



**Richard de Clare
Community Academy**

Religious Education Policy

Reviewed:	Summer 2020
Next review date:	Summer 2023

Religious Education Policy

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of the school in relation to the teaching of religious education. The teaching may be implicit or explicit. The children will experience both methods during their time in the school. 'exploRE' is the agreed syllabus in Essex and forms the major part of the teaching of Religious Education in the school.

Aim 1

To learn about religion by developing

- An awareness of the aspects of human experience in which religion is rooted (implicit RE).
- An empathetic understanding of what it means to be religious and an appreciation of the implications of religious belief (explicit RE).

Aim 2

To learn from religion by developing

- The ability to reflect on and evaluate one's own beliefs, ideas, perceptions, values, attitudes and experiences.

N.B. We do not seek to use RE to convert.

How the RE curriculum is to be taught

RE is taught through each class's chosen topics. Children will have the opportunity to participate in a range of learning experiences:

- Accessing a variety of resources, e.g. books, videos, pictures, people, places, online pictures, videos/resources
- Listening to and discussing a range of stories including both explicitly religious stories and stories illustrating aspects of spiritual dimension of experience
- Expressing freely one's own ideas, opinions, beliefs and disbeliefs
- Exploring a range of means of creative expressions
- Exploring the means and use of religious artefacts
- Visiting places of worships
- Meeting religious believers
- Experiencing aspects of the natural world
- Being still and quietly reflecting
- Working collaboratively

At The Early Years Foundation Stage

Religious Education in the Early Years Foundation Stage starts from the children's own experience of life and religion. Children will have opportunities to develop skills that help them make sense of the world. Experiences are planned and support provided to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves and different cultures and traditions.

Children are able to participate in activities based on first hand experiences. There will be opportunities for play and learning that reflects the children's religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds. Planning should incorporate opportunities for children to develop an awareness of, explore and question religious and cultural differences.

The early learning goals in 'exploRE' link to those in the Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the form of Development Matters. They also link to Expected Outcomes in the statutory guidance for the Early Year Foundation Stage. Predominantly these relate to aspects of Personal, Social and Emotional Development and to Understanding the World.

At Key Stage 1

For implicit RE, key ideas will be introduced to the children related to the spiritual dimension of experience. Children will have opportunities to think and talk freely about these ideas.

For explicit RE, content will be from Christianity and other world religions. The Christian content is clearly prescribed but teachers can exercise choice in selecting specific subject matter related to other world religions.

Much of the explicit material takes the form of stories and learning about festivals. Children are introduced to a rich and varied range of stories and festivals which they will explore at their own level through discussion, drama and art work etc. The emphasis will be on the story or the festival itself, not on the religious content.

In 'exploRE' the programme of study for Key Stage 1 is categorised according to six areas of individual and shared human experience. These are:

1. Special People
2. Special places
3. Special words and stories
4. Special things in nature
5. Special symbols and objects
6. Special ways of living

In Year 1, each of the six study units will be explored in relation to the home.

In Year 2, each of the six study units will be explored in relation to the local community (in UK and other countries).

As learning opportunities are planned through a class topic, teachers will reference links to these programmes of study.

Secular perspectives

As well as learning about religious beliefs, it is also important for children to understand that for many people, the most satisfactory answers to the 'big questions' are not found in religion. Although secular perspectives are not included in the programme of study in Key Stage 1, teachers will need to take opportunities as they arise naturally through the material being explored to make the children aware of secular points of view.

Key learning experiences

The agreed syllabus notes a number of key learning experiences which should be regarded as entitlements for all children at Key Stage 1:

Opportunities should be provided for children to:

- Visit places of worship, focusing on symbols and feelings.
- Listen and respond to visitors from local faith communities.
- Use their senses and have times of quiet reflection.
- Use art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination.
- Share their own beliefs, ideas and values and talk about their feelings and experiences.
- Begin to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community.

Time Allocation for Religious Education in Key Stage 1

In order to cover the content specified in the programme of study for Key Stage 1 in a meaningful way, the equivalent of at least 40 minutes of curriculum time per week should be devoted to R.E.

At Key Stage 2

In 'explORE' the programme of study for Key Stage 2 states that children should be taught about the following:

- Christianity
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Humanism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

Children learn about the impact of religion and belief on individuals and society locally, nationally and globally.

The school's curriculum map sets out when each of these religions will be taught in Key Stage 2.

Learning from religion

R.E. is not solely concerned with the transmission of information about beliefs and practices but must help children to open their personal awareness to those aspects of experience that are recognised by religious people as the root of religion. In order for R.E. to be made relevant and meaningful to children, it needs to connect with aspects of their own and other people's experiences that may be termed 'spiritual', such as:

- The sense of mystery underlying existence
- Feelings of love and connectedness with other people
- A sense of awe and wonder and beauty
- The search for meaning, purpose and fulfilment
- Concerns about right and wrong and justice and fairness
- Awareness of goodness
- Awareness of suffering
- The big questions that we ask about life and death, including the question 'Why'?

Key learning experiences

The agreed syllabus notes a number of key learning experiences which should be regarded as entitlements for all children at Key Stage 2:

Opportunities should be provided for children to:

- Encounter religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community.
- Consider why people have religious beliefs and why some reject religion.
- Engage in personal reflection and response.
- Discuss religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others.
- Engage in extended writing.
- Express and communicate their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT.
- Develop the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing awareness of religions and beliefs globally.
- Consider how religion is portrayed in the media and society, recognising stereotypes and misrepresentation.

Time Allocation for Religious Education in Key Stage 2

In order to cover the content specified in the programme of study for Key Stage 1 in a meaningful way, the equivalent of at least 50 minutes of curriculum time per week should be devoted to R.E.

Assessment

Assessment opportunities will be incorporated into the short term planning for RE. They may be oral (e.g. discussion, questioning, presentations, role play, drama, debate) or written (e.g. stories, reports, diagrams, descriptions, labels). At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils are assessed against the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage Profile. Observations are based on children's responses to stories and role play. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, children are assessed in relation to the attainment targets for RE in Essex (page 100 in *exploRE*).

Reporting to Parents

Reports issued in the summer term will have a written assessment relating to each child's attitudes and understanding of the subject.

Equal Opportunities

All children are entitled to have access to a curriculum, irrespective of gender, ethnic background, age, starting point or disability. The materials that are used reflect a multi-

cultural society and the contribution of different men, women and races to the subject are acknowledged.

Withdrawal

Every parent has the right to request the withdrawal of his or her child from Religious Education. A parent who wishes to do so must inform the Head of School, who will discuss with the parent whether the child is to be physically withdrawn or to be present but excused from taking part in Religious Education.

The Head of School and the class teacher will make arrangements for supervision of any child physically withdrawn from Religious Education.

Staff members also have the right to be excused from Religious Education, either physically or to be present but excused actual teaching of Religious Education.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school and will be reviewed by the staff, Head of School and the Governing Body as part of the school Development Plan.

Review date: Summer 2023