



Religious Education Policy 2023-2024

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Reviewed by: Mrs L Robbins

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'The place of RE in the lives of children and young people keeps changing, but some things are constant. Every person, growing up, finds their own values and beliefs by which to live. The tensions of our differences are creative and fascinating for most of us, but occasionally they cause conflict. The place of religion in the modern world is controversial and challenging but does not go away. For these (among many) reasons it is vital for our schools to help children and young people to develop their own ideas and ways of living, to learn to be reasonable about belief and religions and to learn to be respectful to those who see the world differently. If everyone finds their own path in life, then the great religions of the world might be seen as guidebooks. RE introduces pupils to the influences of faiths and beliefs over thousands of years and for billions of people. That's a part of a good education for the twenty-first century.'

'In England, the spirit of co-operation characterises the making of RE syllabuses by local authority SACREs. In Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton the usual collaborations between different faith groups, teachers and democratically elected members have another layer: the three local authorities have seen the benefit once again in working together to make [a] shared RE syllabus, which gives more help than ever before to teachers as they plan and teach RE.'

'We hope that the children and young people of our local authority areas will find in their RE learning plenty of material to fascinate and stimulate, much to think about creatively and deeply, some challenges to each person to play their part in a better community and the chances to develop religious literacy and explore spirituality for themselves.'

Identities, meanings, values – The RE Agreed Syllabus, 2018-2023
Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton

Statement of Intent

At Moggerhanger Primary School the principal aim of RE is:

- To explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

As part of this aim teaching at Moggerhanger will encompass and examine:

- challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human;
- religions and beliefs in local, national and global contexts;
- weighing up the value of wisdom from different sources in order for pupils to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully;
- equipping pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and beliefs, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities;
- developing in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society;
- gaining and deploying the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence.

Our curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils can do the following:

- Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:
 - identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
 - explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
 - recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g., texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation
- Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:
 - examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
 - recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
 - appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning
- Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:
 - evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
 - challenge the ideas they study, and consider how these ideas might challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
 - discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

Local RE network links

The RE co-ordinator regularly attends Central Bedfordshire RE network sessions for primary teachers organised by the local SACRE. These sessions are a useful source of new planning and ideas about the teaching of RE, which are disseminated to the rest of the team at Moggerhanger.

Implementation through Teaching and Learning

Early Years and Foundation Stage

RE in the Early Years may be taught through any of the six areas of learning ('Communication and language', 'Personal, social and emotional development', 'Understanding of the World', 'Expressive arts and design', 'Literacy' and 'Mathematics'). Children encounter local examples of religion, including Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it through the following activities:

- Taking part in festivals in the Christian calendar at St John's Church, Moggerhanger or in school, such as Harvest Festival, Advent, Christmas, Lent (Pancake Day) and Easter
- Activities to mark festivals, such as Diwali and Eid, of other religions
- Discussing religious festivals in relation to their own personal lives
- Listening to stories
- Role play activities

These activities are designed to teach four of the following units (framed as questions):

- Why is Christmas special for Christians?
- Why is Easter special for Christians?
- Being special: where do we belong?
- Which stories are specially valued and why?

Key Stage One

The local RE Agreed syllabus for Key Stage 1 provides for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should use basic subject-specific vocabulary, raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

The two-year rolling programme provides for pupils to be taught six topics a year (framed as key questions) as follows:

- What do Christians believe God is like?
- Why does Christmas matter to Christians? How and why do we celebrate special times?
- Who is a Muslim? What do they believe and how do they live? (double topic)
- Why does Easter matter to Christians?
- What makes some places significant? What makes some places sacred to believers?
- How and why do we celebrate significant times? What makes some celebrations sacred to believers?
- What can we learn from sacred books and stories?
- How do we show we care for others? Why does it matter?
- How do we show we care for the Earth? Why does it matter?
- Who is an inspiring person? What stories inspire Christian, Muslim and/or Jewish people?
- What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings?

Key Stage Two

The local RE Agreed syllabus for Key Stage 2 is designed for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. Pupils should be introduced to an extended range of sources and subject-specific vocabulary; and encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. Pupils should learn to express their own ideas in response to the material they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views.

The two-year rolling programme for Lower Key Stage 2 provides for pupils to be taught six topics a year (framed as key questions) as follows:

- Where, how and why do people worship?
- Why do some people think life is like a journey? How and why do people mark the significant events of life?
- What is the 'Trinity' and why is it important for Christians?
- What kind of world did Jesus want?
- Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?
- How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?
- How is faith expressed in Hindu communities and traditions?
- How is faith expressed in Sikh communities and traditions?
- How do festivals and worship show what matters to Muslims?

- For Christians, what was the impact of Pentecost?
- What are the deeper meanings of the festivals?
- How and why do people try to make the world a better place?

The two-year rolling programme for Upper Key Stage 2 provides for pupils to be taught six topics a year (framed as key questions) as follows:

- What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving?
- Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?
- Values: What matters most to Humanists and Christians?
- How and why do some people inspire others? Examples from religions
- How do Christians decide how to live? 'What would Jesus do?'
- What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people?
- What helps Hindu people as they try to be good?
- How is faith expressed in Islam?
- Justice and poverty: why does faith make a difference?
- What will make our community a more respectful place?
- Why do some people believe in God and some people not?
- How does faith enable resilience?

