

Religious Education (RE) Policy



Mission Statement, Aims and Objectives

The purpose of Religious Education at Emmanuel School is to nurture the spiritual and moral development in our children through learning *about* and *from* religion.

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. 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 while addressing the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit.

Building on our Christian ethos and in partnership with the whole school community, we provide a stimulating and caring environment where individuals are valued and nurtured morally, spiritually and academically. We stress the fundamental principle;

“Always treat others as you would like them to treat you” as Jesus said Matthew 7:12

The aims of religious education is to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- 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 to enable them to make reasoned judgements about spiritual and religious issues;
- have respect for other people’s views and to celebrate the diversity in society;
- develop their own personality, talents and abilities to the full

The legal position of religious education

The Religious Education curriculum forms an important part of our school’s spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the RE syllabus that has been written by the Diocese of London and it has been designed to help children to both learn about religions and to learn from religions. Whilst the children learn about all the major world faiths, the syllabus naturally gives particular emphasis to the Christian faith. Religious Education will be allocated not less than 5% of the timetable. In Key Stage 2 this translates as 1 ¼ hours per week, totaling 45 hours over the year.

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Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children to both learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the spiritual and religious ideas and concepts mean to them.

There are two attainment targets in Religious Education, namely:

AT1 Learning about Religion

To gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity in particular and world religions in general.

AT2 Learning from Religion

Developing the capacity and skill to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions.

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 and those around them in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and the learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and 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. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups and those of no faith on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues; they use computers and work individually or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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 common 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;
- children also working in mixed ability partners to facilitate good role models and a positive learning attitude;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

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As a school, we attend a weekly church service at Emmanuel Church where children worship and celebrate key events in the Christian calendar.

Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the London Diocese Board of School's scheme of study. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

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 half term at each key stage. Where possible, we teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects. In Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of spiritual and religious themes and topics.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each half term. The curriculum co-ordinator keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception and nursery years.

In the Early Years, religious education is an integral part of the 'Understanding of the World' strand of the foundation stage curriculum. We relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the 'Development Matters' document which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Teaching religious education to children with special needs

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 that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against learning objectives allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

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We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a trip to a place of worship, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We give verbal feedback and question children. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the curriculum unit objectives. We record the attainment in our assessment files, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. This information is also used to decide if interventions are needed to challenge or support certain children.

When RE is highlighted on our monitoring programme, we collect samples of children's work for moderation purposes. These samples of work inform us of the level of work that are expected from each year group and to ensure that the school is maintaining high standards of progress and attainment.

Resources

We have appropriate resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. Classes will also undertake visits or have visitors come into school. We are continually developing the supply of RE resources to support the children's learning.

Each class has a 'Reflection Space' where children can find a cross, a bible and other religious books. The RE topic of that class will also be displayed in that area with relevant resources.

Monitoring and review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The leader reviews samples of the children's work, monitors planning and objectives coverage and visits classes to observe teaching in the subject.

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| Policy reviewed | November 2021 |
| Agreed review schedule | 3 yearly |
| Next review due | November 2024 |