RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Vision:

We are committed to quality teaching and learning in a positive and compassionate Christian environment, where everyone is valued as an individual.

We expect everyone to, 'Treat others as you want them to treat you.' (Matthew 7:12).

We have high expectations of all, and strive to provide a safe, challenging and stimulating environment where everyone can flourish spiritually.

Values:

To create and develop learners who demonstrate:

- Respect – by learning about the customs and beliefs in a variety of different religions, to understand why people have a faith and be welcoming of differences and similarities.
- Compassion – through discussing the big and complex questions that religions address, demonstrating empathy and understanding when listening to diverse viewpoints that may differ from one's own.
- Creation – by using our understanding of God's creation to learn about and protect our local, national and global environment.
- Perseverance – by understanding stories from different religions to show how figures from different faiths demonstrate strength and determination.
- Service – by thinking about how we can use our knowledge and understanding of other religions to help others in our local community and beyond.

At Willaston CE Primary School we aim;

- To teach an informed and respectful understanding of a range of worldviews
- To develop children's spiritual development by providing a safe environment where discussion and reflection are encouraged and thus cultivate reasoned, considerate and thoughtful self-expression.

- To develop awareness of the fundamental questions of life and respond to these in the light of their experience, beliefs and values.
- To enable children to explore their own and others' religious, spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions critically and responsibly.
- To inspire children to become courageous advocates, who care about social action and use creative ways to promote change for the better.
- To stimulate the children's curiosity and develop a sense of awe through artefacts, visits and visitors.
- To encourage children to relate what they have learnt in religious education lessons to the wider world around them, promoting respect, compassion and aspire to tolerance.

Introduction

At Willaston Church of England Primary School, we recognise the need for pupils to understand and learn about Christianity and the belief systems, practices and cultures of other world faiths including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. As a school, we value all opportunities on offer to us, through the curriculum, to learn about other cultures, religions, communities and people.

We believe that our children should be knowledgeable about Christianity, build confidence about their own beliefs and to develop a respect and understanding of those with different beliefs, including those represented in our own school community. Children will be offered opportunities to apply the knowledge learned from the study of the above mentioned faiths to different spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues – discussing various viewpoints, demonstrating sensitivity to, and respect of, different beliefs, cultures and people.

Legal Requirements

The requirements of the Education Act (1996) are that religious education must be provided for all registered pupils in accordance with the local agreed syllabus and that every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking into account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Britain.
By law all maintained schools (including controlled schools) are required to teach Religious Education according to the locally agreed syllabus. The teaching of
Religious Education therefore follows the Cheshire West and Chester Agreed Syllabus which has been adapted to incorporate the scheme of work provided by the Diocese of Chester.

Intent of the RE Curriculum in Cheshire West and Chester

Through the teaching of Religious Education (RE), children learn the essential knowledge of other worldviews, as well as skills and attitudes such as critical thinking and empathy. This understanding of others' worldviews is an essential first step to enabling each pupil to understand, reflect on and develop their own personal worldview, which is one of the core tasks of education.

Implementation

The teaching of RE at Willaston Church of England Primary School follows the Cheshire West and Chester Agreed Syllabus (2024).We use The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Religious Education Syllabus Questful and Understanding Christianity to supplement our teaching.

The requirements of the syllabus are that 5% of the curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Religious Education. In the main, Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject however, it does form part of cross-curricular teaching where appropriate. A variety of teaching approaches are used and mind-friendly strategies support teaching and learning as appropriate.

- During the Foundation stage children should be taught RE in addition to the requirements of the Early Learning Goals. It is expected that by the end of the summer term children will be moving towards the statutory requirements for Key Stage 1.
- Children in Key stage 1 should be taught RE for 36 hours per year - 50 minutes a week.
- Children in Key stage 2 should be taught RE for 45 hours per year - an hour a week.