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

Spiritual development: The study of RE necessarily raises questions of spirituality and is also about the pupil's own search for identity, meaning and values by which to live.

Moral development: As pupils progress through the Key Stages, they are increasingly asked to consider and comment on moral questions and dilemmas as part of RE learning. They will be taught to consider how human values are often common and humane, but also often distinctive in the ways they are expressed and practised. As pupils learn they will develop their emerging moral awareness.

Social development: RE teaching encourages pupils to develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions. Teaching in RE will also encourage pupils to reflect on different social issues.

Cultural development: Through the study of different religions pupils will be encouraged to gain an understanding of and empathise with, people from different cultural backgrounds. They will learn about cultural and religious diversity in the area local to the school, throughout their RE learning and, in particular, through the UKS2 unit 'What will make our community a more respectful place?' and through opportunities to visit different places of worship in Moggerhanger and Bedford.

British Values

As a school we promote British values ensuring that our children leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. At Moggerhanger Primary we aim to promote British values through RE. British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and, especially, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, are important in the teaching of RE. The RE curriculum gives many opportunities for pupils to explore British Values. It connects religious values and the values of pupils, the school and the wider community. RE allows pupils to build an accurate

knowledge base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. This supports children to move beyond attitudes of tolerance towards increasing respect, so that they can celebrate diversity.

Cross-Curricular Links

English

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts used in RE lessons provide opportunities for developing reading comprehension skills. Children develop oracy through debating spiritual or moral issues within RE. They develop their writing ability through their written responses to different aspects of religion in the form of descriptions of religious beliefs and practices, and other forms of writing inspired by RE.

Computing

RE teaching uses computing when appropriate. Children use computing in RE mainly to research information using the internet.

Geography

RE teaching makes links with Geography when teaching about the origins of different faiths and present-day distribution across the globe of people practising different religions.

Art and Design

Art and Design is an important aspect of a pupil's response to RE teaching and an expression of their own thoughts and beliefs.

PSHE

PSHE and RE have some themes in common – both allow children to learn about themselves and to reflect on wider cultural and societal issues. Children learn the importance of respecting people from all parts of society, including different faiths and cultures.

Implementation through Assessment, Recording, Reporting and Monitoring

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in school. Children's progress should be monitored through observation and by using planning and learning objectives. Feedback to pupils should be provided on their attainment against the objectives of RE. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the school marking policy.

Opportunities for assessment will be identified when planning, having regard to end-of phase outcomes in the local Agreed RE Syllabus, and progress is measured against the learning intention. Children will have regular teacher assessment through observation of independent and adult led work. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect upon their own work as individuals and in class groups through self-assessment where appropriate.

RE will be monitored throughout the school by the RE Co-ordinator who will be responsible for gathering samples of curriculum work. The RE Co-ordinator will also monitor RE books and schemes of work to ensure that the local Agreed Syllabus is being effectively taught and matches the needs and abilities of the pupils. Lessons ideally will also be monitored to help promote quality of learning and standards of achievement in RE.

Implementation through inclusion, including meeting the needs of SEND pupils

In line with our Equality Policy we are committed to providing a teaching environment that promotes learning. Children are given opportunities to work with others, listen to each other and treat everyone with respect:

- We plan our classroom activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender and language background.
- We are aware of different learning styles and the need to allow pupils to be able to work in their preferred learning styles for some of the time.
- We use materials for teaching which avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability.
- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise.

At our school we teach RE to all children*, whatever their ability. RE forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the local Agreed RE Syllabus allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected outcomes. We use a range of strategies to support pupils. A few of these, particularly relevant to RE are:

- The use of appropriate vocabulary at varying levels of difficulty during lessons
- Modified text passages as expected in other curriculum areas
- Careful use of support for pupils with English as an additional language
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty
- Providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child
- Using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups

Parental right of withdrawal from RE*:

- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3)). This will be the parents' responsibility.
- Moggerhanger Primary School requests parents considering withdrawal to contact the head teacher to arrange a discussion.

Implementation through resources

The school's RE resources are stored in cupboards in classrooms. All staff may access them, but they are responsible for their prompt and orderly return. Any damaged equipment should be reported to the RE Co-ordinator as soon as possible. We all agree that the quality and availability of resources must be maintained and that children should value the school's equipment. As funding allows, the range of resources will be updated and extended as necessary.

Implementation through Professional Development and Training

The RE Co-ordinator will:

- Ensure that the delivery of RE meets the long-term plan
- Ensure the RE curriculum meets the aims and objectives of the school
- Support, guide and motivates teachers and other adults of the subjects
- Ensure colleagues are aware of current initiatives

- Evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning within the school
- Monitor progress towards targets for pupils and staff to inform future priorities and targets for the subject through:
 - Book scrutiny
 - Scrutiny of planning
 - Lesson Observations
 - Looking at displays and photographs
 - Discussions with staff
 - Analysis of assessments
- Review current practice in school, evaluating strengths and areas for development
- Lead staff meetings as appropriate
- Review and revise the RE policy
- Audit resources and order resources when needed
- Keep regular contact with Governors
- Attend relevant in-service training and prompt others about relevant training
- Represent the school in local cluster groups.