



RE Policy

Statement and Rationale

This policy reflects Rowena Academy's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of Religious Education. At Rowena we acknowledge the importance of providing children with the opportunities to develop their own values, beliefs and respect for others. RE is important in developing the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and plays a major part in our delivery of multi-cultural education. We seek to teach RE which is both age and ability appropriate for our children as they explore a range of human experiences, religious practices and beliefs.

This policy supports our school vision statement of 'hand in hand together we can'. It also supports our whole school ethos of developing a Rowena Person.



Aims and Objectives

At Rowena we recognise the importance of Religious Education to develop children's sense of value and identity, allowing each child a sense of 'belonging' within society. We aim to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Through our teaching of RE we aim ensure that all pupils:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity that exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.
- Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
- Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.
- Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.
- Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.
- Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
- Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Intent

At Rowena Academy we aim to create a happy, purposeful and caring environment where children are taught through first hand experiences, stimulating their interests and motivating them to explore their world. Our vision statement reflects a passionate commitment to learning and recognises the uniqueness of individual learners. It is driven by our desire to offer the best possible educational outcomes for our pupils, in partnership with parents and the local community.

We believe that it is vital for all our pupils to learn from and about religion, so that they can understand the world around them. Through Religious Education, pupils develop their knowledge of the world faiths, and their understanding and awareness of the beliefs, values and traditions of other individuals, societies, communities and cultures. We encourage our pupils to ask questions about the world and to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences. We celebrate and appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and our behaviour, develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Our RE curriculum is enhanced further with whole school festival days.

Implementation

We follow the Programme of Study for RE as suggested in the Doncaster Agreed Syllabus and we have used the RE Today scheme of work to create a whole school approach to teaching RE, focusing carefully on the progression from Nursery to Year 2. During each Key Stage pupils are taught knowledge, skills and understanding through learning about Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jewish and Humanist people through three key strands: Believing, Expressing and Living.

Impact

Our Religious Education Curriculum is high quality, well thought out and is planned to demonstrate progression. The teaching and learning in RE should enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.

- Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

Each key question will give pupils opportunities to develop these skills and build upon their ideas and insights. Observations will be made by class teachers as to whether the children are emerging, expected or exceeding towards the end of Key Stage outcomes (see assessments section).

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching and learning approaches are used in our RE lessons as recommended in the Doncaster Local Authority Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. At Rowena children have opportunities to learn about religion through books, technology, class discussions, group work, art work, dance and media. A scheme of work has been created to support the teaching of RE, focusing on Christianity in Year 1 and Islam in Year 2.

Much of the RE in our Academy will take place as discussion times. Our children will be given access to a variety of interesting and up-to-date resources and literature (both fiction and non-fiction) related to both the implicit and explicit aspects of RE. Through these, particularly our older children, will be encouraged to investigate ideas for themselves, record (where necessary), interpret and express their own feelings and values.

Through the teaching of RE, children will be encouraged to begin to ask questions like how and why about the natural world and their own existence. With a deepening awareness, children begin to ask some of the 'ultimate questions' which life presents like 'is there a God?' and 'what happens when we die?' Although RE has no conclusive answers to these questions it can help particularly our older children to begin to formulate their own personal values and beliefs. Children will be given the opportunity, when and where appropriate, to share their own ideas on these issues. We also have a section of literature which can help our children to deal with sensitive situations like death etc.

Children will be encouraged to explore the Qur'an alongside the Bible, looking at their similarities and differences. We have beautiful artefacts in our Academy to enhance this work. Teachers are invited to choose from a selection of both Old and New Testament stories to share with their children, particularly those linked with Easter, one of the main Christian celebrations. Children can also deepen their understanding of religion and develop their own self-awareness through our festival days. These days are planned half termly by the 'Develop' team and aim to explore the key festival days of different religions around the world. During these celebratory days, the children will explore religion through dance, craft, taste testing, music, drama and media.

RE Curriculum Planning

Year group staff meet together on a half-termly or termly basis to plan their forthcoming topic. They also meet on a weekly basis to plan a forecast of the forthcoming week's work. Lesson plans were developed for Key Stage 1 and Foundation using the 'RE Today' scheme of work. The activities and lessons were carefully selected to ensure they relate to the threefold aim of RE (Doncaster Agreed Syllabus 2019.)

