunity to achieve more than they ever thought possible. We understand that as a Church Academy that we are in a unique position to develop a clearer understanding of the ways in which Christian Values can be reflected within the whole curriculum of the school. We not only encourage our pupils to develop academically and spiritually, aspiring beyond their own and others' expectations – Everyone Achieves.

Our school is inclusive and accepts children regardless of background or special need and our intake of pupils is representative of all sections of the local community. We recognise that we are in a unique position to develop a clearer understanding and identification of ways in which Christian, British, moral and other faith values can motivate relationships between all members of our community.

We believe that the enduring and renewing values that underpin the Christian story may be considered to be even more relevant within our fast-changing society. The concepts of respect and kindness are central to the way we live our lives in our School.

At Beaminster St Mary's we emphasise the importance of children being aware of and respecting the needs of others in a caring, multi-cultural global community. The children will learn about religions by focusing on traditional belief systems. Across their time with us students will have the opportunity to examine religious beliefs, to enjoy and understand the powerful stories behind religions, to gain an understanding of the diverse range of religious practices that takes place within even our small city and to begin to see how religious beliefs influence social justice, community action and personal choices.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. We welcome diversity, and we are sensitive to the home background of each child. RE does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

The communal life of our school, and the role of every teacher within it, continues to be highly significant. An atmosphere in which it is accepted that religion can be a genuine and important dimension of human life will foster the achievement of the more specific aim of a tolerant understanding of religious believers and institutions.

CONTENT

The 'Dorset Agreed Syllabus for RE' follows an enquiry approach to learning. To fulfil the requirements of this syllabus, we will use units from the Emmanuel Project' as the basis for planning

TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

- Wherever possible, pupils should be actively engaged in exploratory and experimental learning including opportunities to:
 - observe religious artefacts, paintings, books, photos, pictures.
 - studying sacred texts and stories;
 - visit places of worship in a planned and structured way;
 - meet and talk to believers of various faiths in a planned and controlled situation.
- Learning should be geared to more than the accumulation of factual knowledge and personal experiences. Opportunities for analysis are especially important and must be given to enable the child to develop those insights and deeper perceptions that lead to understanding.
- RE is equally concerned with understanding the feelings and attitudes of others. This requires both openness and sensitivity, and a degree of imagination in order to empathize with and see the world through the eyes of another person.

During RE in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils have the opportunity to know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews and gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews. The children acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism; and how these religions influence individuals, communities, society and the world around them. In Upper Key Stage 2 they will also study the Humanism movement as an aid to understanding worldwide views, critical thinking as well as exploring their own values.

VALUES AND ATTITUDES

We embed Christian Values to ensure they permeate through our policies and every aspect of the children's learning and lives. Made in the image of God, they all deserve to be the best they can be regardless of background, faith and ability.

Children are given opportunities to:

- Work with others, listening to each other's ideas, and treat others with respect;
- Consider their own experiences, attitudes and values, and those of other people;
- Develop respect for evidence and critically evaluate ideas that may or may

not fit the evidence available;

- Identify puzzling questions and suggest answers;
- Develop their understanding of why certain things are held to be right or wrong;
- Relate to moral and religious issues.
- Explore and express personal values, feelings and choices;
- Experience stillness and periods of quietness, silence or being alone;
- Evaluate their experiences and discoveries;
- Express themselves through movement, dance, poetry, music or in other creative media;
- Develop appropriate behaviour and responses when dealing with what is special, important, precious or sacred to themselves and others.

EXPECTATIONS

By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children will have had opportunities to:

- Find out and learn about the world they live in
- Learn about the beliefs and cultures of others;
- Share in the celebration of different festivals;
- Hear stories from a variety of cultural and religious traditions.

