

GAINFORD C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL

Together we love, learn and flourish



RE Policy

Date Adopted by Governing Body	November 2022
Review Period	Annually
Next review Date	November 2023

At Gainford CE Primary School and Preschool Religious Education is an integral part of our school life

We are a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with a Christian foundation and, as such, Christianity forms the basis of all teaching in the school and how we treat each other. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and workable framework for the learning and teaching of RE and to establish a common purpose amongst staff and pupils, which may be clearly understood by parents, Governors, Diocese and external agencies.

At Gainford CE Primary pupils and their families 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.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide 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.

Philosophy

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness.

(John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.

Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

We live out our Christian Values in all that we do and our RE provision should promote and develop these values .

Aims and objectives

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Gainford CE Primary we develop the children's knowledge and understanding 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. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other religions and non-religious worldviews beyond the six principle religions, providing the foundation for pupils to know about and understand the diversity of beliefs and practices in the world in which we live. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.

- To develop deepening knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and nonreligious worldviews so that they can:
 - describe and explain beliefs and theological concepts
 - describe and explain some sources of authority and teachings within and across religious and non-religious traditions o describe and explain ways in which beliefs are expressed
 - know and understand the significance and impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, communities and societies - connect these together into a coherent framework of beliefs and practices

- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human and experience

- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.

- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

- gain and deploy deepening understanding of specialist vocabulary and terms

- know and understand about religious diversity within the region

- gain and deploy skills that enable critical thinking and enquiry in relation to the material they study • reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values and beliefs with increasing discernment

The teaching of RE underpins the aims of the school: we have a positive, caring ethos founded on Christian beliefs, where all children are valued and respected and encouraged to maximise their potential; every child matters and every success is celebrated; our children will leave us as good citizens, feeling fulfilled, challenged and inspired, and with a solid Christian foundation.

The legal position of Religious Education

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Teaching and learning Organisation

Allocation of time for RE recommended as the minimum entitlement is 36 hours for KS1 and 45 hours for KS2, which approximates to 5% of curriculum time, or roughly one hour per week. Religious Education contributes dynamically to pupils' education 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 religious and nonreligious worldviews in order to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to interpret, analyse, evaluate and critically respond to the claims that religious and non-religious worldviews make. Pupils learn to express their insights and to agree or disagree respectfully. At Gainford Religious Education offers opportunities for personal reflection and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as it encourages pupils to examine the significance of their learning in relation to themselves and others. It enables pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or not), ideas, feelings, experiences and values in the light of what they learn. Religious Education encourages empathy and respect. It enables 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. Religious Education at Gainford makes a significant contribution to the active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance of others' faiths and beliefs, a fundamental British value. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Teaching in Religious Education promotes openness, respect for others, religious literacy and critical enquiry

Curriculum planning in Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy. (Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief.) (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs

- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs Detailed units of work have been written in accordance with the Durham Agreed Syllabus

EYFS

During the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Religious Education may be taught as part of whole class topics or themes. At Gainford we use the following themes to explore religion:

Special and Belonging. Children could explore these ideas through topics such as special times, special objects, special people, special books, how we show belonging, the natural world, new life, new places, and stories provide excellent opportunities for RE foundation work in Preschool and Reception and can be successfully built on at Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1

- Christianity - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.
- Buddhism – introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact
- Similarities and Differences between religions

Key Stage 2

- Christianity – beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.
- Hinduism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities
- Judaism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities •

Religious diversity - the diverse religious and non-religious landscape across the region, including a special study of a local Muslim community (Islam small study)

- Similarities and differences within and between religious and non-religious worldviews through at least one thematic study e.g. about ritual, the environment, care for others

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in paired and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Equal Opportunities

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

Resources

We source sufficient resources to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. Resources are available from Durham Learning Resources library for schools within Durham and the Religious Resources Centre in Durham, both of which provide a range of books, artefacts and religious resources to enhance learning opportunities. Websites and opportunities to extend learning using video clips and online materials are made available through NATRE. Children from Year 3 upwards have their own Bible which is accessible in lessons and also for reading for pleasure times. There are a range of Bibles available for all pupils and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a supply of RE topic books

The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards. o Ensure there are assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.

- Monitor RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.
- for ensuring parents are informed of any developments concerning RE.
- for working with Foundation Governors including Reverend Canon Eileen Harrop of St Mary's Church and ensuring that they are informed of any changes in RE provision and amendments to school policy, which is to be made available to them for discussion and approval.
- for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation, applies to RE.

Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Assessment and recording

Assessment of children's progress in RE is ongoing. As a piece of work is completed, verbal feedback is given whenever possible or it is marked and teachers give written feedback to pupils,. If an opportunity for personal reflection is given, this is not marked.. Teachers use their judgements made during lesson observations, discussions and marking, to inform their judgement against the benchmark expectations within the syllabus, 2020. Recording of assessment is at the end of each unit of work .