

## **River Primary School** **Religious Education Policy**

**Our school policies reflect our commitment to an inclusive, creative and exciting curriculum, based around high quality teaching and learning.**

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own. The teaching of religion and belief makes a unique and distinctive contribution to developing knowledge and understanding of how values and beliefs inspire people to actions, individually and collectively, helping pupils to make sense of the world whilst promoting acceptance and understanding. The teaching of RE provides opportunities for children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally by exploring fundamental questions about human life and also prepares pupils to become active and understanding members of their community.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4/the-national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4#programmes-of-study-and-attainment-targets>

### **CURRICULUM DRIVERS IN Religious Education**

**Collaboration** – Children are encouraged to communicate effectively and express themselves to work towards a common goal. They will have the opportunity to discuss some of the big questions encountered when learning about different belief systems. Throughout their study of RE children will have the opportunity to revisit religions, all the while building on their knowledge by working with their peers.

**Initiative** – Children are encouraged to independently analyse the ideas and concepts they encounter in different religions, relating them back to their own lives and experiences. Children are given the opportunity to investigate and develop their own ideas about what they believe, as well as having the chance articulate these beliefs.

**Diversity** – Children are encouraged to recognise how different groups of people can hold varying beliefs but still co-exist peacefully. The views of others may differ from individual to individual, but children are expected to understand that whilst we can challenge views and ideas, we must always respect those held by others. Children will always be given opportunities to reflect on the diversity around them and where they view themselves as both local and global citizens.

### **AIMS**

The Kent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils can:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.

- Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered, by some of the sources of wisdom<sup>2</sup> found in religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Explain, using reasoned arguments, their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.
  - Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.
  - Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.
  - Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
  - Clearly articulate beliefs, values and commitments in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

## **THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF RELIGION AND WORLDVIEW EDUCATION:**

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements that all children registered in state-funded schools in England are provided RE. Religious education is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'. Over each fortnight, 2 x 45minutes/one-hour sessions are required to be taught of RE. If a teacher prefers, RE can be taught in single weekly lessons or blocks to best suit the activity. The subject may be taught by a HLTA or teacher. While education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for all registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils unless they have been withdrawn by their parents from some or all the RE curriculum.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw pupils from Religion Education but this must be discussed with the class teacher, RE Coordinator and Head teacher. A class teacher cannot make the decision to allow a child/parent to withdraw from Religious Education. If the parent chooses to go ahead and withdraw their child from RE, this must be given to the school in writing by the parent. Staff should refer to the Kent Agreed Syllabus for information about speaking to parents and withdrawing pupils from RE and the issues surrounding this, including the negative implications, which must be highlighted to the parent (for example, missing lessons that may link to other subject areas, for example, Literacy lessons, which could have an impact on the pupil's progress and learning), as well as issues of discrimination. The withdrawal of a child from Religion Education should be the last resort as RE is an important part of learning and understanding about the world and community.

## **SUBJECT SKILLS**

As a school, our principal aim is to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding in RE by using a variety of teaching and learning styles in lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods,

group work and independent work, combining these with enquiry-based lessons to help achieve mastery. 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 studied in the Religious Education curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. As well as studying “Key Questions” within religious faiths, the children also compare the religious views of different faith groups. We recognize that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching to challenge of the task to the individual child. This supports each child in developing subject specific skills such as:

- Appropriately handling religious objects.
- Visiting places of worship – displaying respect and curiosity.
- Handling and assessing secondary sources such as books and photographs.
- Engaging with external visitors showing tolerance and respect.
- Using drama and thought tracking to act out religious events.
- Using resources from the internet and research skills to explore the “Big Questions” further.
- Having access to and use non-fiction books to research and discover more about religions and beliefs.
- Having opportunities to work independently or collaboratively to ask, as well as answer, spiritual, moral and cultural questions.
- Having regular opportunities to revisit and recall previously acquired knowledge and skills to improve memory.
- Having opportunities to celebrate different cultural events such as Easter and Eid.
- Taking part in open-ended tasks which allow the children to have a variety of responses.
- Taking part in structures debates to learn more about other people’s views, beliefs and opinions.

