

# Sunnybrow Primary School



*"Where every child has the chance to shine."*

R.E. policy

## Policy on Religious Education (RE)

### Introduction

Religious Education is an academically rigorous subject which makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' overall knowledge. Through the study of beliefs and practices children are given the opportunity to think about ultimate questions that concern all of humanity. In RE pupils learn about religious and non-religious worldviews in order to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. Children learn to interpret, analyse, evaluate and critically respond to the claims that religious and non-religious worldviews make. Pupils learn to express their insights and to agree or disagree respectfully. In our school, RE equips pupils with knowledge and understanding of what is meant by the terms 'religion' and 'worldview' as well as systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. In our school RE offers opportunities for personal reflection and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as it encourages pupils to examine the significance of their learning in relation to themselves and others. RE contributes to PSHE and multi-cultural awareness. RE lessons play a key role in enhancing the school ethos by fostering attitudes and values such as honesty, empathy, ambition, respect, resilience and trust. Religious education should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religious and non-religious worldviews. Teaching in RE must promote therefore openness, respect for others, scholarly accuracy and critical enquiry. We teach RE using high quality resources including the Durham Agreed Syllabus (2020).

### RE vision statement

There is limited religious diversity in our immediate locality so we believe that it is vitally important that our RE curriculum covers a range of religions and beliefs. This will enable our pupils to learn from and about religion so that children understand the world around them. It will also encourage them to understand the need to respect others no matter their religion. We also aim for our RE curriculum to enhance social, moral, spiritual and cultural education and strengthen the children's understanding of British Values. This will support our pupils in being prepared for life in modern Britain.

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We want our pupils to become resilient, mindful and inquisitive learners and to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues. By deepening knowledge and understanding, by having informed discussions and by developing and using critical thinking skills we will build children's religious literacy.

Providing opportunities for reflection supports pupils in developing a sense of their own identity and self-awareness and how their individual beliefs can or cannot mirror those of others.

We believe that it is important for our pupils to gain the knowledge and skills that will enable them to answer challenging questions, explore different religious beliefs, values and traditions and appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and behaviour. By understanding the beliefs and practices of others, they may make connections to their own beliefs and values and how these beliefs and values influence their own behaviours.

### Intent

Planning and teaching incorporates the 3 elements of the RE curriculum: knowledge and understanding, critical thinking and personal reflection. Throughout each unit there is also the opportunity to develop various skills and attitudes. They are as follows –

- Skills: investigation and enquiry, interpretation, application, expression, analysis, evaluation, reflection and response and empathy.
- Attitudes: self-awareness, respect, open-mindedness, appreciation and wonder.

Each unit covers one or more key concepts of RE. Those four concepts are: belief, authority, expression of belief and impact of belief.

In nursery and reception class, children will learn about: special times, special objects, special music, special books, special people, special places and belonging. They will cover these aspects through a wide variety of religions which include: Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

In KS1 children will study Christianity, Buddhism and religious diversity.

In KS2 children will study Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and religious diversity which includes a special study of a local Muslim community. They will also be some thematic units during which a common theme will be explored across several different religions.

All classes will learn about Christmas and Easter but the focus will be on a different element of those celebrations each time.

### **Aims and objectives**

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Sunnybrow Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a deepened knowledge and understanding not only of Christianity but also of other world religions and non-religious world views. Children gain and are able to deploy skills that enable critical thinking and enquiry in relation to the material they study. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.

Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children:

- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems adhered to in the UK;
- to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
- to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

### **The legal position of religious education**

The 1988 Education Reform Act provides a legal framework for the provision of Religious Education and states that Religious Education must be provided in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes and sixth form. Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus, which is the statutory order. At Sunnybrow Primary School we follow the Durham Agreed Syllabus (2020)

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for Religious Education which is a statutory order. The SCARE may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus at any time. In accordance with the 1988 Act, the Agreed Syllabus reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of teachings and practices of other principal world religions represented in Great Britain. At Sunnybrow Primary School, children at Key Stage 1 focus on Christianity and Buddhism and Key Stage 2 children focus on Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, plus a small study on Islam. Dimensions from other faiths may be included.

