

Religious Education

'For pupils to be able to understand our constantly changing world they need to be able to interpret religious issues and evaluate their significance. RE gives students valuable insights into the diverse beliefs and opinions held by people today. It helps with their own personal development and supports an understanding of the spiritual, moral, social & cultural questions that surface in their lives. In tackling difficult questions it provides pupils with insight that can work to challenge stereotypes, promote cohesion, and tackle extremism.

It is important for our children to learn to be respectful of both their own and other people's beliefs and cultures. This helps make schools & communities a fairer place for everybody, whatever their religion, culture, language or background.'

Why RE Matters -SACRE(Barnet)

'The ability to understand the faith or belief of individuals and communities, and how these may shape their culture and behaviour, is an invaluable asset for children in modern day Britain. Explaining religious and non-religious worldviews in an academic way allows young people to engage with the complexities of belief, avoid stereotyping and contribute to an informed debate'

Why RE Matters – The Religious Education Council of England and Wales 2020

How RE links to the ethos and values of Gainford

As a church school the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum .Links with the school vision and support for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have significant impact on learners .We provide a range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Gainford pupils can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied , enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views .We teach according to the Durham Agreed syllabus

Here education is about more than just academic achievement; it is about developing young people who can flourish in all areas of their lives developing the intellectual, spiritual, moral and physical attributes, becoming proud and respectful members of our community. Our deeply Christian ethos and foundation on Christian values are central to the experiences our children have each day as part of our whole school experience ,

Through our ethos and values we encourage our children to have respect and tolerance for others. Inclusiveness is a key Christian value of Gainford school . We also advocate and model friendship and kindness across the whole school from children to all adults. We all work together in partnership to celebrate the diverse cultures of our world and the

environment in which we live, encouraging our children to become active and responsible citizens who contribute positively to their community and society.

A Character Education for RE

Our school's vision 'Together we love learn and flourish' sits at the heart of our day to day practice. Our deeply Christian vision pervades throughout the school, in every child, in every adult; a loving and nurturing environment where children grow and flourish.

At Gainford we nurture and care for our school family adults and children alike. We work in partnership with all pupils and stakeholders promoting deeply Christian values. Within our pupils we plant seeds and nurture their development through school this includes within RE.

Our Character education equips young people to grow in wisdom, hope, community and dignity and is shaped by an understanding of God at work in the world, present and active in shaping each individual's developmental story. It is fundamental to the pursuit of academic excellence, and stands at the heart of all aspirational teaching, learning and pastoral care.

Our school has an important role in the fostering of good mental wellbeing among young people so that they can fulfil their potential at school and are well prepared for adult life. With our clear expectations on behaviour and well-planned provision for character and personal development we help promote good mental wellbeing and positive moral attributes.

We aim to enable our children to acquire social confidence and the ability to make points or arguments clearly and constructively, listen attentively to the views of others, behave with courtesy and good manners and speak persuasively to an audience through our character education.

Our vision for RE

RE contributes to pupils' education in our school through challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Pupils learn about religious and non-religious worldviews allowing them to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn skills to interpret, analyse, evaluate and critically respond to the views that religious and non-religious worldviews make. Pupils learn to express their insights and to agree or disagree respectfully. Teaching will enable pupils to appreciate that worldviews are complex, diverse and have influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.

RE provides opportunities for personal reflection and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as it encourages them to examine the significance of their learning in relation to themselves and others. It enables pupils to explore their own beliefs, ideas, feelings, experiences and values in the light of what they learn. Our Religious Education encourages empathy and respect and allows pupils to develop their own sense of identity and

belonging. It also promotes respect for the right of others to hold different beliefs, values and ideas.

RE at Gainford is further enhanced by Open the Book sessions, gifted to us by members of our local church, St Mary's in Gainford, school governors and school family members. This also helps to Grow Faith with home, school and church. These sessions actively involve pupils and bring Bible stories and the Christian message alive

How do we teach RE at Gainford ?

RE must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes and this is assumed to be approximately 5% of curriculum time. The recommended time for teaching RE in KS1 is approximately 36 hours per year and in KS2 is approximately 45 hours per year.

RE is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus (Durham), which is the statutory order.

Our teaching in RE will promote openness, respect for others and critical enquiry. It will be coherent and progressive, enabling pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews and their understanding of the complex and diverse nature of belief systems.

