

RE Policy (May 2023)



Moor First School

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of Moor First School at their meeting on:

Signed Chair of Governors

Signed Co-Headteacher

Signed Co-Headteacher

Signed Subject Leader

Next review May 2026

Rationale

'We live in an increasingly diverse society, religiously and culturally. Religious Education plays a special role in preparing pupils to flourish in this complex world. Educating pupils to live well in a culturally and religiously plural society means that they must learn how to navigate difference and diversity. This will often mean reflecting on views and behaviours that they have previously not encountered, and which may not correspond neatly with their own views and understandings of the world. Religious Education therefore not only enables pupils to build up a core basis of relevant knowledge and insights and supports them as they explore the 'big questions' about life and formulate and express their own views and values. It also challenges pupils to recognise and confront negative attitudes towards diversity, both in society at large and within themselves'

(SACRE Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus 2023)

Legal Requirements

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that:

'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- **promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.**
- **All state schools ... must teach religious education ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online'.**

(National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)

Purpose

At Moor First, we believe that it is important for all of our pupils to learn from and about religion, so that they can understand the world around them. The aim of Religious Education in our school is to help children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. To appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and behaviour, develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and culture development.

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way to reflect the overall aims, values and philosophy of the school. It plays an important role, along with all the other curriculum areas, particularly PSHE, in promoting social awareness and understanding our children. We encourage our pupils to ask questions about the worlds and to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences. We include and promote British values, ensuring that children are aware of the rights and responsibilities as UK citizens.

Our curriculum is designed to encourage creativity, imagination, enquiry, debate, discussion and independence.

Aims and objectives

Religious Education is an important part of the school curriculum and is taught relevant to the child's stage of development and experience. The overall aims should enable pupils to:

- **Develop conceptual understanding of religion, religious beliefs and practices** – in order that they can begin to engage in informed reflection and discussion about religions and religion.
- **Develop an informed appreciation of religions** – in order that they can explore religions with openness, interest and enjoyment.
- **Value religious and cultural diversity** – in order to enhance their social and cultural development and to contribute to a more just and civil society. ,
- **Create meaning from their knowledge and understanding of religions** – in order to enhance their spiritual and moral development.
- **Develop an awareness of the richness of religions and their contributions to society and culture** – in order that they can make increasingly mature judgements about the world in which they live.
- **Recognise commonality and difference within and between religions** – in order to develop respect, openness and curiosity.
- **Develop a sensitive understanding of the significance of religious commitment and practice in the lives of individuals** – in order that they might develop respect for individuals and their right to hold beliefs that are different from their own.
- **Foster sensitivity and respect towards other** – in order to play a responsible part in our community and wider world and make meaningful connections and contributions.

Objectives

- Children will learn about religions and religion – to ensure that religious education provides breadth and balance in both content and approaches to learning so that they become religiously literate.
- Children will learn from religions and religion – to ensure that they are able to:
 - a) Create meaning, find relevance and develop personally from their engagement with religious education;
 - b) Explore human experiences and questions by addressing values, ultimate questions and fundamental concerns about themselves and the world in which they live.
- We provide opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and ensure the planned progression built into the syllabus offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through school. KS2 builds upon KS1. In addition, certain skills and attitudes are encouraged eg learning to respect the skills of others, asking questions and listening to others, personal reflection on life and its values.

- Children with Special Educational Needs will access the RE study units at within their year group. The law says that the Agreed Syllabus is to be taught to SEND pupils 'as far as it is practical'.
- The teaching and learning strategies within RE lessons will vary to ensure that our curriculum is exciting and engaging. Learning in Religious Education takes place in many ways – through art, music, reflection, stories, computing, writing, drama, artefacts and being outdoors.
- Teachers should ensure that their children have opportunities to encounter religions, faith and commitment through visits and visitors.
- Gifted and talented pupils will be offered differentiated opportunities, where appropriate, to extend their learning in order to reach their true potential.
- The children may use Ipads/laptops to research and present their work. This will require discernment in their use of sources.

