

Newton Hall Infants' School

Policy for RE



Date of production – May 2026
Date of next review – May 2028

RE Policy

Introduction

There are four main purposes to this policy:

It establishes an entitlement for all pupils.

It establishes expectations for the standard to be achieved.

It builds on what pupils have learned previously and promotes continuity and coherence across the school.

It states the school's approach to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents and carers, understanding of the curriculum.

The importance of RE in the curriculum.

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purposes of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and world views. RE offers pupils the opportunity to examine the significance of religion in relation to themselves and others, as they consider how religion and beliefs have an impact on individuals and groups in local, national and global contexts.

RE offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they be religious or not) in the light of what they learn, examine issues of religious beliefs and faith, and consider their own responses to questions raised. RE encourages empathy and enables pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging.

RE encourages respect for all, including those with differing faiths and beliefs, as pupils develop understanding and appreciation of our diverse society and world. RE helps to challenge prejudice, discrimination and racism.

Legal Requirements

The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Durham (revised 2020) and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils to a particular religion.

Aims

Religious Education is an important element in the broad and balanced curriculum we aim to provide at Newton Hall Infants School. Through our RE curriculum, we aim to provide opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews and reflect on the challenging questions that it provokes.

The aims of religious education are:

- To develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions and non-religious worldviews and consider how the beliefs of others impact on their lives and the lives of others.
- To encourage children to ask and reflect on challenging questions
- To provide opportunities for personal reflection where children can explore their own beliefs (not necessarily religious)
- To encourage children to appreciate and respect the different cultures in today's society.

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Teaching and Learning

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Divali, Passover etc to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship.

Expectations

We use the benchmark expectations from the Agreed Syllabus to gain a clear picture of how pupils are making progress in Religious Education and how they are developing religious literacy. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of children will have achieved the Expectations by age 7 band.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We assess children's knowledge and understanding by questioning, listening and observation during lessons. Written work and photographs should be recorded in RE books.

Information on a child's progress in RE will be communicated to parents in the written report once yearly.

Pupils with Special Needs

Pupils with diverse learning needs are provided for through:

- ✓ Pre-teaching of topic vocabulary
- ✓ Preferred method of communication used
- ✓ Pre-teaching/Pre reading of topic content
- ✓ Pre-exposure to lesson content/equipment to engage interest
- ✓ Use of hooks to engage visual learners e.g model, picture, object
- ✓ Focus on oracy – well managed environmental background noise
- ✓ Visual prompts and organisers
- ✓ Vocab mats
- ✓ Opportunities for repetition and over learning
- ✓ Mixed ability peer pairings/groupings/flexible groupings
- ✓ Modelled thinking out loud to scaffold thought processes
- ✓ Adult scaffolding to further break down tasks and learning into smaller steps
- ✓ Worked examples to use as a model
- ✓ Scaffolded recording e.g use of scribe or video recording/word processing tool, writing frames
- ✓ Adaptations to resources e.g enlarged diagrams/additional labelling
- ✓ Use of real life references to make content less abstract – supported by pictorial/video resources.
- ✓ Use of real life experiences and resources e.g school visits/visitors into school
- ✓ Inclusion of drama/hot seating/role play

Inclusion

The school aims to provide work that is stimulating, challenging and inclusive for all children so as to enable them to take an active part in each lesson and help them to reach their full potential. Children should be allowed to develop skills and knowledge in relation to their ability and educational needs.

Equal opportunities

The teaching of RE in our school takes into consideration our equal opportunities policy and inclusion. We recognise children as individuals and base our teaching upon our knowledge of their specific needs. A range of teaching methods and resources allow children with a wide range of abilities to achieve their potential.

Curriculum and Planning

We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Durham (Revised 2020) We ensure that the topics studied in RE build upon prior learning.

We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we ensure that the progression planned into the curriculum map offers the children an increasing challenge as pupils move through the school. KS2 builds upon KS1, KS1 builds upon the Foundation Stage. In addition, certain skills and attitudes are encouraged e.g. learning to respect the skills of others, asking questions and listening to others, personal reflection on life and its values.

Mixed age classes mean planning has to be re-adjusted each year to ensure coverage. This is carried out by the subject leader but it is imperative that class teachers keep a record of units and objectives covered.

Learning Resources

Learning resources are kept in the PE cupboard. The resources are organised in boxes which are sorted by religion. Relevant resources are taken to the class by the class teacher to support learning and should be returned in the same way.

Foundation Stage

We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the reception. In the EYFS, children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They are introduced to some religious practices. (Knowledge and Understanding) are given opportunities to ask questions (Critical Thinking) and are given opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and feelings (Personal Reflection).

As the reception classes are part of the Foundation Stage Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the childrens learning experiences to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

The contribution of RE to other aspects of the curriculum

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching and English in our school by actively promoting the skills of oracy, reading and writing. Our RE lessons include a strong element of speaking and listening and discussion. We use a variety of written sources to develop deeper understanding of beliefs and practices. Children are given time for thinking and planning to enable them to produce written work which demonstrates depths of understanding about beliefs, expressions of belief and their impact on individuals and communities today.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society. We also teach and promote British Values through religious education. At Newton Hall Infants School, these are reinforced in the following ways: democracy, the rule of law, individual freedom, mutual respect and tolerance for other faiths and beliefs.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Withdrawal from RE Learning

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from R.E. Where parents are wishing to exercise this right, the Governing Body would first suggest that the parents first meet with the Headteacher to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved, parents need to apply to the Governing Body in writing to withdraw their child from RE lessons. The Governing body will make arrangements with the Headteacher for the child(ren) to be supervised or engaged in another activity during this time. We are mindful that everyone holds different beliefs and this is taken into consideration at Newton Hall Infants School and in RE lessons.

How the subject is monitored and evaluated

All teachers are responsible for monitoring standards using the assessment procedures outlined in this policy. This is overseen by the RE co-ordinator. The RE co-ordinator is also responsible for the production and implementation of the action plan.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years in line with the school's policy review programme. The Headteacher is responsible for reporting to the Governors about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.

