



Neville's Cross Primary School & Nursery

Religious Education Policy

Date of policy: January 2023

Review date: January 2025

Neville's Cross is an inclusive family where all are nurtured to become creative, confident and resilient learners supported to reach their unique potential. Our children develop skills to become active and respectful members of our school, community and society and during their time at Neville's Cross, make memories to cherish.

RE INTENT

At Neville's Cross, we recognise the importance of Religious Education in all aspects of our lives as religious beliefs and practices shape culture and society. It is our intention that our children will develop an openminded curiosity which motivates them to develop a deep knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and non-religious worldviews and the impact that these have for individuals and communities. Through an enquiry approach to the teaching of Religious Education, we aim to develop children's critical thinking skills so that they are able to give opinions, support their ideas with reasons, consider alternative viewpoints, listen to and respond respectfully to the views of others. A key aim of Religious Education at Neville's Cross, is to enable our children to reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values and beliefs and the influence of these on their daily life, attitudes and actions. Through our teaching of Religious Education, we encourage our children to develop positive attitudes to their own and others' beliefs, ideas, experiences, feelings and values in a classroom climate that recognises and respects difference, in order to prepare our children to develop tolerance as they live in an increasingly diverse world.

THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes and the sixth form.

Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus which is the statutory order.

Each Local Authority (LA) must have a SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) to advise the LA on matters connected with RE. The SACRE may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus at any time. This is in addition to the requirement on LAs to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to reconsider the Agreed Syllabus every five years.

The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils. Teaching about denominations is not prohibited.

The Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The key focus and learning outcomes for each key stage set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages.

The Head Teacher must ensure the provision of Religious Education and ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education to meet statutory requirements. For LA maintained schools, the governing body and the LA must also exercise their functions in securing this provision.

RE at Neville's Cross Primary School and Nursery will meet legal requirements by:

- its inclusion in the curriculum of all registered pupils. In primary school, this is a requirement for all pupils in Reception to Year 6, but does not include children in nursery classes. However, at Neville's Cross pupils in nursery also take part in RE.
- reflecting the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.
- teaching RE in accordance with Durham Locally Agreed Syllabus (2020)

AIMS

We will, through the teaching of RE, aim to:

- develop knowledge of Christianity and other principal religions, traditions and world views represented in Britain.
- enhance awareness of the influence of religion, belief and practice upon individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- nurture the ability to consider challenging questions about life, God, self, reality and what it means to be human.
- promote the capacity to consider religious and ethical issues in a reasoned and informed manner.
- build an ability to process and evaluate information from a wide range of artefacts and sources.
- nurture communication skills, critical thinking and reasoning.
- encourage learning from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and sense of identity and belonging.
- develop respect for and sensitivity towards others, particularly those whose faith and beliefs are different to their own.
- nurture discernment, fairness and the capacity to combat prejudice and recognise human diversity.
- foster skills to help future citizens flourish within communities in a pluralistic society and global community.

Although our Religious Education curriculum is planned using the Durham Locally Agreed Syllabus (2020), it is also designed with our key curriculum drivers in mind:

Creativity – we aim to ignite curiosity within our children to allow them to question the religious and nonreligious worldviews around them at a local, national and global level and to appreciate the wonder of the world in which we live. Creative approaches to demonstrating knowledge and understanding such as storytelling, drama and art are carefully woven into Religious Education lessons. The critical thinking skills developed in Religious Education lessons will allow our children to think creatively to explore issues and possible solutions linked to religious and cultural issues.

Well-being – we recognise the valuable contribution Religious Education makes to our children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. By providing our children with

opportunities to consider their own beliefs, values and attitudes and become increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas, attitudes and behaviour on others we hope to develop self-confidence in our children to communicate these to others, whilst at the same time being respectful and mindful that others have a right to different beliefs and practices to their own. At Neville's Cross we value diversity.

