

# Religious Education Policy

<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	March 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2026
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	Biannually
<b>Reviewing committee:</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Lead Governor Responsible:</b>	
<b>Reviewers:</b>	RE Leader
<b>Linked Policies:</b>	Collective Worship Teaching and Learning Assessment for Learning and Feedback Policy Equality Policy RSHE Policy Curriculum Policy
<b>Policy is based upon:</b>	Hampshire Agree Syllabus Living Difference
<b>Ratification Date:</b>	
<b>Signed by Headteacher:</b>	
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors:</b>	

## Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of Religious Education at Hook Junior School.

## Aim and Purpose of Religious Education (RE)

The aim of RE is to foster in pupils a reflective approach to life and enable and enrich this process through their study of living faiths, acknowledging the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in the country. Through this approach we aim to help children develop understanding, empathy and respect the right of people to hold and practise beliefs different from their own.

- RE aims to develop the children's skills, concepts and attitudes identified in the Agreed Hampshire Syllabus.
- RE seeks to promote reflection, empathy, comprehension, investigation, interpretation and analysis. RE also aims to foster attitudes such as curiosity, open-mindedness, self-

understanding, respect, wonder and appreciation, as these are fundamental to a fair-minded study of religions and spiritual dimensions of human life.

- RE encourages and allows pupils to think critically about religion and ethics.

## Legal Requirement

The Education Act 1996, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Education Act 2002 require that:

- Religious education should be taught to all children and young people other than those in nursery classes and except for those withdrawn at the wish of their parents. Teachers' rights are safeguarded, should they wish to withdraw from the teaching of religious education.
- Religious education in all community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools should be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.

## Local Authority Agreed Syllabus

In accordance with the Education Act (2006), the teaching of RE at Hook Junior School follows the LA Agreed Syllabus 'Living Difference IV'.

- The Agreed Syllabus reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions in Great Britain.
- It is designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference is convened every five years to review the existing syllabus.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) (now the Department for Education) guidance, *Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010*, states that:

- "Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally Agreed Syllabus within the LA concerned. ... Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses. LA must, however, ensure that the Agreed Syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."

## Time Allocation

The time allocation for the teaching of RE at Hook Junior School is 45 hours per year, as recommended in the Agreed Syllabus 'Living Difference IV'. Collective worship is not part of the taught day and cannot be considered as part of the recommended time for teaching the Agreed Syllabus. PSHE will be taught in a distinct way from RE.

Each class has a weekly RE lesson timetabled into the curriculum. As a general rule, the sessions are 1 hour in length but depending on the content to be covered, this may be longer.

## Approaches for teaching Religious Education

RE is taught in accordance with the agreed Hampshire Syllabus 'Living Difference IV'.

Although the main learning focus is Christianity, the children are taught other key religions which are non-Christian denominations identified in the Agreed Syllabus. Years 3 and 4 study Hinduism and Years 5 and 6 study Islam. Links are also made with other religions such as Judaism in Year 6 linking with World War 2.

The RE topics build on the children's knowledge, own experiences and progressively develop an understanding of the key concepts, features, beliefs, celebrations and values of all religions. Whilst fostering an appreciation of the significance of faiths and their followers, children learn to appreciate the significance of faiths to their believers.

## **Strategies for the teaching of Religious Education**

The predominant mode of working in RE is whole class teaching, although individual work and co-operative group work are used to further enrich the learning. The teaching and learning methods of RE is planned to employ a wide range of teaching methods including:

- Visits to places of worship
- Exploring Religious artefacts
- Listening to religious stories
- Visits by members of faith communities
- Reflection on religious symbols, sounds and the use of silence
- Using ICT where appropriate
- Art, music, dance, etc
- Experiential learning through drama
- RE is delivered through a process of enquiry into concepts. This allows children to develop skills such as critical thinking. The enquiry model included the following five steps: communicate, apply, inquire, contextualise and evaluate.

## **Cycle of Enquiry**

The Living Difference IV approach to teaching RE always begins with the teacher finding interesting ways to bring the concept alive for children. RE planning and delivery follows the journey around the cycle of enquiry. Appendix 1 shows an overview of the steps followed.

## **Equal opportunities**

The teaching of RE is planned with due regard for the school's policy for Equal Opportunities.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs receive support via scaffolded learning or differentiated tasks. Pupils undertake work which is planned for their level of ability and which allows them to participate in learning alongside their peers.

## **Role of the RE Leader**

- To take the lead in policy development.
- To ensure progression and continuity in RE through the development of the long-term RE curriculum plan.
- Linked to the long-term plan, the RE leader produces a Knowledge Progression document to further ensure progression across the school. This is updated as necessary.
- To provide colleagues with medium-term plans for each unit, which each Year Group then implements as they feel appropriate for their needs.
- To monitor progress in RE and advise the Senior Leadership Team on action needed.
- To take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources for RE.
- To keep up to date with developments and CPD in RE and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

- To monitor the quality of teaching and learning in RE through learning walks, book scrutiny, data analysis, pupil conferencing, monitoring of planning, attending cross school moderation sessions.

## Resources

There is a central store of RE resources located in the link corridor. These include religious artefacts, books, posters, and image media are organised according to the religion to which they relate. There is also a range of books in the library which can be located using a SLS book list.

Copies of medium and long-term plans from across the Key Stage can be found on the school's online system.

## Continuity and progression

RE is planned to ensure continuity and progression. Pupils engage with Christmas and Easter in each year group but focus on a different concept within each of these units. The concepts are selected from the Hampshire Syllabus 'Living Difference IV' and are organised into A, B and C concepts.