Enquiry questions are at the heart of our RE from Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6. They enable pupils to build on previous learning and deepen and broaden their understanding through systematic and thematic enquiries.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), RE may be taught as part of whole class topics or themes. In Key Stage 1 and 2 RE will usually be delivered in a weekly timetabled lesson; however it may also be taught as a whole day or afternoon or as a suspended timetable day in order to visit a place of religious significance.

Throughout RE pupils will build religious literacy through:

- developing knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious worldviews
- becoming increasingly able to respond to religious and non-religious worldviews in an informed and insightful way
- reflecting on their own ideas and the ideas of others.

In the Durham Agreed Syllabus there are three elements of RE:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Reflection

These elements are interlinked and enable pupils to make good progress in RE.

RE skills and knowledge taught for each year group

Pupils will:	Expectations by Age 7	Expectations by Age 9	Expectations by Age 11
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have simple knowledge of some of the beliefs, teaching / stories and practices of specific religions studied, using simple technical vocabulary • have simple knowledge of why these beliefs and practices may be important to people • have simple knowledge of some of the similarities and differences between and within the religious and non-religious worldviews they learn about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to describe some of the beliefs, teachings and expressions of beliefs within the religions studied and how these have an impact for individuals and communities • begin to form a framework of connections between these concepts by making some links between them • identify some patterns between or within religions and non-religious worldviews by comparing similarities and differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have more detailed knowledge and understanding of the concepts (beliefs, teachings, sources of authority, expressions of belief and the impact of beliefs on the lives of individuals and communities) across several religious and non-religious worldviews • have more detailed knowledge and understanding of how these concepts connect to form a framework for understanding religious and non-religious worldviews • have knowledge of the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews in the

			local, national and global context, and show understanding of similarities and differences between them.
Critical Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the material they learn about, pupils can raise questions, express their opinions and back them up with simple reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the material they learn about, pupils can raise questions, express their opinions and support these with plausible reasons. They recognise that others may think differently and have different opinions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the material they learn about, pupils can raise controversial questions, express their opinions and use sound reasons to back these up. Pupils show appreciation of different perspectives, recognising the reasons given to support these viewpoints (see both sides of an argument).

Durham Agreed Syllabus 2020

RE contribution to Reading

Within RE we will use a variety of sources which develop deeper understanding of beliefs and practices – this includes significant writings from religious and non-religious traditions, the authentic experiences of believers from a diverse range of religious and non-religious worldviews .We will consider the different types of written genres used in primary sources of wisdom e.g. the Torah, the Bible. We will read and use fiction to demonstrate and explore ideas, beliefs, values and theological concepts including children’s story books

In collaboration with the charitable organisation ‘The Children’s Bible Society’ all children from Year 2 upwards are gifted their own personal Bible and this is available for reading in lessons and when reading for pleasure .There are also a range of Bibles within our library area as well as books covering other religions and aspects of Religious Education area for teachers and pupils to access.

In RE we will give time for reading for meaning and decode and explain vocabulary, texts and passages so that all pupils grow confident in their reading ability.

Assessment

In RE it is important that pupils:

- make progress in knowing about and evaluating the beliefs and practices of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews
- know and understand the progress they are making in RE
- Know and understand what they need to do to make further progress
- are challenged by the enquiries, activities and tasks in which they are engaged
- achieve standards which match their expected capabilities (attainment and achievement). Good assessment will also help teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum, planning and teaching.

A range of methods can be used to assess pupils' progress. For example -

- Prepared speeches or presentations
- Vocabulary used
- Knowledge quizzes or test
- Extended writing
- Contributions in discussions and debates
- Teacher observations
- Practical activities /ordering , sequencing , retelling

The Benchmark Expectations should be used as the basis of planning and assessment.

Assessment goes hand in hand with curriculum design. An effective curriculum design enables continuity and progression and sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain across and throughout key stages and year groups. Curriculum planning should include assessment opportunities that will demonstrate this progression.

- Assessment opportunities should be based on the Benchmark Expectations in this Agreed Syllabus (with the exception of EYFS)
- Assessment in Religious Education is based on Knowledge and Understanding and/or Critical Thinking. Assessments should ensure both these elements are covered over the course of a year. Personal reflection will not be assessed.

Measuring impact

RE will help our pupils participate positively in our society with respect for its diverse religious and non-religious worldviews. It makes a significant contribution to the active promotion of

mutual respect and tolerance of others' faiths and beliefs and prepares our pupils for life in modern Britain.

It also has a vital role in contributing to SMSC and the promotion of British Values.

Impact of RE in our school is also evidenced in our 2019 SIAMS report