



Review Date: January 2019

To be reviewed: January 2021

Religious Education Policy

1. A statement regarding the legal position of RE in your school.

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'

Even Swindon Primary is a Community school therefore we deliver RE in line with the Swindon Agreed Syllabus

2. Rationale/Aims for teaching RE (Reference should be made to the Swindon Agreed Syllabus and Religious Education in English schools: Non statutory guidance 2010)

In Religious Education at Even Swindon Primary School we aim that Religious Education will:-

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. 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** (whether they are 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. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **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 and wonder and mystery
- See *Swindon Agreed Syllabus for specific skills and attitudes developed in RE*

3. The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to community cohesion

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development



Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

4. Approaches to teaching RE.

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through Swindon Agreed Syllabuses, (diocesan advice) and in schools, taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

Religious Education at Even Swindon Primary school is delivered in the following way.

- We deliver RE in line with the Swindon Local Agreed Syllabus.
- We inspire learners through a varied curriculum; the themes for each term are based on the whole school focus of STEM, with six foundation themes – one per term – being interwoven (RE, History, Geography, Art, DT and Computing).
- Termly Topic Webs for each year group are available on our school website.



5. How RE is organised. This will include how RE is delivered i.e. as a discrete subject or part of topic work or humanities etc. What religions are taught at which KS, who is responsible, where resources are stored?

In accordance with the structure of the Swindon Agreed Syllabus we have agreed the following:

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Rec.	F1 Which stories are special and why?	F2 Which people are special and why?	F3 Which places are special and why?	F4 Which times are special and why?	F5 Where do we belong?	F6 What is special about our world and why?
Yr 1	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? <i>Christians, Muslims and Jewish</i>	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?	1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe?		1.5 What makes some places sacred? <i>Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish</i> <i>This could be an RE week or fit into a cross curricular unit of study.</i>	
Yr 2	1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter? <i>Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish</i>	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? <i>(different festival focus)</i> <i>Christians, Jewish and/or Muslims</i>	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? or 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe?		1.4 How can we learn from sacred books? <i>Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish</i>	
Yr 3	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today?		L2.1 What do different people believe about God? <i>Christian, Hindus and/or Muslims</i>	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? <i>Christian and Jewish</i> <i>Easter focus possibly an RE week</i>	L2.4 Why do people pray? <i>Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims</i>	L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians today?
Yr 4	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?		L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong? <i>Christians, Jewish people and non-religious (Humanists)</i>	L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people?	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? <i>Hindus and Muslims</i> <i>Eid focus possibly an RE week</i>	L2.6 Why do some people think that life is like a journey and what significant experiences mark this?
Yr 5	U2.1 Why do some people think God exists? <i>Christians and non-religious (Humanists)</i>	U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? <i>Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people</i> <i>Possible RE week or fortnight with a focus on a visit to the church and the mandir</i>	U2.2 What would Jesus do? (Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century?)		U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? <i>Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people and non-religious (Humanists)</i>	
Yr 6	U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? <i>Christians, Muslims and non-religious (Humanists)</i>	U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa, grace and/or Ummah? <i>Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims</i>	U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists?			U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? <i>Christians, Hindus & non-religious (Humanists)</i>



6. Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording, assessment should be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies in order to assess progress and understanding and diagnose areas for development, whether for an individual, group or the whole class.

It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set. Assessment questions (including those from the Swindon Agreed Syllabus) are incorporated into all RE lessons. RE achievement is recorded and reported upon annually in written reports.

7. Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The Senior Leadership Team (encompassing curriculum and year leaders) will monitor RE within the school through planning scrutinies, work scrutinies and pupil conferencing. This takes place at least three times per year, and is additionally followed up where necessary.

8. Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its contribution to SMSC awareness and teaching British Values
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE



9. The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Even Swindon Primary school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Even Swindon school.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- 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 should be made aware of its 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 No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that 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 need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.
- Outside arrangements can only be made as long as no financial burden falls on the school as a result of these arrangements.

10. Date of policy review: January 2021

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