The coverage of the religions year by year is set out below

Foundation Stage

- Christianity and others to meet EYFS requirements of understanding the world

Key stage one: Year one and year two (six terms)

- Christianity - two terms
- Judaism - one term
- Islam - one term
- Humanism – 1/2 term
- Comparing world views- ½ term
- Free choice 1 term

Key stage two: Year three and year four (six terms)

- Christianity – two 1/2 terms
- Hindu Dharma - one term
- Judaism - ½ term
- Islam - ½ term

- Humanism – 1/2 term
- Free choice ½ term
- Comparing world views- ½ term

Key stage two: Year five and year six (six terms)

- Christianity – one 1/2 terms
- Islam - one terms
- Sikhism - one term
- Comparing world views on diversity- ½ term
- Comparing world views on science and belief- ½ term
- Free choice enquiry - one term

Teaching on non-religious world views (including Humanism) must be included in both key stages.

Experiences and Opportunities

Visiting places of worship and having visitors from a variety of faith groups in school provide invaluable learning opportunities and greatly enhance the R.E. curriculum. Pupils can gain a greater understanding of a religion by putting what has been learnt in the classroom into a vibrant and real life context. They provide opportunities for children to learn about belief from a believer. (Cheshire West and Chester syllabus guidance)

At Willaston, we provide a variety of opportunities for children to encounter religions and faiths for themselves. These include:

Foundation and Key Stage 1:

•visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings;
•listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities;
•using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination;
•using their senses and having times of quiet reflection; sharing their own beliefs, ideas and value and talking about their feelings and experiences;
•beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community;

Key Stage 2:

•encountering religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community; eg visits by the Harmony Project and taking the Easter Experience to the two local churches for parents and members of the community.
•discussing religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others;
•considering a range of human experiences and feelings;

•reflecting on their own and others insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning;
•expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT;
•developing the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing pupil's awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning in RE.
Teachers make assessments about children's progress using the essential knowledge and key questions found within the Cheshire West and Chester and Diocese of Chester planning. Assessment for Learning strategies are used to provide teachers with information on individual strengths and weaknesses in the subject, inform the planning of future work and to help children understand how to improve their learning.
Summative assessments are linked to specific objectives and take a variety of forms e.g. written responses, poetry, artistic activities, role plays, model making, etc.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement of full access to the Religious Education curriculum. This entitlement takes account of the physical, sensory, academic, emotional and learning needs of individual children in ways which acknowledge the value of their responses, contributions and achievements. We take account of their requirements and make provision where necessary to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to realise their full potential and participate effectively in Religious Education.

Differentiation

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

- teaching a lively, stimulating Religious Education curriculum;
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- grouping the children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- differentiating by dialogue/questioning;
- giving children the opportunity to explain their reasoning to each other to help them reach higher levels of understanding;
- 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.

Inclusion

All policies, schemes of work and curriculum related documents recognise the recommendations linked to the Human Rights Act 1998. All children will be supported, respected and treated fairly in the effort to ensure that all children achieve their full potential.

In teaching RE at Willaston, we aim to encourage children to:

- Honour all members of our school community;
- Celebrate differences within our school and society;
- Be nurtured in a community where they can grow in love and respect for others;
- Experience a community where children and adults of all races work and learn together in partnership.

Special Needs

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. Through a range of teaching styles, appropriate resources, differentiation, target setting, and full consideration of a child's special needs, teachers provide learning opportunities that are relevant and appropriately challenging.

Right of Withdrawal

By law (Education Act 1988) parents/carers may withdraw their children from RE if they wish. Here at Willaston our approach to the teaching of RE does not try to favour one religion over another, nor force religion onto children. It is therefore hoped that parents would not feel the need to withdraw their child/children from RE sessions on Religious/philosophical grounds. However, if such an issue arises, the school will respect the decision of the family and withdraw the child from such lessons. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal, but we would strongly encourage any parent/carer who wishes to do so to discuss their request with the Headteacher.

Resources

Religious Education Resource boxes containing artefacts, posters, books, resource packs and other topic materials for each faith group are stored in a designated area. Resources are regularly updated. Resources may also be obtained on a loan from Hoole C of E Primary School, Chester. The RE co-ordinator can obtain these resources upon request.

Health and Safety

Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example visits, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Monitoring

The Religious Education subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Approved by Governors, July 2025



Signed Chair of Governors