- A concepts are concepts that are common to all people e.g remembering, celebration and compassion. These concepts are taught in Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2.
- B concepts are concepts that are shared by many religions e.g worship, stewardship and discipleship. These concepts are taught across Key Stage 2.
- C concepts are concepts that are distinctive to particular religions e.g Torah, redemption, Trinity. These concepts are delivered in Upper Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. This ensures a clear progression across the school.

## Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment opportunities are identified on the medium-term plans.
- Teachers assess regularly against objectives on Arbor and then submit a final judgement at the end of each term.
- The RE Leader monitors and reports on the progress and attainment of pupils across the Key Stage in RE.
- The progress pupils make in RE is reported annually to parents through their child's annual school report.

## Monitoring

- The RE Leader collects evidence of children's work to place in portfolio, exemplifying standards.
- Discussions with staff identify where development work is needed.
- Pupil conferencing takes place regularly with a particular focus outlined on the SSP.
- Book and planning monitoring takes place regularly to ensure a clear progression across the school. Feedback from this is then reported to teaching staff and SLT.
- Consideration about further resources and INSET that are required to deliver the RE curriculum effectively.
- The RE Leader meets with a governor to review progress against RE SSP targets

## Parental right of withdrawal

In accordance with the **Education Act 1996, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Education Act 2002**, parents should have the right to withdraw their children from the teaching of RE, without influence from the school, although the school will ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision. Where parents have

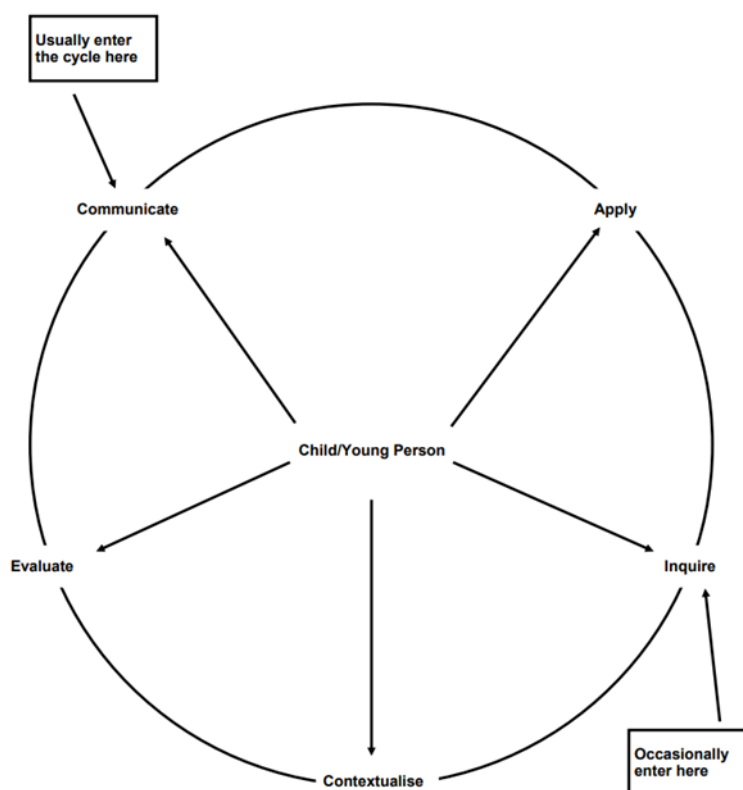
requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. In order to avoid misunderstandings, any parent wishing to withdraw their child may arrange a meeting with the Head Teacher in order to discuss:

- The religious issues about which the parent would object to his/her child being taught.
- The practical implications of withdrawal e.g. supervision and alternative activities.
- The circumstances in which the school can reasonably be expected to accommodate parental wishes.
- Any advance notice required of such RE

## **Teachers right of withdrawal**

In accordance with DFE circular 1/94, the legal right of teachers to withdraw from the teaching of RE is recognised. Any teacher wishing to withdraw must confirm this in writing to the Headteacher and Governors. In event of this right being exercised, the teaching of RE would be implemented by the Year group team/RE Leader after discussion with the Headteacher.

## Appendix 1: The Cycle of Enquiry



Living Difference IV approach to teaching religious education will always begin with the teacher finding interesting ways to bring the concept/word alive for children and young people. This experiential moment is there to ensure that religious education always starts with real and concrete situations and encounters, and also makes room for the different ways in which children and young people experience what they encounter.

The journey around the cycle of enquiry then usually moves into the **Communicate** step where children and young people are introduced to the concept/word and invited to share their experiences in different ways. This can be a creative response and may not always require words, especially with younger children. At the **Apply** step the teacher opens up the classroom conversation so that children and young people can become aware of the experience of others, beginning with those in their class.

The teacher then introduces the material and additional vocabulary to be encountered and studied, usually at the Inquire step. Here children and young people engage with the dimensions, manifestations, words and concepts of religious traditions and practices. The material a teacher selects will most frequently be new to the children and young people. However, there may be occasions where material previously encountered and/or studied by the children and young people could be revisited and studied in new ways. This is to broaden and deepen children and young people's understanding, ensuring they are knowledgeable and well-informed about the matters at the end.

Living Difference IV is interested in the lived experience of what it means to live a life with a religious or other orientation, therefore formal study of a tradition or other way of life will always include living examples or case studies where the material studied can be seen in real life contexts). These are introduced at the **Contextualise** step.

Children and young people begin to discern value at the **Evaluate** step. This happens in two ways. First, value is discerned for those living within the context studied. The second part of the Evaluate step is where children and young people are brought to discern the question of how the material encountered and studied might matter in their own lives.

Living Difference IV acknowledges the diversity of experiences that children and young people will have concerning what is studied. Therefore, children and young people's experience must be acknowledged so religious education can make a positive contribution to their ability to come to discernment about how all this might matter in their own lives.