



Religious Education Policy

SUMMARY

This policy outlines the school's approach to the teaching of Religious Education

POLICY OWNER

Robert Howell
Headteacher

DELEGATION

Community Engagement
Committee

DATE OF APPROVAL

January 2023

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW

January 2026

REVIEW CYCLE

Triennial

PUBLISHED ON WEBSITE

Yes

POLICY SOURCE

[The Key for School Leaders](#)



[Discovery RE](#)



Paper copies available by
emailing

admin@alfredsutton.reading.sch.uk

Alfred Sutton Primary School
148 Wokingham Road
Reading
RG6 7BL

DFE No: 870/2000

www.alfredsutton.primary.co.uk

Introduction

Statutory requirements

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that: 'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. All state schools ... must teach religious education ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online'.

(National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)

Although there is not a National Curriculum for RE, all maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE. The RE curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Agreed Syllabuses used in schools (maintained or academy), which are not designated with a religious character must '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'. Schools with a religious designation may prioritise one religion in their RE curriculum, but all schools must recognise diverse religions and systems of belief in the UK both locally and nationally.

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.

Religious Education links to our school ethos which is:

"Happy together. Achieving together."

'Intelligence plus character-that is the goal of true education,' (Martin Luther King, Jr)

Our values – the Sutton Six and British Values – are taught and reinforced across all aspects of our provision, enabling us to uphold our ethos.

Happy together

School values underpin and enable our provision for personal development intent: to make positive choices helping ourselves and others.

From Early Years to year 6 staff, working in partnership with families, seek to provide a safe learning culture that will equip pupils emotionally and socially to be positive contributors and lead healthy, happy fulfilled lives.

We ensure pupils inclusively:

- Demonstrate age appropriate positive choices
- Engage in innovative, immersive learning experiences which systematically celebrate, develop and promote good character.

'It takes a whole village to raise a child,' (African Proverb)

Achieving together

School values also underpin and enable our national curriculum provision for academic development intent: to do our best and be proud of the results.

Working in partnership with families, we seek to provide a safe learning culture that will equip pupils academically to be positive contributors and lead healthy, happy fulfilled lives.

We ensure pupils inclusively:

- Master age appropriate English and maths, enabling full, inclusive curriculum access
- Engage in innovative, immersive learning experiences which systematically build real-world-applicable knowledge and skills

'Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere,' (Chinese proverb)

At Alfred Sutton Primary School we use the Discovery RE programme as our scheme of work.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
- RE: realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-educationrealising-potential)
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)
- Research Review Series: Religious Education (Ofsted May 2021)

The aims of our RE, using the Discovery RE Scheme of Work

Discovery RE meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non- statutory guidance described above.

By following Discovery RE at Alfred Sutton Primary School we intend that Religious Education will: -

- **adopt an enquiry- based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion
- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development

- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion
- **develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery**
- **nurture children's own spiritual development**

Discovery RE Content

Discovery RE covers all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion is taught in each year group. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group.

Foundation Stage 1/2:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied:
What makes people special?	Christianity, Judaism
What is Christmas	Christianity
How do people celebrate?	Islam/Judaism
What is Easter?	Hinduism
What can we learn from stories?	Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism
What makes people special?	Christianity, Islam, Judaism.

Year 1:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied:
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem?	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity

Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children?	Judaism

Year 2:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world?	Christianity
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life?	Islam
How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion?	Christianity
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim?	Islam

Year 3:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions Studied
Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?	Hinduism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
What is "good" about Good Friday?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Hinduism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu?	Hinduism

Year 4:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God?	Judaism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?	Judaism
Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	Christianity

What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

Year 5:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion?	Sikhism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
Are Sikh stories important today?	Sikhism
How significant is it for Christians to believe God intend Jesus to die?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Sikhism
What is the best way for Christian to show commitment to God?	Christianity

Year 6:

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother?	Christianity
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Christianity
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

How is RE organised in this school?

Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. We recognise that pupils need to learn subjects in sufficient depth so that they remember what they have learnt.

Learning is assessed at the end of each unit of work and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. As pupils' journey through a planned and well-sequenced curriculum in primary school, they will build different types of knowledge as they 'know more and remember more'

of the planned curriculum. In line with the Discovery Re Scheme, the 3 strands that are assessed after each taught unit are:

- Personal resonance with or reflection on
 - The concept / belief underlying the subject matter of the enquiry.
 - Child's own thoughts, opinions, belief, empathy.
- Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of that enquiry [subject knowledge]
- Skills of evaluation and critical thinking in relation to the big enquiry question.

RE is taught as part of the weekly timetable.

Differentiation/SEN

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. To further help teachers differentiate for children in KS1 and 2, each enquiry has exemplars for those children working towards the learning objective, at the expected level for this age group and those working beyond the expected level of achievement.

Assessment and Reporting

Teachers monitor pupils' progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in, informal, end of unit assessments that we have based on the assessment resources provided within the Discovery RE scheme. Teachers use evidence from the children's books, discussions with pupils and their own observations and make a judgement in all 3 aspects of learning, stating whether they are achieving below, at, or above the age-related expectation.

RE attainment is reported to parents termly for Key Stage 2 and at the end of the Summer term in Key Stage 1.

These 3 aspects assessed in RE are:

- Personal resonance with or reflection on
 - The concept / belief underlying the subject matter of the enquiry.
 - Child's own thoughts, opinions, belief, empathy.
- Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of that enquiry [subject knowledge]
- Skills of evaluation and critical thinking in relation to the big enquiry question.

In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) observational assessments are completed at the end of the reception year. As discreet subjects are not taught, RE comes under the 'Understanding the World' area of learning with focus on understanding people and community and people in the wider world. Children are assessed against the Early Years foundation stage profile.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school

External contributors

RE gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. The British Values agenda is intrinsic to Discovery RE and a map of coverage is available on request.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

Involving parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- * Response to RE comments on reports
- * Discussions with teachers / subject lead
- * Displays

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils, and respects their own personal beliefs. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.

The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents. The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, we will discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Curriculum Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- PSHE, including RSHE Policy
- Prevent Strategy

Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a regular basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated when appropriate in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed triennially.