The progression document for RE highlights key vocabulary to be explicitly taught within each unit of work. Teachers model the use of this vocabulary within lessons and encourage children to use this vocabulary during whole class and paired discussion as well as when asking and answering the “Key Questions”. Each lesson begins with the teaching of new vocabulary and retrieval opportunities to review and revisit prior knowledge, skills and vocabulary taught.

## **SUBJECT CONTENT**

As directed in the Kent Agreed Syllabus, children at River Primary will learn about a broad range of religions and other views held by non-religious groups. Our subject overviews outline the skills and units covered each term for each year group from the Agreed Syllabus. These plans define what we will teach and ensure coverage of the Kent Agreed Syllabus curriculum. Teachers plan for opportunities to discuss different beliefs, explore religious objects, go on school trip to visit places of worship and complete extended writing within the subject, where deemed suitable.

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/curriculum-resources/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education>

As outlines in the Kent Agreed Syllabus, our RE curriculum is structured so that it:

- Offers a clear structure for learning so that it makes sense to pupils – units are based around the three strands of believing, expressing, living and each strand is broken down into ‘threads’

to support children in seeing the narrative of the curriculum and to build on their prior knowledge.

- Focuses on core concepts which are at the heart of religious and non-religious worldviews. These are explored from different perspectives to enrich understanding.
- Allows pupils to encounter diverse examples of religion and worldviews.
- Enables pupils to embed learning into their long-term memory.
- Encourages pupil's personal development, applying their learning to living. Children are taught to disagree respectfully, apply their learning and are supported to make connections between their learning and the world around them.

### **Foundation Stage:**

In foundation stage, children are taught using the key questions from the Kent Agreed Syllabus. These questions are linked to the children's wider learning goals. Each question is based around the children's direct surroundings and allows them to explore the questions using their environment and life experiences thus far. By using these key questions, the children are able to begin to see links between important people, places and stories and will begin to understand what it means to question and reflect on why these elements are important in their own lives.

### **Key stage 1**

People should develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognizing their local, national and global contexts. They should use basic subject specific vocabulary. They should 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. They will learn about special events and religious traditions in people's lives. Within each unit, children have opportunities to reflect on their experiences and learn about significant events and people within the focused faith.

#### **Pupils should be taught about:**

Our curriculum includes the themes Which stories, people and places are special and why in Year R.

Our curriculum includes the theme Christianity in Year 1.

Our Curriculum includes the themes Christianity and Judaism in Year 2.

### **Key stage 2**

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding of religious and worldviews, recognizing their local, national and global contexts. They will gain a deeper and more varied understanding of world faiths and their beliefs. They should be introduced to an extended range of sources and subject specific vocabulary. They should be 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.

#### **Pupils should be taught about:**

Our curriculum includes the themes Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam in Year 3.

Our curriculum includes the themes Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam in Year 4.

Our Curriculum includes the themes Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam in Year 5.

Our Curriculum includes the themes Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Humanism in Year 6.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

At River Primary School, we provide a daily act of collective worship for every child as required by Kent Agreed Syllabus. This may take the form of a whole-school or Key Stage assembly, class assembly or within PSHE lessons. Collective worship aims to develop pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally. Collective worship is about the growth of the person, their character and social outlook.

## **CROSS-CURRICULAR LEARNING**

Consistent with our curriculum aims, we identify learning by subject so children know when they are learning Religious Education. This ensures that the integrity of the subject is not degraded and children acquire the underlying knowledge needed to access the subject in later years, including the acquisition of specific subject vocabulary. Despite this, close links are made to other subjects and the children are encouraged to recognize and create links of their own. This enables children to see the relevance of their learning in different subjects. More detail can be found in our Curriculum Policy and on our school website [www.river.kent.sch.uk](http://www.river.kent.sch.uk).