Our Communities – within many of our RE units, there is a strong element of exploring the diversity of the local area as well as nationally and globally, for example through visiting religious buildings and receiving visitors from different world faiths into school to develop our cultural knowledge. We aim to develop strong links with our local church, St. John's to allow our children opportunities to join with the local community for example through participating in festivals such as harvest or local fundraising opportunities. As part of our study of Durham Cathedral, our children come to appreciate and value the building's significance not only for its historic and cultural heritage, but also the significance it has for the local and global Christian community.

APPROACH

The three elements of RE

RE is based on:

- **Knowledge and Understanding of Religion**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Personal Reflection**

These are interlinked and enable pupils to make good progress in RE.

Enquiry Based Learning

- Enquiry questions have been used to help produce a balanced Scheme of Work that enables pupils to develop an understanding of the differing dimensions in the study of religion. Enquiry Based Learning is a process which actively engages pupils in the learning process. It enables them to develop skills as they investigate issues surrounding religion and beliefs. Through the cycle of enquiry pupils have the opportunity to:
 - generate and refine questions
 - develop lines of enquiry using a range of methods and sources
 - research complex issues and explore a range of viewpoints
 - gather, compare and synthesise information, interpreting, analysing and evaluating findings
 - develop knowledge and understanding of religion and belief and the impact these have on individuals and communities today
 - use critical thinking and reasoning to draw conclusions
 - reflect on their own ideas, beliefs, values, experiences and feelings in relation to what they have learnt through the enquiry.

PROGRESSION

The RE curriculum is coherent and progressive, enabling pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews and their understanding of the complex, diverse and plural nature of belief systems. Our curriculum operates on a two-year cycle, with the exception of Early Years Foundation Stage which is taught on an annual cycle.

Enquiry questions are at the heart of RE at all key stages from Early Years Foundation Stage to post-16 study. They enable pupils to build on previous learning and deepen and broaden their understanding through increasingly sophisticated and complex systematic and thematic enquiries. The content below will be taught for each key stage:

Early Years Foundation Stage

During the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Religious Education may be taught as part of whole class topics or themes. The Agreed Syllabus uses the following themes to explore religion: **Special and Belonging**. Children 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 Nursery and Reception and can be successfully built on at Key Stage 1.

Examples for exploration in Religious Education:

- Let's find out about the Christmas story
- Let's find out about Raksha Bandhan

Key Stage 1

Pupils must be taught about:

- **Christianity** - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.

Example of Unit Question - How do Christians celebrate Easter?

- **Buddhism** - introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact.

Example of Unit Question - How do Buddhists worship?

- **Religious diversity** - introduction to the diverse religious and non-religious landscape in the local area (including differing denominations).

Example of Unit Question - What can we find out about our local faith communities?

Key Stage 2

Pupils must be taught about:

- **Christianity** - beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.

Examples of Unit Questions - Why are Good Friday and Easter Sunday the most important days for Christians? So, what do we now know about Christianity? (Statutory Bridging Unit)

- **Hinduism** – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities

Example of Unit Question - What do Hindus believe?

- **Judaism** – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities

Example of Unit Question - Why do Jewish people go to the synagogue?

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

Examples of Unit Questions - What can we find out about diversity in our region? What can we find out about a local Muslim community?

- 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

Examples of Unit Questions - How do people show care for others? Why do people use ritual in their lives?

Long Term Planning

The Long Term plan is produced by the RE lead under the direction of the Senior Leadership Team and follows the Durham Locally Agreed Syllabus (2020). Due to the two-year rolling programme, units have been carefully sequenced to ensure that knowledge and skills are progressive, for example, pupils learn about Buddhism and the Buddha before they learn how Buddhists worship.

Medium Term Planning

Medium Term plans have been produced by the RE leader, drawing on the enquiry questions, knowledge, skills and vocabulary that are identified within the suggested unit plans from the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Each unit plan has an overarching question title and within that each lesson has an enquiry question as a focus. The key sticky knowledge and vocabulary pupils are expected to know by the end of the unit is outlined in the Medium Term Plans.

