

Religious Education Policy 2022



Ratified by Governors: pending

Mrs Selina Timmins (Chairman)
Policy to be reviewed: February 2024

Our School Vision

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

1 Peter 4:10

The school’s vision is one of Christian service: each of us using our skills and talents to support and serve one another. We extend this service to all, whatever their backgrounds or beliefs; both within the school itself, and the wider community. All are welcomed wholeheartedly into our school family and are nurtured and supported by our harmonious school community. Friendship is a blessing extended to each and every one, as we develop as a community where God’s love, compassion and forgiveness inform our daily lives. We believe that God will guide us all with hope, compassion and wisdom in becoming successful members of a global community.

The school’s vision of service (1 Peter 4v10) is complemented by the focus on the Fruits of the Spirit as given in Galatians 5v22-23. As we serve, these characteristics – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control – teach us how we should present ourselves. Focussing on the Fruits of the Spirit has given Collective Worship a cohesive feel and purpose as it teaches pupils how they should deal with one another and with the wider community.

RE at Bishop Wilson School

Bishop Wilson School is a Church of England aided school and as such the Governors are responsible for deciding the RE curriculum. They are advised to do this in consultation with the Headteacher and the member of staff with responsibility for RE. Staff at Bishop Wilson are not legally bound to use the (agreed) Syllabus for Religious Education produced by the Diocese of Birmingham. All members of staff have however agreed, after discussion, that whilst a significant place will be allocated to the Diocesan Guidelines in the planning of RE in the form of the scheme of work ‘Understanding Christianity, they will also use some aspects of the framework of the Solihull Agreed Syllabus, Birmingham Syllabus and other lessons as recommended by the Birmingham Diocese to deliver the RE curriculum.

The majority of children at Bishop Wilson School do not have a religious background. They therefore have a limited knowledge and experience of religion. The children have little or no direct contact with people of faiths other than Christianity.

The ethos of the school is Christian and is based on the principles of caring for others, respecting others and taking responsibility for one’s own actions and behaviour.

The RE policy upholds the school aims, which are:

- To provide a safe Christian environment in which pupils will be educated, staff can work and develop and parents and visitors will be warmly received.
- To share with parents in the care and education of their child.
- To help pupils acquire a set of Christian values upon which to base their own behaviour and life, whilst fostering a respect for people of different cultures and faiths.
- To develop in pupils, the ability to work hard and succeed at tasks, working independently and co-operatively.
- To help pupils develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to argue rationally.
- To help pupils understand the part they play in the community and the World in which they live and to prepare them for adult life in our changing world.

- To develop the qualities of spirit, feeling, imagination and a sense of beauty.
- To value and have high expectations of every individual in the school, encouraging mutual respect and trust between all members of the school community.
- To foster good relationships with the local communities.

As Bishop Wilson School is a Church School, staff have a prerogative to nurture children in the Christian faith, taking seriously their responsibility to educate them in the Christian religion and other faiths.

Although RE is not solely responsible for promoting the spiritual and moral development of children, it makes a large contribution in this area. Our policy supports the following:-

- **spiritual development** - we hope to encourage children to reflect upon the purpose and meaning of life itself
- **moral development** - our work gives each child the opportunity to come to terms with, and also discuss, ethical issues
- **social development** - children are provided with the opportunity to discover the joy and conflict of living in a society and a school and wider community
- **cultural development** - we aim to encourage pupils' own cultural experiences

Bishop Wilson School is connected to and has strong links with St Andrew's Church. We hold two separate clergy led worship times for KS1 and KS2 each week. The main Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter are celebrated as a whole school at Church. Church also hosts amongst other things a Reception Year Group induction/welcome and a Year 6 leavers' service. This means that the children of Bishop Wilson School start and end their school life as a part of St Andrew's Church.

The Agreed Syllabus

Every pupil must receive RE by law and it must be broad and balanced and prepare them for adult life. Parents also have the right to withdraw their children from RE if they so wish.

Any RE Syllabus must "reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions in Great Britain". ERA 1988

Solihull's Agreed Syllabus for RE reflects the above points.

Aims

The staff at Bishop Wilson School have agreed the following aims for the teaching of RE, drawing on the aims listed in the Diocesan Guidelines, Understanding Christianity, Agreed Syllabus and other sources.

- RE should help to appreciate the way in which religious beliefs shape lives and how they contribute to personal morality and social responsibility.
- RE should enable pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of the origin, content and development of the Christian religion.

- RE should encourage pupils to have respect for all people and to develop tolerance and understanding of other cultures and religions.
- RE should help children develop an awareness of the spiritual dimension to life and help them to come to personal decisions on belief and life stances.
- RE should give children an understanding of what religion is in its widest sense, especially in relation to other faiths.

