



Religious Education Policy

Alexandra Infants' School
Coordinator: Mrs J Farrer

Alexandra Junior School
Coordinator: Mrs S Wilton

Introduction

At Alexandra Infants' and Junior School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially Islam, Judaism and faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

At Alexandra Infants' and Junior School, Religious Education plays an important part, in association with other subjects, in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Both schools follow the new agreed Stoke on Trent Syllabus for Religious Education 2021-2026 alongside using resources from Understanding Christianity. Both schemes of work are from RE Today Services. Within the syllabus is states, 'The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.' (Stoke on Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026, Page 7)

The aims of RE

The principal aims for religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principle aim. The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs
2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs
3. Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied

The aims can be found in detail on Page 8 of the Stoke on Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026

Teaching and Learning Style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. 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 and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Eid-ul-Fitr, Diwali and Passover to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by adapting the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.
- The use of stories in EYFS and KS1 is of prime importance.
- Allowing the children to work in a range of ways i.e. group work, class discussions, class drama activities, visits to places of worship, visiting speakers.

RE is taught for a minimum of one hour a week, each half term or term a learning question is set and explored. See Long Term Plan or Implementation and

Intent documents for more information. These can be found on each school's retrospective websites.

RE in the Foundation Stage

Children in the foundation stage are taught RE in accordance with the Stoke-On-Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026. In Reception, they have 6 key questions to cover over the year - 3 of which are systematic units with a focus on Christianity and 3 that are thematic units.

The 6 questions covered in Reception are:

- F1 - Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?
- F2 - Why is Christmas special for Christians?
- F3 - Why is Easter special for Christians?
- F4 - Being special: Where do we belong?
- F5 - Which places are special and why?
- F6 - Which stories are special and why?

The five areas of learning within the Early Learning Goals Framework, which most closely relate to RE are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Planning

We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with the Stoke-on-Trent's LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

In KS1, we carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases - a long term plan, a unit overview and a flipchart plan for the delivery of the session. The long-term plan has been created by the subject lead which outlines which units

are to be taught in each year group and in which term. The unit overview provides the learning intention questions for the unit alongside a vocabulary planner, which is taken from the syllabus or from the scheme Understanding Christianity. The class teacher then uses this and the accompanying resources to create lesson flipcharts for each week. The flipchart planning must clearly show the lesson question and accompanying success criteria. Flipcharts must include; a can you still, guided discussion, guided/independent practice and a plenary. All work completed in the lesson is put into the RE floor book which shows the structure of the lesson, pupil voice and an example of the activity. In EYFS, activities will be discussion led and activities will be set up in continuous provision linked to the weekly learning intention. Any evidence or observations will be uploaded on to DCPRO under the EYFS framework objectives.

In KS2, we carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan has been provided by the Coordinator which outlines the units to be taught throughout the year (flexibility is given to allow units to be swapped as long as every unit is taught)

The medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term can be found in each classroom and are taken from the Agreed syllabus.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. They keep these individual plans and may discuss them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Assessment

In EYFS, any RE work that takes place will be recorded on DCPRO through observations or within the tracking books. Discussion is a key part of assessment within the foundation stage, children's responses will also be recorded.

In KS1, formative assessment is carried out throughout the lessons with children's responses being noted down on a class success criteria comment sheet which is then highlighted at the end of the lesson in accordance to the success criteria. All work is kept and class discussions are recorded on IWB which are

printed and put into the floor book. The assessment sheets from each lesson are used when completing an excel tracker for the end of each unit.

In KS2, the children are continuously assessed before, during and after the lessons. After each lesson, the children will be assessed using an 'I can' statement. For each lesson, there will be a knowledge learning objective and a skill learning objective. This will be shown on the appropriate page in the floor book. The children will be RAG rated on how they have achieved the particular knowledge or skill they have been working on. Green will show that the child has achieved ARE within that lesson. If the name is not coloured, then that means that they are not working at ARE. The word 'absent' will be put next to the name if the child was away during the lesson. This assessment will inform a teacher's judgement as to whether they are age related at the end of the unit. Any of the 5Es that are relevant to the lesson will be noted next to the learning objective on the 'I can' statement.

At the end of a unit, the teacher will fill in an assessment grid which will assess the children based on the outcomes from the entire unit. Retention of knowledge is supported and assessed through a range of mini quizzes revisited regularly.

Inclusion

The starting points for educating all pupils are the same: an acceptance of diversity, pupils' rights, and the knowledge that all pupils can learn if they receive good teaching. All pupils have a right to effective teaching and full participation in the community of a school as set out in international agreements (the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989) and education law in England (the Equality Act, 2010 and the Children and Families Act, 2014).

At Alexandra Infants' and Junior School it is our belief that all children have an equal right to a broad and balanced curriculum, which enables them to meet their full potential. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that are ambitious for all and enable all pupils to make good progress.

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils in RE. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

(For further details, see separate policies)

Teachers will plan lessons so pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study RE, and ensure that barriers to learning are reduced through adaptations as part of high-quality teaching. Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in RE.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

As a school we strive to ensure that all children, staff and members of our school community are treated fairly and equally. All children have equal rights to access all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and disability. Within this subject area, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff endeavour to provide the appropriate provision for this to occur. This policy follows the guidelines and practices that are stated and outlined in Alexandra Infants' and Junior Schools Equality Scheme. Please see this policy for further detail.

This policy will be reviewed annually.