Short Term Planning

Using the medium term plans, class teachers draw upon the subject knowledge, skills and vocabulary they are required to teach and create a Learning Journey which encapsulates the information from the MTP. Individual lessons are then planned and resources are created with which to teach the children.

RESOURCES

In order to provide rich and stimulating RE lessons we will do the following:

- provide activities to develop knowledge of religious practices

- embrace a wide range of artefacts, props, texts, internet sources, visits and visitors in teaching the children to gather information, reflect and answer questions about religion.
- facilitate the communication and presentation of information, ideas and judgements about religion in a wide range of group sizes and ways: verbal, dramatic, artistic, musical, pictorial, written, filmed or photographed.

Boxes of RE resources are kept in the cupboard at the end of the KS2 corridor and these resources are supplemented with resources from the local Durham Religious Resources Centre for which we have an annual subscription and through the Durham Learning Resources SLA.

Where possible and appropriate, RE units will be introduced through a visit or visitor relating to the religion being studied.

ASSESSMENT and HOME LEARNING

Pupils' learning and understanding in RE will be assessed incorporating the benchmark expectations set out in the Durham Agreed Syllabus and the key knowledge and vocabulary outlined in each unit's Learning Journey and the Medium Term Plans. Of the three elements in RE, Personal Reflection is not assessed. At the end of each lesson, teachers assess whether a pupil has met the objective and understood the enquiry question for that lesson. At the end of each unit, teachers make a summative best-fit judgement based on their ongoing assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding within each lesson and across the unit to assess whether pupils are 'Emerging', 'Developing', 'Secure' or 'Secure +'. This data is captured in a tracking document which the RE subject lead can then analyse to identify achievement and any areas which require improvement, e.g. curriculum modification, CPD etc.

Across school, Knowledge and Understanding of specific religious and non-religious worldviews will become deeper, more complex and more comprehensive across the year groups and key stages. This will include the use of specialised vocabulary and making connections between concepts. Knowledge and Understanding of similarities and differences between and within religious and non-religious worldviews will become increasingly sophisticated.

Critical Thinking requires pupils to become increasingly sophisticated in analysing and evaluating questions raised by religious and non-religious worldviews, their beliefs, practices and their significance and influence. This involves working with increasingly complex information and types of evidence. It includes understanding that there are differing perspectives about the complex questions and issues which relate to beliefs and ways of living in our world today. Critical Thinking involves grappling with the controversial nature of religious and non-religious worldviews.

The long-term plan and Medium-Term Plans for RE are shared on the school website and pupils will be encouraged to discuss their RE learning with parents and carers. Opportunities to involve families and friends of the school to support RE lessons will be sought especially when contributions can be made about religious or non-religious beliefs and world views.

EQUALITY and SEND

Within our RE teaching we aim to:

- nurture an atmosphere of genuine enquiry, openness and respect in which children can use their knowledge of religious belief and practices to talk about and reflect upon their own beliefs, values and experiences.
- model, value and teach attitudes of fairness, respect and empathy towards people of various religions and belief systems, including those represented within the class, school and local communities as well as in the wider global community.

RE lessons will be differentiated to ensure that they are accessible for all children and pupils will be encouraged to demonstrate respect and a growing understanding towards those who hold any religious belief or none. RE encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their own and others' beliefs and values, in a classroom climate that recognises and respects difference.

The following attitudes can be developed and are planned for in units of work at every key stage.

- Self-awareness
- Respect
- Open-mindedness
- Appreciation and Wonder

Right of withdrawal from RE

RE is provided for all pupils and is open, inclusive and broad. During RE lessons, pupils explore a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. In the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. If parents wish to do so they should discuss this with the head teacher. (see NATRE guidance)

https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/18-15676_NAHT%20RE%20withdrawal%20document_final.pdf