Festival days are organised by the RE Co-ordinator and the 'Develop' team and are agreed and discussed during staff meeting. After consultation with all the staff at Rowena it was decided that Year One would study Christianity and Year Two would study Islam.

The Programme of Study is in line with the Doncaster Agreed Syllabus. It will be monitored and reviewed by the co-ordinator in collaboration with staff at regular interludes.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

During the Foundation Stage, children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

In Nursery the following key questions will be covered:

F1- Which stories are special and why?

Questions in this thread:

- What is your favourite story? What do you like about it, and why?
- Do you know any Bible stories? What stories do you know that are special to Christians? What do you think Jesus was (is) like?
- What stories are special to Christians? What happens in a story from the Bible? Does the story tell you about God? What do you learn?
- What stories do you know that are special to Christians (or other faiths)? Who are the stories about? What do you learn?

F2- Which people are special and why?

Questions in this thread:

- Who is special to you and why?
- Why are some people special?
- What story do Sikhs tell about a special person?
- What is a good friend like? How did Jesus make some very special friends?
- What can a Christian learn from actions in a story?
- What story shows Jesus being a friend and caring for others?

F3- Which places are special and why?

Questions in this thread:

- Where is special to me?
- Where is a special place for Christians to go?
- What makes a church special?
- Where is a holy place for Muslims to go?
- What makes a mosque special?
- What is important in a church and a mosque? How are holy buildings similar and different?
- What is needed to make a truly special place of our own?

In Reception, the following key questions will be covered:

F4- Which times are special and why?

Questions in this thread:

- What special times have you had? What do other people celebrate?
- What happens at Sukkot and why?
- What story do Hindu people remember at Diwali? What happens at Diwali and why?
- What happens at Christmas, and why?

- What can we say about Christmas, Diwali and Sukkot?

F5- Where do we belong?

Questions in this thread:

- What makes us feel special? What makes Christians feel special to God?
- How do Christians know that children are special to God?
- What groups do we belong to? How do we know we belong to a group? What groups do religious people belong to?
- How do we show people they are welcome? How are babies welcomed into the Christian family?
- How is a baby welcomed into the Muslim religion?
- How do Hindu brothers and sisters show their love for each other at a festival?

F6- What is special about our world?

Questions in this thread:

- What are our favourite things about nature?
- Why do some people say the world is special? What do you think is special about the world?
- What story do Christians tell about the creation of the world?
- How can we tell the Christian story of creation?
- What stories to Muslim people tell about God's creation?
- How does Muhammad show Muslims how to behave in the story of Muhammad and the Kittens?
- Is our world 'very good'?

Aspects of the Foundation Stage which have particular relevance for RE:

Religious education can make an active contribution to all of the areas of learning, but has a particularly important contribution to make to:

- Communication and Language.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.
- Literacy.

Communication and Language

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities:

- Children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences.
- Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities:

- Children use some stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways.
- Using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation.
- Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
- Children think about issues of right and wrong, and how humans help one another.

Understanding the World

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities:

- Children ask and answer questions about religion and culture, as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences.
- Children visit places of worship.
- Children listen to and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups.
- Children handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
- Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

Expressive Arts and Design

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities:

- Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with an artefact.
- Children share their own experiences and feelings, and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Literacy

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities:

- Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

Key Stage 1

Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. We have chosen to explore Islam. Through RE the children will learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Outline of Programme of Study for Key Stage 1

Breadth of study:

The knowledge, skills and understanding identify the key aspects of learning in RE. They are developed through the breadth of study which has three elements:

- **Believing-** religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth.
- **Expressing-** religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.
- **Living-** religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments.

These elements are broken down into key questions and are designed to enable children to achieve the end of key stage outcomes.

Believing:

- **Who is a Christian and what do they believe?**

This question allows children to think about the beliefs that Christians hold about God. The children will explore art, symbols and music that express ideas about God. We will learn about

and share stories from the Bible and allow the children to explore what the idea of God means for them.