Reflection Time (collective Worship)

Every day, children are given the opportunity to reflect meaningfully to develop their beliefs and values. This can be done a whole school or within individual classes. Different strategies are used to enable children to reflect for example, through music and poetry, stories, hymns, prayer, meditation, video clips, a moment of silence or writing down thoughts. Reflecting in this way can enhance children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness as well as helping them to understand their own thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Teaching and Learning

At Moor First we use the SACRE Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education as a basis for our curriculum. The syllabus seeks to achieve the vision through the following three specific themes.

EXPLORE- Exploring the issue or dimension, encountering the context, following up questions and establishing new knowledge concerning religion, belief and world views.

ENGAGE- Investigating the impact of beliefs and practices on lifestyles, attitudes and action and considering the ways in which beliefs, spiritual insights and ideas are expressed, engaging with fundamental questions to understand why people respond to life as they do.

REFLECT- Reflecting on equality and diversity, and on personal responses to these aspects to develop their own standpoints and self-understanding.

At Moor First, it has been agreed that having taken into account the requirements and guidelines presented in the Agreed Syllabus, the following religions have been selected for study:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hindu Dharma
- Sikhi may be used for comparison work

From the syllabus it is required that:-

In the Early Years the learning outcomes are referenced to Christianity and as appropriate to a range of other beliefs and cultures.

- Emerald – Christianity
- Garnet – Christianity and Islam
- Sapphire – Christianity, Islam and Hindu Dharma
- Amethyst – Christianity, Islam, Hindu Dharma and Sikhi

There are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of the children and the staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity and we value the links, which are and can be made between home, school and a faith community. We are extremely lucky that members of the local churches regularly visit our school to carry out assemblies. We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils. We promote teaching in Religious Education that stresses open enquiry and first-hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children.

Early Years Foundation Stage

It is important in the foundation stage to give children a broad, play based experience of RE in a range of contexts, including outdoor play. Early years learning environments should feature RE scenarios based on experience in the real world, such as role play. We teach RE to all children in school, including those in reception class, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage

Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings, which are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity, enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three prime areas are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

The other four specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design

which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Contributions of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We encourage children to write stories or record information in a variety of ways and enhance our speaking and listening skills debate.

Computing

We use computing where appropriate in religious education. For example as a research tool or using text and graphics programmes to present their work in a different way.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through the our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour, so, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs (key stage 2) and health education. 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 Moor First, these are reinforced in the following ways: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.

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 cultural context of their own lives.

Assessment

Teachers assess the children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. We have clear expectations of what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of each key stage. We keep a record of children's skills in this subject which we discuss with parents during Parents Evenings and additional meetings/discussions that take place throughout the year. We report on PSHE to parents in the annual school report.

Inclusion (see our SEND policy)

We believe that all children have the right to access the RE curriculum. In order to ensure that children with special educational needs achieve to the best of their ability, it may be necessary to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for some pupils. We teach the RE curriculum to all children, whatever their ability. Through the teaching of RE 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. Where appropriate we may support SEND children in small groups or on a one to one basis.

Withdrawal

Where a request to withdraw pupils from RE is received, the school will ensure that discussions take place, and appropriate action is agreed

Link with other policies

- British value policy
- SRE, PE and Science Policies – link with Personal and Health Education strands.
- Behaviour Policy – links with Citizenship/Social Education.
- Equal Opportunities Policy – links with the Personal and Social Education strands.
- Health and Safety Policy – links with the Health Education strand.

Resources

RE resources are constantly being reviewed, changed and improved to ensure that children are receiving the most up to date information that will assist teachers and teaching assistants in delivering high quality RE sessions.

This will also support their class and group discussions and how they can link RE to other subject areas.

A range of resources is being collected to assist with supporting and enhancing learning in RE. RE documents and other published materials are used as a basis of teaching RE – these are modified and adapted as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching through work samples and discussion with pupils. By doing this they can evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the subject and indicate areas for further improvement.

The Subject Leader supports colleagues in their teaching of RE by giving them information and current developments in the subject and by providing strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed in three years or earlier if necessary.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of Moor First School is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Head Teacher for implementation.