

# Policy for RE



## Introduction

This Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) has been created by the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus Conference. It is the legal basis for RE in Sandwell schools.

Since 1944, all schools have been required to teach RE to all pupils on roll (with the exception that parents have the right to withdraw their children from the subject). Therefore, along with English, Mathematics, Science, Information Technology and Secondary Citizenship, Religious Education is part of the Basic Curriculum.

The syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils, and specifies for teachers what shall be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE, and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject. As such, the Agreed Syllabus is parallel to the government's subject orders for the subjects of the National Curriculum.

Religious Education is an essential component of a broad and balanced education is a focal point in the curriculum for work on SMSCD and British Values. It enables the growth of religious literacy, essential for life in modern Britain and the wider world.

Religious Education is concerned with the deep meaning that individuals and groups make of their experiences and how this helps them give purpose to their lives. It provides opportunities to explore, make and respond to the meanings of those experiences in relation to the beliefs and experiences of others as well as to one's own experiences.

RE's place in the curriculum is underpinned by values and purposes. Along with the other subjects of the curriculum. In line with the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2024-2029 our R.E. aims are:

- To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
- To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the present and the future.

The following purpose statements underpin the syllabus, which is constructed to support pupils and teachers in fulfilling them:

- Religious Education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- In RE pupils learn about religions and beliefs in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions.
- They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.
- RE teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and beliefs, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities.
- It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can develop religious literacy and participate positively in our society, with its diverse religions and beliefs.

- Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

## Aims

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.

## **The threefold aim of RE**

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

### **1. Beliefs: Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:**

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
- explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
- recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation

### **2. Impact of beliefs: Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:**

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

### **3. Connections: Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:**

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
- challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:**

What does the legislation about RE in England say?

RE is for all pupils:

- Every pupil has a legal entitlement to religious education (RE).
- RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' (a current OFSTED focus) and must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).
- This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age (although there are many examples of good practice of RE in nursery classes).
- Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE 'as far as is practicable'.
- The 'basic' school curriculum includes the national curriculum, RE and relationships and sex education.

#### **RE is locally determined, not nationally:**

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority.
- Local authority maintained schools without a religious character must follow the locally agreed syllabus.
- Voluntary aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school, unless parents request the locally agreed syllabus. The Anglican Dioceses of Birmingham and Lichfield have been involved in developing this syllabus via SACREs. It is a good fit with the work of both VA and VC schools, especially as it includes Units which are complimentary to those from 'Understanding Christianity' ('UC') which Anglican schools are already using.
- Foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character must follow the locally agreed syllabus for all pupils, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.
- Religious Education is also compulsory in academies and free schools, as set out in their funding agreements. Academies may use the local agreed syllabus, or a different locally agreed syllabus (with permission of the SACRE concerned), or devise their own curriculum, in line with the law on RE. This agreed syllabus has been written to support academies in our local area to meet the requirements of their funding agreement. Academy use of the syllabus is warmly welcomed by SACRE, which has a concern for all the pupils in Sandwell.

#### **RE is multi-faith:**

- The RE curriculum drawn up by a SACRE, or used by an academy or free school 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.
- As education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for all registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils on the roll of every school, unless they have been withdrawn by their parents from RE.

#### **The right of withdrawal from RE**

This was first granted when the curriculum subject of RE was called 'religious instruction' and carried with it possible connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different

now - open, broad, exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, in the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own religious education. (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3)). This will be the parents' responsibility. However, it is good practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the broad minded aims and value of RE before they exercise this right. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. Schools should make a policy statement to parents about RE and its multi-faith nature on their website and at admission. It makes sense to include in this a policy statement about the inclusive nature of the subject.

### Range of Learning opportunities

- Part of planned curriculum time
- Through cross curricular links
- Through a combination of whole class, group and individual teaching
- Teacher presentations, role-play and story telling
- Question and answer sessions, discussions and debates.
- Investigating artefacts, photographs, paintings and other documents as sources of evidence.
- Computing- interactive white board and internet resources, CD ROMs, TV and other visual and audio resources.
- Topic and Artefact Boxes
- Visitors and visits to places of worship
- Special day or weeks such as multicultural week

### TIME FOR RE

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver Religious Education to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents. Schools must ensure that sufficient time is given in order to enable pupils to meet the expectations set out in this agreed syllabus, ensuring that the curriculum is coherent and shows progression, particularly across transitions between key stages.

There is no single correct way of making appropriate provision for RE as long as the outcomes are met. In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of 5 per cent of curriculum time for RE. This is set out in the table below, and based on the most recent national guidance.

<b>4-5s</b>	<b>36 hours of RE</b> (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
<b>5-7s:</b>	<b>36 hours of tuition per year</b> (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)

### RE is legally required for all pupils.

RE is a core subject of the curriculum for all pupils. RE is an entitlement for all pupils through their schooling.

### WHAT RELIGIONS ARE TO BE TAUGHT?

This agreed syllabus requires that all pupils developing understanding of Christianity in each key stage. In addition, across the ages range, pupils will develop understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law.

<b>4-5s Reception</b>	Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. Schools with lots of pupils who are Sikh, Muslim or Hindu will include learning from these religions
<b>5-7s Key Stage 1</b>	Christians, Sikhs and Muslims (an additional study of Hinduism where there are many Hindu pupils in a class)

With consideration of other religions and non-religious worldviews.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The EYFS describes the phase of a child's education to the end of the reception year, age 5. Religious Education is a statutory requirement for all registered pupils on the school roll - those in Reception. Religious Education is not compulsory for pupils in a nursery school or nursery class. National requirements for EYFS are reduced by the Department for Education in the year when this syllabus is published, but for RE the programme of learning described below applies to all schools.

