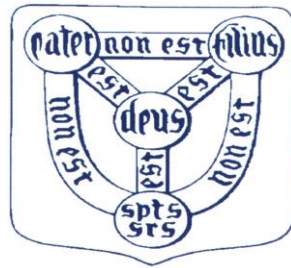


+Shellingford CE (A) Primary School

Headteacher: Miss Judith Terrell



"Inspiring hearts and minds"

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

The Nature of Religious Education

As a Church of England School, Religious Education (RE) is viewed as a highly valued subject and important element of the school's curriculum.

Our school vision focuses on '**Inspiring hearts and minds**' by nurturing '**Roots and foundation in love**' (*Ephesians 3:17*) in our teaching and learning.

Our four key values of **Creativity, Respect, Belonging and Spirituality** permeate our approach to others and to what we do in school.

The Christian ethos of our school is placed explicitly at the centre of Religious Education with an emphasis on Christianity whilst also teaching about other world religions, beliefs and practices. At Shellingford CE (A) Primary School we believe that RE encourages a reflective approach to life and we explore how different individuals and communities make sense of their lives through faith. We focus on developing an awareness and tolerant understanding of living in a multi-cultural society and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and affirm their own beliefs.

Religious Education also provides opportunities to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by helping them to reflect upon personal feelings, responses and relationships.

The purpose of teaching Religious Education is therefore two-fold: so that pupils can learn more about themselves and their place in the world; and so that they can learn about religions and world views which have influenced people and the development of different human cultures. Thus, our Religious Education provision aims to be both academically and personally challenging. We aim for children to move into secondary education with an aptitude for dialogue so that they can engage positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews.

At Shellingford CE (A) Primary School we are committed to providing Religious Education to all children from the Foundation Stage to Year Six, in accordance with its Trust Deed. The school ensures the provision of high-quality Religious Education reflects the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement (2019) for all pupils to receive a broad and balanced curriculum which, "Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and of society and prepares pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of life".

Following advice from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, we base our Religious Education teaching on the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2023), to enable teachers to plan an ambitious and coherent RE curriculum for our pupils. This has been approved by the Headteacher and Governing Body. The school follows the Oxford Diocese Board of Education (ODBE) RE Scheme of Work and 'Understanding Christianity' framework which supports the aims of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Our Aims for Religious Education teaching are to:

- Provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- Develop pupils knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views.
- Offer opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Enhance pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression as well as the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- Encourage children to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs, and searching for meaning and purpose in life.
- Challenge pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief and ethics, and to communicate their responses.
- Encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, and enable them to flourish individually within their communities, and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.
- Play an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning, enabling them to develop respect and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- Promote discernment enabling pupils to combat prejudice.

The Curriculum

All pupils will learn about Christianity and other world faiths in a course in which Christianity will clearly predominate.

At Foundation Stage, the religious content is drawn primarily from Christianity, and then from other religions particularly those represented amongst the pupils.

As well as Christianity, aspects of Judaism and Sikhism will also be studied at Key Stage One, with the addition of Islam and Hinduism at Key Stage Two:

- EYFS will cover Sikhism
- KS1 will cover Judaism and Sikhism
- Lower KS2 will cover Hinduism and Judaism
- Upper KS2 will cover Islam and Sikhism

Religious Education will be non-denominational although teaching about denominational differences is permitted.

Our Whole School Curriculum Overview maps out the 'Big Questions' (units of work) which are taught each term for each Key Stage. These units are taken from the Oxford Diocese Board of Education (ODBE) 'RE Scheme of Work' and from the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. These resources comply with the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2023) and reflect an enquiry-based approach to RE whereby encouraging pupils to develop curiosity, make connections, build knowledge progressively and engage with thinking about various religions and non-religious worldviews from their perspectives.

These frameworks not only give pupils opportunities to learn about different beliefs and what people believe, but also provide insight into ways of living and lifestyles, sharing faith and expressions of faith.