Objectives

The above aims will be realised through using the framework of objectives listed in the Agreed Syllabus. These objectives have been divided into five areas.

1. **Concepts:** general ideas which pupils should understand.
2. **Knowledge:** the facts which pupils must be aware of or which they must learn.
3. **Skills:** the capabilities which pupils should develop as a result of their study.
4. **Attitudes:** the affective domain within which pupils are encouraged to adopt appropriate responses.
5. **Exploration of human experience:** encompasses both the processes through which pupils will learn and the opportunities taken for reflection and discussion on issues affecting their daily lives.

The aims of the Understanding Christianity scheme are-

Understanding Christianity encourages pupils to explore core Bible texts, examine the impact for Christians and consider possible implications. Each unit incorporates the three elements:

- **Making sense of the text** – Developing skills of reading and interpretation; understanding how Christians interpret, handle and use biblical texts; making sense of the meanings of texts for Christians
- **Understanding the impact** – Examining ways in which Christians respond to biblical texts and teachings, and how they put their beliefs into action in diverse ways within the Christian community and in the world
- **Making connections** – Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the texts and concepts studied, and discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

Organisation of Staff

There is one member of staff responsible for the co-ordination of RE within the school. Staff teach their own class RE. It is not necessary for the teacher to have a personal religious commitment in order to be able to teach RE as it is not the intention of this subject to indoctrinate children into a particular religion. However, staff at Bishop Wilson School recognise their responsibility in giving children some experience of what it means to be a Christian.

Organisation of the Subject

Within the **Foundation stage**, RE is covered within Understanding of the World and Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Understanding the World

People Culture and Communities ELG

Children at the expected level of development will: - Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts, and maps; - Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; - Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation ELG Children at the expected level of development will: - Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; - Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate; - Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self ELG Children at the expected level of development will: - Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge; - Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; - Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships ELG Children at the expected level of development will: - Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; - Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers; - Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs. .

Both the Diocesan Guidelines and the Agreed Syllabus state that in KS1 and KS2 at least one hour per week should be allocated to RE. If a teacher wishes to allocate a block of time to RE then this may be done by spending five hours on the subject over a concentrated period of time in a half term. This should be made explicit in the teacher's planning.

RE will be integrated into topic work where it is suitable to do so without making tenuous links which undermine the nature of the subject. However, where RE is taught in this way the time allocations stated above must be adhered to and the RE element in the material must be clearly identifiable. The element of the Agreed Syllabus which cannot legitimately be integrated into general topic work will be taught as discrete RE topics.

Continuity and progressions will be planned into the scheme so that pupils progressing through the school will work with material appropriate to their experience and maturity. By following the scheme pupils will be building on their concepts, knowledge, skill, attitudes and exploration of human experience acquired in previous years. There should therefore be not direct repetition of work in RE.

Teaching / Learning Strategies

RE may be taught using the following methods depending on the subject of the lesson and the need of the children:-

Storytelling	Drama
Visits	Use of artefacts
Use of pictures/video/slides	Music
Independent investigation	Art
Visitors to school	Discussion

A variety of approaches are strongly recommended. The children may work individually, in pairs or in groups as appropriate. At appropriate times and for specific activities, RE will also contribute to pupils' Maths and English skills.

Differentiation in RE lessons will mainly be by outcome, as all pupils should have access to the material presented to them. However, opportunities for the more able pupils to lead in group work or to develop other activities will be encouraged. Differing outcomes will be achieved by the use of the above methods.

Children with special needs should be able to participate fully in RE lessons, working at their own level in any follow up activities as there are frequently no right or wrong answers required, but a personal response to the material. Teachers use open questioning techniques and create a classroom atmosphere where all children feel valued. All children have equal opportunities to all materials.

Assessment

There is no statutory requirement to assess children in RE. However, there is a statutory requirement to report to parents and therefore a record of pupils' responses to the material is needed in order to make the reporting of any value to parents.

RE is assessed via half termly assessment sheets in exercise books. Children will begin each new unit of work by discussing what they already know and what they would like to find out about this subject. This is then recorded on a front sheet which is put into books. At the end of the unit, class teachers can then assess children's progress based on the objectives taught. This can then inform future planning.

Resources

RE resources are kept in the science cupboard near to the main hall. A variety of books and online resources are available within school and with consultation with the RE leaders. Resources for the scheme of work 'Understanding Christianity', all long and medium term plans are saved on the main computer system which all staff are able to access. The RE lead forwards all relevant resources to staff prior to each unit of work being taught via email.

Evaluation

It is proposed that this policy be evaluated by the post holder in consultation with all members of staff after two years. The next evaluation is due March 2024.