



Religious Education policy

Policy Statement

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 is taught in Mattishall primary school because it makes:

"a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

Mattishall Primary school is a member of the Synergy Academy. We deliver RE in line with the Norfolk Syllabus. We use the Discovery RE programme as our scheme of work.

Aims and purposes

The aims of our RE, using the Discovery RE Scheme of Work, is to meet the requirements of Norfolk agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non- statutory guidance.

By following Discovery RE at Mattishall 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.

LINK TO TEACHING AND LEARNING STATEMENT

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Statement for Mattishall Primary School.

Organisation

RE is taught in Mattishall Primary school and follows the strategy supported by the Norfolk Syllabus by bringing 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.

Where appropriate, links are made to other subjects to allow for cross curricular learning.

Learning is teacher assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

Christianity plus one or two other religions in each group forms the pattern. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group. The long-term map describes full coverage.

Class	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Red	Pupils begin to explore religion and worldviews in terms of important people, times, places and objects, as well as visiting places of worship. Pupils listen to, and talk about, religious stories which may raise puzzling and interesting questions. They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression.					
Orange	Christianity	Christianity	Christianity	Christianity	Judaism	Judaism
Yellow	Christianity	Christianity	Islam	Christianity	Islam	Islam
Green	Hinduism	Christianity	Christianity	Christianity	Hinduism	Hinduism
Blue	Christianity	Christianity	Christianity	Buddhism	Buddhism	Buddhism
Indigo	Christianity	Christianity	Sikhism	Christianity	Sikhism	Sikhism
Violet		Christianity		Humanism		Humanism

Equal opportunities

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 include 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 classes with special educational needs, each enquiry has level exemplars for the full range likely for that age group, allowing children to evidence levels from L1 to L5. Teachers will use their own discretion as to the needs of their class.

Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment that the teacher completes at the end of each topic. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher's assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in reaching a best-fit level. Each enquiry has assessment levels and exemplars based on the current nationally agreed levels. Mattishall primary school's marking policy will be used.

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 other's views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is always encouraged and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

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 can 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.

Withdrawal from RE lessons

In the UK, Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education on the grounds that they wish to make their own provision. 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, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. If a pupil is withdrawn the school has a duty of care to look after them, but not to provide alternative provision. There are different ways of handling this, but any arrangements made must not incur an additional cost to the school or local authority. This time must not be used for other curriculum subject areas such as, extra maths or other lessons. Once a child has been withdrawn, they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas.

We recognise the clear link between RE:

- Collective Worship
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- RSHE and SMSC Policy

Continuity and progression

The RE leader monitors delivery of R.E. 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.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2026.