



Theale Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Policy

At Theale CE Primary School the children come first. They are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity.

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
Mark 12: v 30-31

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

Published on Website	Yes
Links to Related Policies and Procedures	Curriculum policy, Teaching & Learning policy, SEND, challenge and inclusion policies and procedures, Positive Behaviour policy and procedures, SMSC & Life Skills policies and curriculum, Collective Worship policy
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“Religious education has an important place in the curriculum of all schools. It provides a space for learning about people, about cultures and faiths and also relationships, tolerance, understanding and appreciation of others’ beliefs and values.” (The Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018-2023)

The Rationale for Religious Education Teaching

Religious Education is a vital and powerful way of teaching the children how to understand the evolving world around them; it gives the children the knowledge and understanding to support them in their life journey, where they will interact with people from different communities and cultures, empowering them to do this in a respectful, accepting and celebratory way, whatever their own faith or worldview.

Our Religious Education curriculum provides the children with:

- a wealth of varied substantive, disciplinary and conceptual knowledge;
- skills including critical thinking and self-reflection;
- awareness of experiences outside of their own and the ability to relate to and connect them to their own lived experience;
- the ability to connect with others through exploration of a range of worldviews and a healthy curiosity in the beliefs, behaviour and sense of belonging of others;
- opportunities to express themselves and to develop socially, morally, emotionally and culturally.

The Legal Position

Every maintained school in England must provide a suitable Religious Education curriculum for all registered pupils, except for those withdrawn by their parents (see below). As a voluntary controlled school, RE is therefore taught in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus, while also reflecting the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education published by the Education Office of the Church of England in February 2019. The statutory section 48 (SIAMS) inspection will evaluate the way that RE contributes to the Christian character of the school as well as the priority, provision and quality of the curriculum.

Pupils may be withdrawn from all or part of the Religious Education curriculum by a parent or guardian in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; teachers can also exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE content; this provision will be the parents’ responsibility. When a parent exercises their right to withdraw their child from RE, the school may offer to speak with the parent to try to understand the basis for the withdrawal, although parents are not obliged to explain their reasoning. Discussion may include the practical implications of withdrawal and offering reassurance by discussing curriculum documents and the aims of RE in the school. Parents will also be made aware that their child will be welcomed to rejoin the Religious Education curriculum at any point, should the parent feel reassured to reverse their choice to withdraw.

If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the headteacher and chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the school will make alternative provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE.

Curriculum Intent

At Theale Church of England Primary School, we will ensure that all children attain the highest possible understanding of the world around them, leading to a lifelong ability to accept, respect and keep an open-mind regarding others' beliefs and faiths. Our high quality Religious Education curriculum educates students about the importance of embracing others' individuality and allows them to reflect on their own developing worldviews and belief systems (whether religious or non-religious) and express these with clarity and confidence.

Curriculum Impact

Children will:

- learn about a range of religions and worldviews (including some non-religious worldviews such as Humanism), their varied beliefs and practices;
- learn about celebrations from a range of religions, their origins and related customs;
- be able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their immediate community, the country and the global community;
- develop an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life, approaching this with a respectful, accepting and celebratory attitude.

Curriculum Implementation

This will be achieved through high-quality teaching for 2-hours per fortnight, with planning in line with the Pan Berkshire SACRE Agreed Syllabus (2024 version still in draft form – 2018-23 version extended to September 2025). The curriculum being delivered has been tailor-designed to reflect our school's ambition and the value that we place on Religious Education, using resources such as Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity to guide and support.

The curriculum is based on the following religions and worldviews: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hindu Dharma, Sikhi, Buddhism and Humanism. Over the course of the children's school career, we ensure that their learning reflects the variation within each belief system and people's lived experiences. The enquiry approach allows for natural review of previous learning which is then built upon as the enquiry progresses. It also gives the children the opportunity to come to their own informed conclusions, learning to justify these with relevant examples and evidence.

Foundation Stage and Year 1

The children begin their religious education by gaining awareness of religious concepts such as people and places being special, celebrations and what it means to practise a religion and believe in God. Children will learn more closely about the practices and beliefs of Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Judaism and Islam. They will begin their learning by considering their own experiences before links are made to those of others.

Year 2/3

Children will further develop their understanding of Christianity and Hindu Dharma and children will encounter Sikhi for the first time. Children will further explore God in a range of religions and will begin to identify the similarities and differences in beliefs between religions. Their knowledge of religious buildings, texts, stories and practices will deepen and children will begin to consider why people choose a religious path. The children will begin to consider the role of symbolism in religion.

Year 4/5

The children will continue to learn about Christianity, Judaism and Sikhi, building on their prior learning to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of religious beliefs and the way that they impact people's customs, traditions and practices. They will develop a deeper understanding of the way that religious symbolism can help people, both religious and non-religious, to gain understanding of concepts that would be otherwise difficult to explain or represent. The children will learn about the ways in which faith can shape people's lives and provide a sense of belonging through shared beliefs and practices.

Year 6

In Year 6, the children will apply all of their previous learning while studying a range of religions and worldviews: Christianity, Islam and Hindu Dharma will be revisited and Buddhism and Humanism will be introduced. Their final year at primary school affords them the opportunity to delve deeper into ideas such as commitment, perspectives on life and death, eternity and the position of religion in the modern world. They are expected to think critically and engage in discussion in a mature and respectful manner, accepting that people's beliefs and opinions will differ and, when necessary, disagreeing without being disagreeable.

Equal Opportunities, Gifted and Talented Pupils and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Religious Education will be inclusive and all children will feel that learning about religion is for them, regardless of their own beliefs/faith, customs or traditions. Every child will be given equal opportunity to thrive in Religious Education, whatever their ethnic, linguistic, family or financial background, gender, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or religious beliefs. Children with SEND will have full access to the Religious Education curriculum; adaptations will be made to meet the children's needs and ensure that they can access the full curriculum. Collaboration and the development of children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural education will be promoted through Religious Education teaching.

Resources

Appropriate resources to support work will be readily available and accessible to both teachers and pupils. They should be in adequate supply and in a good state. Care of resources should be emphasised to both pupils and staff. The Subject Leader should be informed of the need to replace, order or repair equipment.

Monitoring and Assessment

The monitoring of Religious Education will take the form of classroom observations by staff, monitoring of planning, work scrutiny, pupil voice, learning walks and evaluation of performances given. The Subject Leader, working with the Headteacher, is responsible for the monitoring of Religious Education and records will be kept as appropriate. The Headteacher will report to governors.

Assessment will be through continual Assessment for Learning, marking of work after each lesson, mid-year teacher judgements and end of year formal teacher assessment. Achievements in Religious Education will be reported to parents in each child's annual report and celebrated throughout the year.

Wider Opportunities and Curriculum Links

Through careful planning, opportunities will be identified in every lesson to build links with other curriculum areas and with Collective Worship. These are identified in medium term planning. Links are also made with the celebrations that the children take part in (e.g. Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas and Easter services) and additional opportunities that have included trips to places of worship and choir performances of a religious nature.