



**Barcombe Hamsey Iford and Kingston Plumpton  
Skylark Federation**

## **Religious Education Policy**

**Reviewed and approved by FGB:  
Next review: Autumn 2024**

## Religious Education Policy

### 1. Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. In the Skylark Federation, we seek to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of some 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. 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. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *about* religion (knowledge and understanding) and *from* religion (response, evaluation, application).

The aims of Religious Education provide children with the opportunity to:

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and of other principal religions (KS1 – Judaism, KS2 – all world religions covered in a rolling programme)
- Respond to the ideas, beliefs and feelings of Christianity and some other principal religions
- Explore what it means to have a faith
- Develop their sense of identity and belonging
- Nurture the spiritual development of pupils and their awareness of the mystery of life and faith
- Develop an awareness of how religious belief affects the values and behaviours of individuals and communities.
- Develop caring attitudes to the needs of other people and the created world.
- Reflect on, analyse and evaluate their own beliefs, values and practices
- Consider questions of meaning and purpose in life and explore fundamental questions of life in a religious context
- Develop empathy with people who hold different beliefs, values and traditions and respect and value those beliefs and practices

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- Make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues

The purpose of RE is not to urge religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own belief. It is not the same as collective worship which has its own special place within school life for church schools.

## **2. Principles of Learning and Teaching**

### **Curriculum Planning**

Our school policy and curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the foundation stage who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education lessons if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have met with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School and ideally given written notice to the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and school governors.

The Religious Education curriculum forms an important part of our schools' spiritual, moral, cultural and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Barcombe CE School and Iford and Kingston CE School are church controlled schools. The Religious Education curriculum for both church schools is determined by the governors who give due attention to our Trust Deed which states that religious instruction should be in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England. The RE scheme includes studies of Christianity and other major world religions as stand-alone units and cross-faith units as well as non-religious world views. It is based on Diocesan Guidelines, the Statement of Entitlement and the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus supported by resources from the Emmanuel Project. Hamsey School and Plumpton School are non-faith schools but must still follow the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus, and therefore the RE scheme of work for all Skylark schools is the same.

The schools' long term RE framework gives an overview of the subject and indicates the various faith-based questions covered. RE has three core elements: Making sense of beliefs; Making connections; Understanding the impact. Coverage of the syllabus is divided into termly units of work. Coverage of the syllabus is divided into termly units of work. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. The planned progression is built into the scheme of work where there is a developmental (whole school) approach to Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Life and Teaching of Jesus offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Our medium-term plans are based on the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus and give details of the coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, the knowledge, skills and understanding and the suggested learning objectives and teaching activities for each unit of work for each term. Medium term plans are regularly developing as practice informs future planning.

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The class teacher is responsible for planning lessons using Faith and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Agreed Syllabus) and The Emmanuel Project, and develops success criteria using these resources.

A range of teaching strategies are used including:

- Discussion
- Research
- Art work
- Educational visits
- Visitors representing different faiths
- Drama
- Written work
- Story telling
- Video

### **Adaptive Teaching**

We recognise the fact that all classes in our schools have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children.

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)

When teaching RE, we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the diverse and individual needs of children and that enable all children to access the RE curriculum and experiences.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We believe that all children irrespective of race, gender and ability should have equal access to RE. The RE syllabus recognises that pupils come to their learning in RE with different backgrounds in terms of knowledge and experience. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that RE is carefully planned and matched to the ability and conceptual levels of the children.

### **Foundation Stage**

RE is an integral part of the education programme for Early Years. The programme of study is developed from the Early Learning Goals for Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Personal, Social and Emotional Development, as well as Faith and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Key Skills Across the Curriculum**

#### **English**

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our schools by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, oracy (speaking and listening). Some of the texts that we

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use in English have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, thus promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability. Opportunities for longer pieces of writing in RE are encouraged when planning lessons for Key Stage 2 year groups where appropriate.

### **Computing**

We use technology where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use technology to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education in Years 5 and 6. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Links**

Through teaching religious education in our schools, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

## **3. Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

### **Assessment of Learning**

At the end of the Foundation Stage, the Profile records children's achievements.

In all other year groups, a summative comment and an indication of each child's achievement of the key skills is recorded in the annual report to parents.

For each full term, the children's attainment against the learning outcomes covered is recorded.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Teachers are required to report to parents on children's progress in RE but there is no legal requirement to report this in terms of attainment. However, RE is assessed full termly to further inform planning.

## **4. Subject Leadership**

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The RE subject leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring high standards of pupil achievement in RE
- Developing and implementing the RE scheme of work
- Monitoring and supporting teachers in the teaching of RE
- Ensuring staff are aware of new developments in RE
- Auditing, monitoring and purchasing of resources for RE
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the planning and delivery of RE
- Reporting to the Governing Body
- Reviewing and revising the RE Policy
- Supporting the school in providing evidence of inquiry question 6 of a SIAMS inspection.

### **Resources**

RE artefacts, posters, DVDs, videos, sets of Bibles, reference books and teachers' handbooks are located in the Curriculum Cupboard of each school in the Skylark Federation and are available to all members of staff. The Faith and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Resource is available to all staff, as is the Big Frieze. Units from the Emmanuel Project support planning of high-quality enquiry-based learning are available to staff. Staff are also encouraged to use a range of web-based resources.

**Reviewed:** December 2023

**Subject Leader:** Annie Clarry and Jennifer Ross