During the EYFS children can begin to explore the world of religion in terms of stories, special people, books, times, places and objects, and visiting places of worship. Children listen to and talk about stories from the beginnings of religions and stories about religion today. They are introduced to simple specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect upon their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live. Play is a major way of learning.

Learning in RE requires a multi-sensory approach, providing opportunities for pupils to begin to learn and understand about, themselves, others (personal, social and emotional development) and the world (knowledge and understanding of the world) and to develop pupils' abilities to express themselves (communication, language and literature, creative development).

### **KS1**

#### **The focus for RE for 5-7 year olds**

**Learning about Religion (AT1):** During key stage 1, pupils will talk about beliefs about God and express their own ideas simply. They will encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They will begin to understand the importance and value of religion for believers. Pupils will begin to learn about Christianity, Sikhism, Islam and Humanism the principal religions and non-religious represented in Sandwell. They will be able to use simple information about religion and non-religious views, recognising that ideas are communicated in a variety of ways with respect to all.

**Learning from Religion (AT2):** In the context of learning about religion and non-religious views, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging, pupils will ask relevant questions, showing that they are developing an enquiring approach to faith/beliefs and life and a sense of wonder at the world. They will be able to talk simply about what is important to them, valuing themselves.

## **Key Stage 1 Breadth of study**

During the key stage pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through the following religions, areas of study, experiences and opportunities:

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These general outcomes are related to specific content within the key question outlines / units of study. There are many good cross curricular links through which RE can be enhanced, with for example, art, music, history, geography, English and PSHE. These are encouraged by this syllabus but never at the expense of the aims and outcomes of RE. Schools should choose twelve of these units to study.

The thirteen units of study provided for schools are:

1. What do Christians believe God is like? (Christians)
  2. Why does Christmas matter to Christians? How + why do we celebrate special times? (Christians)
  3. Who celebrates what? How and Where? Celebrations that matter in Sandwell (Christian, Muslim, Sikh)
  4. Beginning to Learn Sikhi: Part A. Stories of the Sikh Gurus.
  5. Beginning to Learn Sikhi: Part B. The Gurdwara, a place to belong.
  6. Why does Easter matter to Christians? (Christians)
  7. Beginning to learn Islam: What can we learn from stories of the Prophet? (Muslims)
  8. Beginning to learn Islam: What can we learn from Muslims in Sandwell? (Muslims)
  9. Holy places: where and how do Christians, Sikhs and Muslims worship?
  10. How and why are some books holy? Sacred words for Sikhs, Muslims and Christians.
  11. Who is an inspiring person? What stories inspire people from different religions?
  12. What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings? (Christians)
  13. Who are the Humanists and what is their way of life?
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## **Equal Opportunities**

Equal Opportunities All pupils, irrespective of ability, gender or ethnic origin are entitled to an education that will provide the opportunity for them to develop, to the best of their abilities, a competence in all aspects of R.E. Staff provide a variety of experiences / activities during a course of study and during a lesson, employing teaching methods and resources that allow all pupils to have equal access to R.E. and to experience success and enjoyment in their work.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Moat Farm Infant School is an inclusive school. We teach children, whatever their ability. RE forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to children. Through our teaching of RE we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the Sandwell Agreed RE syllabus levels allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - organisational, teaching materials, teaching styles and differentiation. This will enable some additional of different action to be taken to enable the child to learn more effectively.

Intervention through Wave 2 may lead to the creation of an IEP of children with special educational needs. This IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to RE.

## **Health and Safety**

Staff should ensure the correct and safe use of resources and complete a risk assessment where necessary.

## **Resources**

All year groups have access to a range of RE resources. Resources for foundation stage are kept in Early Years classrooms and resources for KS1 are kept in the school hall.

### **Role of the RE Co-ordinator**

The subject co-ordinator will;-

- Advise on plans, teaching and learning approaches, assessment and resources.
- Monitor progression and differentiation within the subject.
- Prepare and update documentation relevant to the teaching and learning of the subject.
- Organise, review, order and publish an inventory of resources.
- Ensure that staff are aware of new resources.
- Keep up to date with their own subject knowledge.

### **Assessment**

In early years children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (Understanding the world). This will be assessed by observations in child-initiated play and specific sessions. In KS1 children are assessed using the key skills (taken from the Sandwell Agreed syllabus for RE level descriptors). This will be updated termly. Assessments are gathered through discussions during learning, the work children produce and other RE activities across the curriculum. Teachers use the assessment for learning to inform future planning.

### **ICT**

All children have an opportunity to use some Geography programmes or websites throughout the year within class and during ICT.

Programmes on the tablets and computers are-

- Faiths and celebrations
- Purple mash

Useful websites-

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zxnygk7>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Interactive.aspx?cat=110>

<http://www.reonline.org.uk/>

<http://www.atschool.co.uk/keystage1-ks1/re.asp>

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/re/re.htm>

### **Monitoring**

The RE co-ordinator should monitor the mid-term planning to ensure that the National Curriculum is being followed and there is progression between the year groups. There will be monitoring of RE during selected times. Monitoring will involve scrutinising children's work, talking with children, observing teachers, overseeing planning and discussing/ evaluating these with colleagues.

### **Review date**

A schedule for the review of this, and all other, policy documents is set out in the School's Improvement

**RE co-ordinator:** Jessica O'Gara

**Date:** January 2025