

SHEREDES PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

- **Reviewed and amended June 2023 in the light of the new Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2023-2028.**
- **Updated July 2024**

All page references relate to the Agreed Syllabus 2023 - 2028

INTRODUCTION

The Education Reform Act of 1996 (later the Education and Inspections Act 2006) requires that the curriculum for every maintained school includes provision for religious education for all pupils at the school. In County Schools, R.E. must be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus of the L.A. in which they are situated. An Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. (p.5).

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2023 - 2028) provides the basis for planning and delivering R.E. at Sheredes Primary.

Although the majority of Sheredes parents who declare a religious faith are Christian, nevertheless we have representatives of other major world faiths – at the time of review: Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. We welcome the diversity of experience of our pupils and appreciate the willingness of some (and their families) to share their experiences. Our overall aim in teaching R.E. is to ensure that our pupils develop as respectful and tolerant young people, reflecting on and developing their own beliefs and ways of living, whilst developing positive and respectful attitudes towards those of different faiths, beliefs and ways of living. (p.3, p.8). In teaching R.E. we enable pupils to become **religiously, theologically and philosophically literate** (p.7) so they can engage with life in an increasingly diverse society. It is not about telling pupils what religious views they should have but rather assists them in gaining shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints. It is not the responsibility of the school to nurture a child in a particular faith. We acknowledge that parents have the right to withdraw their children from receiving R.E. if they so wish, and that teachers may withdraw from teaching R.E. if they so wish. (p.29).

AIMS

We believe at this school that R.E. both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the R.E. curriculum. R.E. provokes the asking of challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Our aims in R.E. reflect our school aims, in particular:

To value and respect each child as an individual and to develop each child's understanding and regard for the rights and beliefs of others, and a concern for the environment and for the world they live in - such that they take their place in society in a considerate, well-mannered, informed, responsible, positive and active way.

Through R.E. as through all other subjects we aim:

To help children develop lively, imaginative, enquiring minds, the ability to question, argue rationally and problem solve, and the ability to become independent learners.

To develop a happy, caring, secure, organised and stimulating learning environment, that acts as a motivational force for all children, and to widen learning opportunities.

More specifically, our aims for R.E. reflect the aims of R.E. as set out in the Herts Agreed Syllabus 2023-2028 (p.8).

The curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of **sources of wisdom and their impact** whilst exploring **personal and critical responses**.

A. Sources of wisdom and their impact

All pupils should:

- know, understand and explore the significance and impact of sacred texts, other sources of wisdom and ways of expressing meaning
- express ideas and insights about the nature of beliefs, values and practices and their impact upon the identity of individuals and communities locally, nationally and globally
- recognise and explore similarities and differences which exist within and between religious and non-religious worldviews.

B. Personal and critical responses

All pupils should:

- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections, critical responses and connections to faith and belief, enquiring into philosophical, moral and ethical issues
- engage with the questions and responses offered by religions and worldviews concerning ultimate questions and human responsibility
- develop the skills required to engage with others in dialogue and to cooperate in society with respect and compassion.

We aim to build on the learning experiences that the children bring with them from home. We believe ours is a happy, caring school in which the beliefs and rights of each and every member of the school community is valued and respected by every other member. Our teaching of R.E. will help to constantly re-establish this principle.

OBJECTIVES

LEARNING

In R.E. we foster a reflective approach to learning by encouraging an open and honest enquiry, an awareness of prejudice, a growing self-understanding and respect for the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own.

R.E. promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including understanding of the Fundamental British Values (p.4).

It therefore contributes to the development of beliefs and values and to the school's 'Prevent' duty to combat extremism.

Central to R.E. are certain skills and processes. Children will be learning by:

1. Investigation; the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events and stories.
2. Questioning; developing curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world.
3. Empathy; developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, joy and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
4. Reflection; the ability to consider thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs of oneself and others.
5. Relating; linking significant features of religions, making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar.
6. Expression; the ability to identify and explain feelings about, and aspects of, religions.

TEACHING

Our teaching of R.E. seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

Our teaching seeks to enable the application and development of skills and the fostering of attitudes central to R.E. – See Learning.

R.E. teaching draws on the following:

1. Written and other resources; enabling children to investigate religions by using written and other resources.
2. Visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and to question/interview people who have faith, rather than the teacher.
3. Role play; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters.
4. Artefacts; being able to explore items that are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect.
5. Parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community.

Also R.E. will involve direct teaching; whole class, group, paired or individual activities and use of I.C.T. – see also organisation.

The teaching of R.E. also encourages the development of the key skills of communication, I.C.T., working with others, improving own learning and performance and thinking skills.

REMOTE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROVISION

Just like our provision in school, we always endeavour to ensure that our remote provision is of a high quality and engaging for all our children. Similarly, we always look to continue to improve what we do, to ensure our pupils make the best possible progress. We teach the same curriculum remotely as we do in school wherever possible and appropriate. We have robust R.E. plans in every year group, with clear learning objectives and success criteria for every lesson, shared with children. Adaptations are made when teaching remotely is required, for example greater use of videos and external websites (such as RE Online - www.reonline.org.uk).

