

Religious Education Policy



WILLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rationale and Importance

“The ability to understand the faith or belief of individuals and communities, and how these may shape their culture and behaviour, is an invaluable asset for children in modern day Britain. Explaining religious and non-religious worldviews in an academic way allows young people to engage with the complexities of belief, avoid stereotyping and contribute to an informed debate”

Why RE Matters -The RE Council

‘Religious Instruction’. RE is now a different subject – it is open, broad and explores a range of religious and non-religious world views. It is an academic subject
NATRE

At Willington Primary School we believe that Religious Education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to explore difficult philosophical questions, develop an understanding of different religious beliefs and also encourage them to reflect on their own ideas and way of living.

RE helps children to combat prejudice, appreciate diversity in the local area and the wider world and promotes the integral values of tolerance and respect. In this way, the RE curriculum contributes towards establishing British values and aids children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

RE gives significant opportunities for our pupils to think about their own experiences, feelings, beliefs and values. As a result, RE is intellectually challenging, academically rigorous and personally enriching.

RE is provided for all pupils in our school as required by the Education Act 1996. It is taught according to the Durham Agreed Syllabus for RE which is the Statutory Order. In accordance with statutory orders^{1,2}, an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that 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. The RE we teach is non-denominational and not designed to urge a particular religion or belief on pupils. As such RE is open to all pupils from all religious traditions and non-religious worldviews. This Syllabus is designed to ensure that pupils learn about a range of religious and nonreligious worldviews throughout their school life.

The word ‘worldview’ refers to the philosophy of life or approach to life which structures how an individual understands truth and the nature of reality, the meaning and purpose of life and their own place in the world. A person’s worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments.

RE makes a significant contribution to our wider school aims and values.

In RE, our children learn about and encounter people from a wide variety of faiths and beliefs. They learn through a variety of teaching styles so that they become independent and resilient through a safe and challenging learning environment. As a result, children develop respect and tolerance for others and learn to embrace their own feelings in a nurturing environment.

¹ Education Act 1996, ² School Standards and Framework Act 1998

Organisation of RE

RE is taught by Class teachers and Teaching Assistants. All classes are taught RE throughout the year.

In Early Years Foundation Stage RE is taught through topics.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 individual teachers decide how to organise delivery of RE. Some teach RE in a lesson once a week. Others teach RE in 'blocks of time', for example, 3 afternoons over the half term. Christmas and Easter units are taught in this way and are brought together as a whole school focus. However, teachers organise their RE teaching, sufficient time is given to the teaching of RE to ensure the programmes of study are covered and pupils can make real progress.

Scheme of Work

Here at Willington Primary School we have planned Religious Education to ensure children can build up a picture of Christianity and some of the other principal faiths represented in Great Britain.

Children in Early Years Foundation Stage will be introduced to aspects of religions through topics about belonging, times of celebration and special objects, people and books. These topics will use examples from Christianity and other religions, as appropriate.

Throughout the rest of the primary phase pupils will build up an increasingly clear and detailed picture of:

- Christianity (taught throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2)
- Buddhism (Key Stage 1)
- Islam, Hinduism and Judaism (Key Stage 2).
- Diversity Units (taught throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2)
- Thematic Units (Key stage 2)

Children in each year group have the opportunity to build up their knowledge and understanding of Christmas and Easter in the Christian tradition by studying different aspects of these festivals each year.

The RE plan also enables pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of religion in the local area through:

- a study of the different religious communities which exist in the local area surrounding the school (including different Christian denominations)
- the study of northern saints (e.g. Aidan, Cuthbert, Bede, Hild) and their influence on the region.

Long Term Plan

| | Autumn Term | How and why is Christmas celebrated by Christians? | Spring Term | How and why is Easter celebrated by Christians? | Summer Term |
|------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| Nursery | Let's find out about Harvest. Let's find out about Divali. | Let's find out about the Christmas story. | Let's find out about the Bible. Let's hear some stories about Jesus (Jesus and Zacchaeus, Jesus calming the storm). | Let's find out about the Easter story. | Let's find out about Christian baptism. Let's find out about Raksha Bandhan. |
| Reception | Let's find out about Harvest in a church. Let's find out about Shabbat. | Let's find out about the Christmas story. Let's find out about Christmas celebrations in churches. | Let's find out about holy books (e.g. the Qur'an, the Torah, the Guru Granth Sahib). Let's hear some stories Jesus told (Lost Sheep, Lost Coin). | Let's find out about Easter celebrations in churches. | Let's find out about special buildings and worship there (e.g. mandir, church, synagogue, Buddhist Rupa). |

| | Autumn Term | How and why is Christmas celebrated by Christians? | Spring Term | How and why is Easter celebrated by Christians? | Summer Term |
|---------------|---|--|--|---|--|
| Year 1 | What can we learn about Christianity from visiting a church? What do Christians believe about God? | Why are gifts given at Christmas? | Why is Jesus special to Christians? | What is the Easter story? | What can we find out about Buddha? |
| Year 2 | Why is the Bible special to Christians? How do Buddhists show their beliefs? | How and why is light important at Christmas? | What does it mean to belong in Christianity? | How do Christians celebrate Easter? | What can we learn from the story of St Cuthbert? What can we learn about our local faith communities? |

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|---------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| Year 3 | How do Hindus worship? | How and why is Advent important to Christians? | What can we learn about Christian worship and beliefs by visiting churches? | What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday? | What do Hindus believe? |
| Year 4 | What do we know about the Bible and why is it important to Christians? | Why do Christians call Jesus the light of the world? | What do Christians believe about Jesus? | Why is Lent such an important period for Christians? | How and why do people show care for others? Why do people visit Durham Cathedral today? |
| Year 5 | Why is Moses important to Jewish people? Why do Jewish people go to the synagogue? | What are the themes of Christmas? | What do Christians believe about God? | Why is the Last Supper so important to Christians? | How are Jewish beliefs expressed in the home? Why do people use rituals today? |
| Year 6 | What can we learn about religious diversity in our area? What can we find out about a local Muslim community? | What do the gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus? | How and why do people care about the environment? | Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians? | So, what do we now know about Christianity? (exploration through the concepts) Statutory Bridging Unit |

Other core religions
 Christianity
 Whole school approach to Christmas/Easter

Diversity unit
 Thematic unit

Additional Information

In Religious Education, pupils have the opportunity to meet people from a wide range of beliefs and traditions and visit places of worship.

Here in Willington Primary School we organise visits to:

- Local churches
- Durham Cathedral
- Virtual visits

In addition, we are members of the resource centre which provides access to members from different religious and non-religious communities to visit school and talk to pupils in their RE lessons.

This engagement and encounter with religious and non-religious communities enables pupils to see the relevance of religious and non-religious beliefs for people today. It also actively promotes the fundamental British value of mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs.

Right of Withdrawal

In line with the Education Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children from some or all of Religious Education. The Headteacher will invite parents to discuss their concerns and issues. The school has a duty to supervise children at this time but not to provide alternative work or teaching.

Leadership and Monitoring of RE

Mrs Wallace is the RE Co-ordinator in school. She keeps abreast of any developments in RE, attends the local RE network (Durham) and attends RE courses and conferences on behalf of the school. She updates the Headteacher, governors and other members of staff of any matters arising in RE and provides some training and resources for staff. She is also responsible for the Long-Term Planning in RE in school. She monitors and evaluates RE provision by regularly checking planning, moderating RE books and talking to pupils.

February 2023