## **Use of Key Questions**

The use of key questions at the beginning of RE lessons, is one of the ways we engage children with their learning; giving them an opportunity to make connections with their prior knowledge. At the end of a lesson, teachers will return to the key question, considering the improvements children have made with their responses.

## **Hinge Questions**

During RE lessons, hinge questions are planned at specific times to enable teachers to assess the pupils understanding and thinking at that point. Following this, the responses to the hinge question will guide the teacher's next step in the lesson – this may involve a recap or moving onto the next stage in the learning sequence.

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

Assessment of Religious Education at both KS1 and KS2 is based on teacher assessment. Pupils will be assessed and their progression recorded in line with the school's Assessment Policy. Teachers make judgements by assessing the answer to the inquiry question alongside the progress made against key learning objectives throughout the unit. Assessment will be undertaken in various forms, including the following:

- Talking to pupils and asking questions
- Discussing pupils' work with them
- Marking work against the key learning objectives
- Pupils' self-evaluation of their work
- Formative assessment, which is carried out informally throughout the year, enables teachers to identify pupils' understanding of subjects and inform their immediate lesson planning.

## **Reporting**

Teachers enter assessment data into the schools reporting system twice a year.

Parent consultations provide a formal opportunity to discuss both progress and attainment and parents also have the opportunity to have a look at the learning that children have been doing in

Religious Education, through their books. Pupil annual reports shared with parents in July, provide a formal report of attainment in RE.

### **Subject Specific Assessment**

In RE, children are assessed using a range of assessment techniques including fact retrieval and demonstration of recall/ knowledge, ongoing assessment against individual skills that would not easily be 'tested' at the end of each unit and assessment against a final piece, performance or presentation. As well as this, we do not set formal tests or examinations in RE. Children are given the opportunities to answer the "Key Questions" at the end of each unit through extended writing, discussions, reflective sheets filled out by children and exit tasks at the end of the topics. The progression document that details the expectations in each year group ensures that teachers are able to understand what has been taught previously, what they need to teach in their year group and what will be taught next and these can also be found on the Kent Agreed Scheme. It is also a tool for identifying any gaps in pupils' learning and skill which allows teachers to plan for this effectively.

## **EQUALITY IN THE CURRICULUM**

This means that our topics for study reflect the diverse population and that our curriculum supports social inclusion through promoting acceptance and appreciation of the similarities and differences of ourselves and of others. Our focus on diversity as a driver reflects our commitment to equality. Through valuing diversity, we learn to expect, respect and value difference in others. We aim for children to recognise and understand their responsibilities towards themselves and others.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**

We have a firm commitment to inclusion so that appropriate adjustments are made for children with special educational needs or disabilities. All children in school have an entitlement to a full education and we will modify and differentiate the curriculum to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.

### **Gifted and Talented Children**

We have a commitment to meeting the needs of all children, including those with an aptitude in one or more areas. It is our responsibility to maximise knowledge, skills, strengths and talents in all children, enabling them to extend and develop their potential. Gifted and talented children are recognised as having particular learning needs and the curriculum is extended in this subject through learning challenges to ensure that positive learning and progress is sustained.

## **Subject Leader Evaluation, overview of Assessment and Monitoring**

To ensure best practice, the subject leader has been involved in curriculum review and has worked with the teaching team to ensure that our current curriculum is well-designed to include all the required aspects of religious Education, whilst making it relevant to our children in our context. In taking this approach, we capitalise on the locality and learning from direct experiences as far as possible.

To evaluate the impact of the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning, the subject leader

works alongside the senior team to monitor standards of teaching and learning. This is achieved through evidence gathering such as: a structured approach to planning, lesson visits, conversations with teachers, conversations with children together with the outcomes of their learning.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_