The ODBE RE Scheme of Work focuses on three core strands:

- Beliefs and questions (theology)
- Community and identity (human and social science)
- Reality and truth (philosophy and ethics)

The Understanding Christianity framework is based on the following core concepts of Christian belief, as expressed in the Bible and lived out by Christians today:

God	Creation	Fall	People of God
Incarnation	Gospel	Salvation	Kingdom of God

These core concepts are revisited across the school in a spiral curriculum so that pupils build a deep understanding of the central elements Christianity.

Teaching and Learning

In our school, the teaching of Religious Education promotes learning across the curriculum in a number of areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key literacy skills and thinking skills, in subjects such as History and Geography, Art and PSHE. References and links are made across these subjects to provide a deep understanding and conceptual framework. Learning encourages the development of attitudes: self-awareness; respect for all; open-mindedness; appreciation and wonder.

Religious Education is taught weekly. Whole School RE 'Big Question' days are also planned to help pupils really engage in the subject matter and to be reflective for a longer period of time. These days are sometimes taught across Key Stages with both younger and older pupils working together.

Teachers plan activities which inspire and engage pupils and stimulate their curiosity. Pupils are encouraged to think creatively and raise, ponder and debate questions. Pupils work in a variety of ways including whole class discussions, in groups, pairs or as individuals.

In the Foundation Stage, much of the expression and reflection is achieved verbally and through the participation in relevant activities linked to Religious Education topics. As children progress throughout the school, they are expected to engage in discussion and debate and to record and defend their opinions about topics.

Resources

A range of resources, styles and techniques will be used as appropriate. Children are able to learn about Religious Education using a variety of books, artefacts and websites. Visits to places of worship and opportunities to see visitors from various faiths are also encouraged.

Assessment, Feedback and Reporting

Teachers use ongoing formative assessment to review the impact of teaching and learning. This assessment takes place in every lesson through questioning, observation, discussion or written work to ensure pupils are acquiring or developing the required knowledge. Pupils are often involved in self and peer assessment opportunities during activities to maximise their own awareness of their progress and beliefs. Throughout lessons, verbal feedback is given to

all pupils to inform them of their progress, address any misconceptions and to motivate them to become effective independent learners.

All pupils have an RE Learning Journal in which they record and reflect on their work. These are marked by teachers, however the most effective feedback is through dialogue with the pupil during the lesson rather than detailed written comments. Each class also has a Class RE Learning Journal which provides additional evidence of class and/or group work in the form of, for example, photographs, or collaborative written / pictorial activities.

Opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate what they have learnt about different religions and what they have learnt from their work at the end of each unit. Knowledge checks such as quizzes, 'cold' or 'hot' tasks may be used to ascertain specific gaps in learning. This also enables teachers to assess what the children have learnt so far and to challenge their thinking further. The Engage, Enquire, Evaluate and Reflect model within the Oxford Diocese Board of Education RE Scheme of Work encourages pupils to use higher order thinking skills that will impact on their learning. Pupils are assessed as working below or above the expected level at the end of each unit of work in a Class Record Sheet. The school uses 'Insight Tracking' as a summative assessment tool to monitor the progress and attainment of pupils three times a year. Parents have the opportunity to look at their child's RE Learning Journal at Parent-Teacher Interviews and progress is also reported to parents on their child's Annual Report.

Monitoring and Review

The RE Subject Leader monitors Religious Education during the course of each academic year by observing lessons, monitoring evidence in Pupil / Class Learning Journals and by carrying out Pupil Voice Surveys.

The impact of Religious Education is also monitored by the Governing Body in conjunction with the 'Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools' (SIAMS) Framework.

The Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their child/ren from all or part of the Religious Education lesson. Any concerns about the subject should be discussed with the class teacher and/or Headteacher. Parents who wish to withdraw their children must provide written notification to this effect. The aim of RE is not to convert pupils to a particular viewpoint or imply that all ethical standpoints are necessarily religious ones.

Written by: Judith Terrell (RE Subject Leader)

Date written: November 2023

Review Date: November 2026

Policy Agreed by the Governing Body on

Signed Chair of Governing Body

Signed Headteacher