ORGANISATION

In R.E. children may be taught using a variety of groupings – e.g. whole class, group, individual, as appropriate to the learning objective.

PLANNING

Our school follows the recommendations of the Agreed Syllabus in that at KS1 approximately 30 hours per year is allocated to the teaching of R.E. (p.10) and at KS2 approximately 39 hours per year is allocated to the teaching of R.E. (p.10). In the Early Years Foundation Stage R.E. will be delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS Framework (p.10), and although the statutory requirement does not extend to Nursery classes, the curriculum in Nursery must

promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work may be blocked in a half term or may be taught on a regular weekly basis.

Our planning is based on the Agreed Syllabus. There are **eight key areas of learning** set out in the new programmes of study which aim to enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of **sources of wisdom and their impact** whilst exploring **personal and critical responses**. (p.8).

Developing religious, theological and philosophical literacy through religions and worldviews permeates all areas of the programmes of study. The following eight areas of R.E. may be taught in any order:

- Beliefs and practices
- Sources of wisdom
- Symbols and actions
- Prayer, worship and reflection
- Identity and belonging
- Ultimate questions
- Human responsibility and values
- Justice and fairness

All eight areas of the programmes of study must be visited across each key stage (p.13).

We plan for learning using our school Scheme of Work, which covers the study of the eight key areas over the Early Years Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and at KS1 Christianity is studied and the other major UK religions are introduced, as well as non-religious worldviews. The scheme is organised into themes at KS1. At KS2 Christianity is studied each year as well as one other major religion (two in Year 6), and comparisons made with non-religious worldviews.

The scheme is organised as follows:

Year 3 - Christianity and Sikhism

Year 4 – Christianity, Islam and Humanism

Year 5 – Christianity, Judaism and Humanism

Year 6 – Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Humanism

Approximately two to three hours is spent on the study of aspects of Christmas and Easter by each year group. (Emphasis is on differing aspects each year).

Our scheme of work aims to provide continuity and progression through content and concepts.

PRESENTATION

Children record their work in a variety of ways: written, pictorial, and symbolic, as well as verbal, for example in general topic folders, R.E. books or folders, through class assemblies, discussions and debates and in classroom displays.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING, REPORTING

Through our teaching using our scheme of work, pupils should develop a progressively broader and deeper understanding of religion over the eight years. Teachers plan for pupils to meet **expected learning outcomes** at the end of each key stage using the eight key areas of learning. Pupils' progress is tracked towards these end of key stage expectation statements. These statements provide the definition of a religiously, theologically and philosophically literate pupil at the end of each key stage (p.21 - 24).

'Religious literacy' focuses on the human experience of religion and belief and the development of skills for expressing these experiences. (p.20)

'Theological literacy' focuses on the big concepts upon which religions are founded, such as God, creation and the afterlife, and on the development of skills for expressing these concepts (p.20).

'Philosophical literacy' focuses on the concepts and arguments used to explore, express and respond to questions of meaning, purpose, knowledge and value and the development of skills to express these. (p.20)

Assessment goes hand in hand with learning and through activities such as discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, displaying work, asking and answering questions, observing, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements and are able to plan future work. Each pupil's achievements are recorded in his/her annual school report, together with brief descriptions of the learning contexts.

At Sheredes Primary, we formally assess at the end of each year; this forms part of our Annual Report to Parents.

RESOURCES

We are continually developing our resources

Staff Room

SHAP Calendar

Humanities Room
and Admin. Corridor

Artefacts for each of the six religions
Videos, fiction/reference books, ideas books for each of
six religions and non-religious worldviews

Central School Library/
ICT Suite

Selection of books under Dewey 200-299
Internet resources.

Online resources

TrueTube, a BAFTA award-winning website of free
short films focusing on RE, and PSHE & Citizenship

MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

The subject leader shall endeavour to:

- Keep abreast of developments in Religious Education and promote a positive image of that area.
- Keep staff up to date with developments in R.E. e.g. through staff meetings
- Identify the needs of the school in R.E. – prepare an annual review and action plan (short, medium and long term) for the Head and Governors – this will form part of the School Development Plan
- Organise and manage resources in R.E., having due regard to any health and safety requirements.
- With the Head, share responsibility for some delegated budget, matching expenditure to identified priorities.
- Take a lead in the formulation and in the writing of the school's policy and guidelines in R.E.
- Provide guidance and support to staff in implementing the policy and in their teaching of R.E. e.g. through discussion, by example, providing details of resources, recommending sources of advice including courses.
- Help the Head monitor the implementation of the R.E. policy and scheme of work.
- Help the Head review and evaluate the success of the policy and scheme of work in maintaining and raising standards of achievement across the school.

CROSS CURRICULAR ISSUES

Other curriculum subjects, including English, Art, and Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship use and reinforce the R.E. we teach, where appropriate. We aim to always provide equal opportunities for all pupils irrespective of gender, ability or disability, race, creed or culture.

RE teaching and learning can be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. Children's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

RE presents many opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development knowledge and awareness of Prevent, British values, keeping children safe and the diversity, equality and cohesion agendas, these are all essential contributing factors in providing outstanding RE teaching and learning for all children.