By the end of Key Stage 1, most children will be able to:

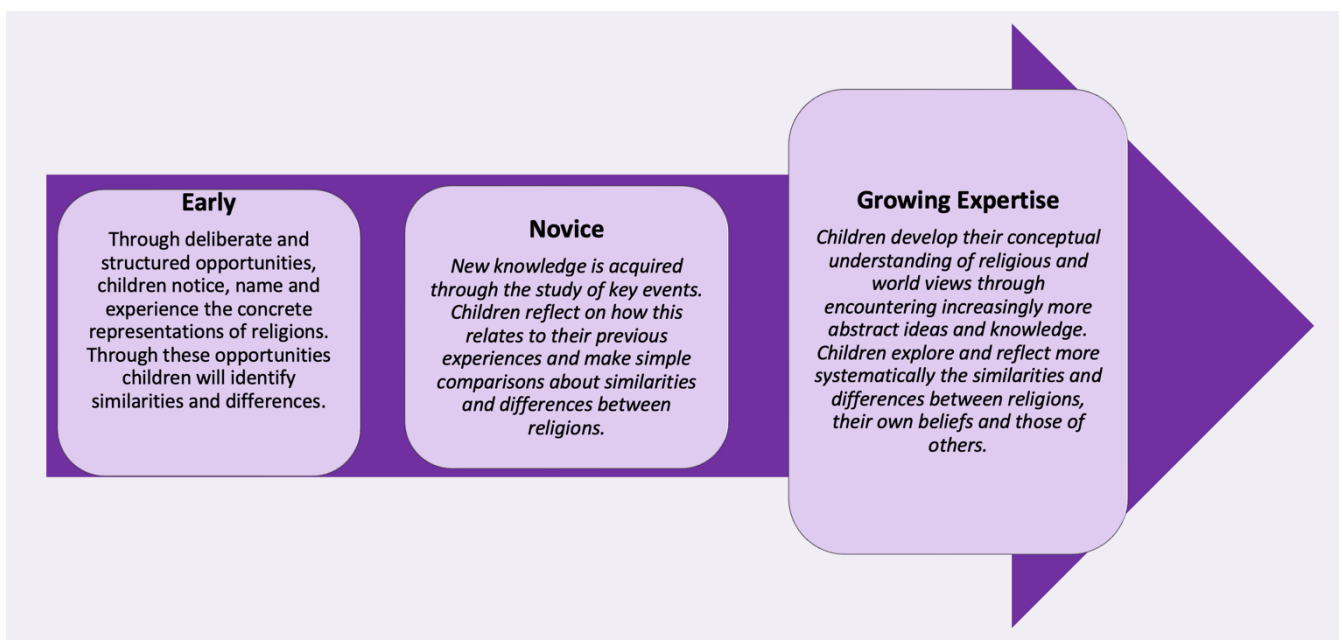
- Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.
- Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come.
- Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.
- Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make.
- Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.
- Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.
- Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.
- Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different.
- Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.

By the end of Key Stage 2, most children will be able to:

- Describe and **make connections** between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their significance.
- Describe and **understand links** between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.

- Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of **expressing meaning**.
- Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.
- Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.
- Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews.
- Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry.
- Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.
- Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.

FEATURES OF PROGRESSION



Withdrawal from RE

We acknowledge the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their children from RE lessons and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We acknowledge that parents/guardians/teachers do not need to provide a reason why they wish to withdraw from the subject. Should a parent/guardian wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons or a teacher wish to refuse to teach RE, we require that written notice be sent to the school local governing board.

Should a parent/guardian request that their child be withdrawn from RE, we will endeavour to communicate clearly the place of RE within a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that they are in possession of all the necessary information before confirming their decision. However, we will not

attempt to persuade them to alter their decision. If a pupil is withdrawn from RE lessons, the school is required to provide supervision but should not incur any additional cost in so doing and is not obliged to provide alternative work.

Any queries regarding withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE Subject Leader in the first instance, and thereafter to the Head of School, Executive Headteacher.

Updated December 2024

Next Update: December 2025