- **Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?**

We will share stories from the Qur'an to help the children understand how Muslims think of Allah and how these stories show them ways to behave (e.g. Muhammad and the Cat.) The children will explore calligraphy and precious objects that belong to Muslims (e.g. prayer mat, prayer beads and headscarf.) The children will learn about the key features of a Mosque and what happens there.

- **What can we learn from sacred books?**

During this section the children will explore their own favorite books and parable stories with deeper meanings. We will then explore the Bible and explore how these books are used and treated. We will share stories from the Bible (e.g. The lost Sheep) and encourage the children to retell the stories using art and role-play.

Expressing:

- **What makes some places sacred?**

The children will explore the words 'sacred' and 'holy' and think about what that means to them. We will discuss the main features of worship for Christian people at the Church and why it is important in their lives. We will also explore the meaning of signs, symbols, artefacts and actions and how they help in worship (e.g. the cross).

- **How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?**

We will consider the importance and value of celebration and remembrance in the children's own lives. We will learn about festivals in Christianity including Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Pentecost. As well as celebrating our half-termly festival days as a whole school, where we focus on a variety of festivals (e.g. Diwali, Chinese New Year and Eid-ul-Fitr).

Living:

- **What does it mean to belong to a faith community?**

The children will be encouraged to think about their own 'belonging' before exploring what it means to belong to a religion. The children will explore how Christians and Muslims show they belong. We will look at and compare weddings and new births in both religions and encourage the children to think about and discuss the similarities and differences between the two celebrations.

- **How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter?**

This question focuses on the idea that each person is unique and important and we will link this to Christian teachings that God values everyone. We will explore stories from the Bible that focus on friendship and caring for others. We will also explore stories about how some people have been inspired to care for people because of their religious beliefs (e.g. Mother Teresa).

Cross-Curricular Links

Opportunities for cross-curricular links are identified in the planning. The following are examples:

English	Accounts of appropriate Bible stories. Writing about 'spiritual experiences'.
Maths	Shape and symmetry in our world.
Science	Awe and wonder at 'what I can do!' Studying the beauty and wonder of the natural world.
Computing	Use of CD/Internet- Bible Stories, The Christmas Story.
Art	Sikh art designs.

Technology	Models related to topic.
History	History related to St. Peter's Church, Conisbrough.
Geography	Especially in Year 2 linking in faiths with different parts of the world.
PE	Exploration of the freedom and beauty of body movement.
Music	Appreciation of the expression and moods within pieces of music.
PSHCE	Sharing and caring for each other.

Assessment

Assessments in Religious Education are ongoing and in the Foundation Stage they are made against the relevant Early Learning Goals. At Key Stage 1 they are made against the nine end of key stage outcomes from the Doncaster Local Authority Agreed Syllabus for RE (2019).

A1. Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.	B1. Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make.	C1. Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.
A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come.	B2. Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.	C2. Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different.
A3. Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.	B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.	C3. Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.

Teachers plan for assessment in their medium and short-term planning. Assessments are made to monitor children's progress, inform future planning and for the purpose of reporting to parents at open evening and in the annual report.

Monitoring and Review

The co-ordination of the RE curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping abreast of current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject.
- Contributes to the Academy Development Plan - setting targets and evaluating the work.
- Monitors and evaluates the general pupil progress and achievement in RE.
- Keeps an RE evidence file of children's work and experiences offered as part of the curriculum.

The curriculum will be monitored to ensure breadth, balance and relevance to individual pupils. This will be achieved by on-going assessment of pupils against the nine end of key stage outcomes from the Doncaster Local Authority Agreed Syllabus for RE.

The delivery of the RE Curriculum is monitored by the consultation of yearly planning grids, which give an overall picture of curriculum coverage. In addition, planning scrutiny is carried out by the Senior Leadership Team.

Governors are also invited to monitor the effectiveness of the Academy through a variety of other activities including learning walks and classroom observation.

Staff are continuously developing their RE subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice, keeping staff informed of current developments in RE and making recommendations for staff training.

This policy was reviewed in September 2023 and will be reviewed again in September 2024.

Signed

G. Cowlishaw

Head of Academy