Some aspects of world religions are included in the topics delivered at the Foundation stage.

Legally, the Agreed Syllabus must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge particular religion or religious belief on pupils. We at Sunnybrow Primary School treat all belief systems with respect and encourage children to do the same.

### Importance of RE

The main aims of Religious Education at Sunnybrow Primary School are to:

- Develop pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions
- Provoke **challenging questions** about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human?
- Offer opportunities for **personal reflection and spiritual development**, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others - individually, communally and cross –culturally
- Promote **mutual respect and tolerance** in a diverse society and therefore contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion.

These are underpinned by the ethos and aims at Sunnybrow primary; In RE at Sunnybrow Primary School, we aim to prepare for full participation in a diverse society, learn the importance of an inclusive community where everyone is valued regardless of religion, belief, race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or disability. To develop an awareness, tolerance, respect and understanding of other cultures and different ways of life. RE also teaches British Values from EYFS to year 6 of mutual respect, rule of law (10

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commandments), tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty and democracy.

### Withdrawal

Under the terms of 1988 Education Reform Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Religious Education. However, it is expected that parents who withdraw their child then provide Religious Education. RE is now an open and broad subject that explores a range a of religious and non-religious world views. It is an academic subject. Whilst we respect the rights of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, the Headteacher would be very happy to meet with parents who have concerns, discuss the nature of religious education in the school and consider arrangements.

### Organisation and Management of RE

RE lessons take place once a week for one hour in each class from year 1 through to year 6. In EYFS time for RE is planned within the EYFS framework. RE lessons are predominately taught by class teachers however, experienced teaching assistants do cover RE lessons if required.

EYFS	Planned within the EYFS framework
KS1	36 Hours per year
KS2	45 Hours per year

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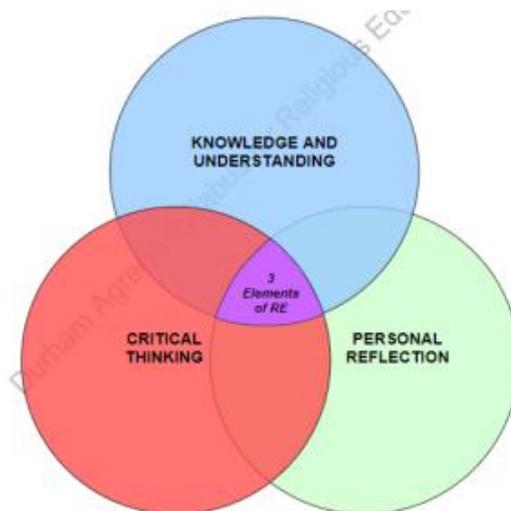
There is a Religious Education Co-ordinator in the school who prepares the Action Plan and reviews, monitors and evaluates provision and practice of Religious Education. School governors have each been given the role to work with a subject leader in each subject, Julie Phillips will take RE. The school will ensure that governors are informed of any developments and changes to provision in Religious Education and amendments to school policy are made available for discussion and approval.

### Planning and Delivery

Teaching and learning in line with the Durham Agreed Syllabus (2020), pupils will build religious literacy in our school by :

- Developing *knowledge and understanding* of religious and non-religious worldviews
- Becoming increasingly able to respond to religious and non-religious worldviews in an informed and insightful way.
- Reflecting on their own ideas and others

In the Durham Agreed Syllabus (2020) these are called the three elements of Religious Education:



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We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including investigation and enquiry, interpretation, application, expression, analysis, evaluation reflection and response and empathy. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space for children to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of lesson where they will be encouraged to:

- Pose and discuss 'big 'and challenging questions
- Read and critically analyse texts.
- Interpret information from different sources.
- Research information for themselves
- Listen to and discuss topics with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engage in pair and group work.
- Explore a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experience visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

A Long-Term Plan for Religious Education has been produced by the Co-ordinator. This meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. The LTP can also be found on our school website.



