



Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks

Palfrey Junior School

Religious Education (RE) Policy 2024

1. Aims and objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Palfrey Junior School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

1.2 The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills, and make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other people's views, and celebrate the diversity in society.

2. School Context

Religious representation at Palfrey Junior School is currently:

Christian 2%

No religion 2%

Sikh 0.8%

Hindu 0.5%

Muslim 93%

Not specified 1.7%

The background of many children therefore appears to be Muslim with only a small percentage of children stating that they do not follow a religion.



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3. The role of the RE Co-ordinator

- 3.1 The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for the development of religious education throughout the school.
- 3.2 The RE Co-ordinator draws up an annual action plan, in the same cycle as the School Development Plan. The action plan outlines the RE Co-ordinator's plans in relation to the scheme of work, resources, monitoring of the subject and budget.
- 3.3 The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring, planning and reviewing children's work.
- 3.4 The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for the purchase and storage of resources.
- 3.5 The RE Co-ordinator will attend courses for religious education, providing feedback on developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead direction for the subject.
- 3.6 The RE Co-ordinator may make links with other schools to support and enhance the teaching of religious education.
- 3.7 The RE Co-ordinator advises teachers as to how to contact local faith communities, with the aim of making regular contact with members of a particular faith.

4. The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. It also meets the requirements for the Walsall SACRE 2016-21. It is being revised to meet the requirements for the 2021-2026 guidance. Please follow the link for more details.

2016-2021 SACRE Policy

https://link.walsall.gov.uk/Portals/18/LA/School%20Evaluation%20%26%20Improvement/Improvement%20Services/Sacre/Agreed%20Syllabus%202016-21/607-2016-06-08-0303-1919-Walsall_agreed_Syllabus_2016.pdf

2021-2026 SACRE Policy

<https://www.retoday.org.uk/uploads/RE%20Today%20Website/RE%20Today%20course%20downloads/2021/Walsall%20Syll%20Launch%2021/Walsall%20RE%20Syllabus%20June%202021%20Final.pdf>



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5. Teaching and learning style

- 5.1 The teaching and learning style will be determined by the learning task or activity and the resources being used. We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.
- 5.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. When Covid restrictions allow, we organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.
- 5.3 Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups.
- 5.4 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:
- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
 - grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
 - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
 - using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

6. Curriculum planning in religious education

- 6.1 We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the LEA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education



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build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

- 6.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group.
- 6.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.
- 6.4 The class teacher and subject leader may adapt these plans to allow for differentiation, writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

7. Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

7.1 English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy have had religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is RE's way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

7.2 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

7.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through religious education in our school we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference



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between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in doing so; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

8. Teaching religious education to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).

9. Assessment and recording

9.1 'Assessment of learning' and 'assessment for learning' in religious education as based on children's knowledge and understanding of religious concepts and their application of skills relevant to the study of religion. Thus assessment as stated in the Agreed Syllabus "will not be used for judging an individual's adherence to a faith, their personal views, their values or their behaviour." It is also important for teachers to be aware that "it may not be appropriate in RE for some children to express their learning about religions through representational art, music or drama."

9.2 We assess children's work in religious education through assessing the elements (which are mandatory) within the programme of study. Taking account of the suggested content and the skills children need to progress in RE, we make informal judgements as we observe them during lessons, for example verbal feedback such as praise and encouragement. Formal assessment is evident through marking and comments as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil through an assessment. The assessment objective and outcome is shared with the children and we provide comments that can be used to set targets. This is important in order to raise achievement in RE and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9.3 The RE subject leader (Mr Partington) keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.



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10. Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. In the central store we have, labelled boxes of artefacts, books (including key books supporting and enhancing teachers' knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths) and posters for each unit of work. There is also a collection of Bibles and our ICT collection includes videos, websites which are available to use on the Smart boards. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and children's reference books. These are colour coded and both children and staff borrow these resources using the library loan procedure.

11. Monitoring and reviewing

11.1 Monitoring and reviewing is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of religious education and to ensure the Agreed Syllabus requirements are being fulfilled in the best possible way. It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for religious education within the school. Detailed evaluation is undertaken by the RE Co-ordinator who is responsible for monitoring and reviewing:

- The curriculum - through informing colleagues about current changes and developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject.
- Keep policy up to date
- Keeping schemes up to date
- Planning – Long/medium/short term
- The quality of teaching – through lesson observations
- Standards of children's work – through samples of work, book trawls, wall trawls and photographs.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

Date: _____ **November 2024** _____



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Review 2027 or sooner should changes occur.