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	<b>Autumn</b>	<b>How and why is Christmas celebrated by Christians?</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>How and why is Easter celebrated by Christians?</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Class 1 A</b>	Let's find out about harvest  Let's find out about Diwali	Let's find out about the Christmas story	Let's find out about the Bible  Let's hear some stories about Jesus (Jesus and Zacchaeus, Jesus calming the storm)	Let's find out about the Easter Story	Let's find out about Christian baptism  Let's find out about Raksha Bandhan
<b>Class 1 B</b>	Let's find out about Harvest in a church  Let's find out about Shabbat	Let's find out about the Christmas story  Let's find out about Christmas celebrations in churches	Let's find out about holy books (e.g. Torah, Qur'an Guru Granth Sahib)	Let's find out about Easter celebrations in churches	Let's find out about special buildings and worship there (e.g. Synagogue, Mandir, Church, Buddhist Rupas)
<b>Class 2 A</b>	What can we learn about Christianity from visiting a church?  What do Christians believe about God?	Why are gifts given at Christmas?	What can we find out about Buddha?	What is the Easter story?	How do Buddhists show their beliefs?  What can we learn about our local communities?
<b>Class 2 B</b>	Why is the Bible special to Christians?  What can we learn from the story of St Cuthbert?	How and why is light important at Christmas?	What does it mean to belong in Christianity?	How do Christians celebrate Easter?	Why is Jesus special to Christians?
<b>Class 3 A</b>	What do we know about the Bible and	Why do Christians call Jesus the light of the world?	What do Christians believe about Jesus?	Why is Lent such an important period for Christians?	How and why do people show care for others?

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	why is it important to Christians?				Why do people visit Durham Cathedral today?
<b>Class 3 B</b>	How do Hindu's worship?	How and why is advent important to Christians?	What can we learn Christian symbols/beliefs by visiting churches?	What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday?	What do Hindus believe?
<b>Class 4 A</b>	Why is Moses important to Jewish People?	What are the themes of Christmas?	What do Christians believe about God?	Why is the Last Supper so important to Christians?	How are Jewish beliefs expressed in the home?
	Why do Jewish people go to the synagogue?				Why do people us rituals today?
<b>Class 4 B</b>	What can we find out about a local Muslim community?	What do the Gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus?	How and why do people care about the environment?	Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians?	So, what do we know about Christianity? (Exploration through concepts)
	What can we learn about religious diversity in our area?				Statutory bridging unit.

	Christianity
	Thematic Unit
	Diversity Unit
	Other Core Religions
	Whole School Approach to Christmas and Easter

### RE curriculum enrichment:

As part of RE learning we give opportunities for children to meet people from faith communities, including, where appropriate, those who do not hold a religious faith. We invite visitors to school to talk about aspects of their beliefs and also take students to visit our local church. We are also developing opportunities for students to talk to and ask questions through the use of technology, e.g. skype, email, video conferencing etc. The school will also keep parents informed of any developments in relation to Religious Education and make the school policy for RE available if requested.

### Equal Opportunities

Religious Education is open to all children at School regardless of religion, race, culture, gender and ability. Through the teaching of Religious Education children learn to:

- Become aware that Britain is multi-religious and multi-cultural
- Challenge inequalities and discrimination based on race, religion, culture, gender, ability or socio-economic groups
- Respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others.

This policy will be reviewed at least every year.

Signed: K. Wild

Signed:

Date: 29/04/2023

Reviewed: 22/11/2024 *K. Wild*

Reviewed: 20/10/2025 *K. Wild*

Reviewed: 15/03/2026 *K. Wild*