



Religious Education (RE) Policy

Date: May 2025

Review Date: May 2028

At Whitegate C of E Primary School, we know the pivotal role that Religious Education (RE) has in a person's life. We know that RE is the backbone of communication and understanding in society as it empowers human beings to look beyond the material things of reality and see the truly unique place we have found ourselves in. High quality RE does lead to beneficial British Citizens and a more tolerant and understanding society but most importantly, it allows everyone in our school community to flourish and embrace the chance to pursue wisdom and mutually support each other to grow in love for each other and the world around us.

With thankful hearts, we trust in God as we grow in his love which shines through us. We aim to live our faith and grow in wisdom.

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and people. (Luke 2:52)

But the wisdom from above is pure first of all; it is also peaceful, gentle, and friendly; it is full of compassion and produces a harvest of good deeds; it is free from prejudice and hypocrisy. (James 3:17)

Introduction

As a Voluntary Aided School, the management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher. RE has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Board as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of RE provided within its school. This policy reflects the school's agreed values and philosophy with regard to RE. It illustrates how this subject is taught within school and gives guidance on planning and assessment. The policy has been produced after discussion with governors and members of staff and will be reviewed every two years. The policy will be available to all staff, governors, parents/carers, advisors and inspectors.

Entitlement

RE in our church school lies at the very heart of the curriculum as a core subject. The School has adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus which reflects the National Framework for RE, the National Society Statement of Entitlement, the Church of England RE Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. The RE Curriculum in accordance with the recommended syllabus requires a curriculum allocation of 5% of the available timetable and in view of this children will be taught in class groups for one afternoon a week in EYFS, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. Christianity plays a central role in RE, taking approximately 70% of the time available. Appropriate teaching about different faiths and world views is included.

The time allocated to RE in school is independent of time allocated to Collective Worship. Although RE and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich each other, Collective Worship is a separate statutory requirement and is not covered by this policy. This policy can be found on the school website.

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Aims and objectives

At Whitegate, the RE provided is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England, and it plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the school.

Within the context of Whitegate, RE will support children in developing their own beliefs, values and attitudes through an exploration of shared human experience and the place and significance of Christianity and different religions in the contemporary world.

The aims of RE are to help children:

- think theologically and philosophically in order to explore the great questions of life, meaning and purpose, developing a personal response to these;
- reflect critically on their own experiences and develop a personal response to their own beliefs;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post-modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding. For Christians, this is based on God and the world;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- develop their own personal faith and nurture their own spiritual development;
- experience the breadth and variety Christian belief and practice as a diverse and global religion;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue about Christianity and different faiths and traditions;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and the personal commitment involved
- to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today including the role of Christianity as a diverse and global religion;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition;
- have respect for other peoples' diverse views.

Questful RE and The RE Curriculum

Questful

At Whitegate, we have embraced the Questful RE syllabus which is recommended by the local diocese. Within this, teachers have access to high quality resources and planning that supports them to provide learning opportunities that support the teaching of an academically rigours RE curriculum. The resource focuses primarily on Christianity and the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. This focus takes up much of the teaching time and allows the children to develop disciplinary and substantive knowledge within RE. Topics for these units and the focus of them can be found on the Long-Term Planning (LTP) which is accessible on the school webpage for RE. Teaching about the world faiths of Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism accounts for up to 30% of teaching time. This is carried out through many of the units that are taught and also within our annual Interfaith Week.

World Faiths

The teaching of Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism accounts for up to 30% of RE curriculum time. This allows pupils to have a broader understanding of key concepts in RE such as god and faith and also opens their eyes up to the reality of the multi-cultural world we live in. Whilst teaching within each of these world faiths takes place within certain units across the year, a central element of this learning occurs through our Interfaith week. Annually, through genuine, high-quality resources and artefacts, visitors, purposeful trips and engaging activities, pupils focus on one of these religions and learn more about them.

World Views

The study of different world views is linked to the learning of different world faiths including Christianity as a diverse and global faith. In addition to this, in upper KS2, pupils are introduced to the world views of Humanism as well as the atheist and agnostic world views. These are covered within a number of units and can also include the visitors and engagement with real-life stories.

Disciplinary Knowledge

Within RE, we understand there to be three main areas of disciplinary knowledge:

- Theology - the study of religious belief from a religious perspective, with a focus on the nature of divinity.
- Philosophy - the pursuit of understanding truths about the themselves, the world and others in society.
- Social Sciences - the study of people, their behaviours, and how they interact with each other and their environment.

Substantive Knowledge

Within RE, we understand there to be a range of ways that substantive knowledge can be formed. These can be found through our use of the Big Frieze from the Understanding Christianity resource, the Golden Threads of curriculum areas identified within the LTP and the annual revisiting of learning from Interfaith Week each year.

Contribution of RE to the Teaching of Other Subjects

Although RE is taught as an implicit subject within our school, it does provide many opportunities for links with other curriculum areas, particularly English, PSHE, history, geography and the creative arts. In addition, there are strong links between RE and cross curricular themes and dimensions, including our No Outsiders curriculum, multi-cultural education, equal opportunities, citizenship and health education.

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 our English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our 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.

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British Values and Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Education.

RE is also a place where spiritual development flourishes. We understand spirituality to be the inner most of each child and is the basis of how we answer the question: who am I? Spiritual development leads to joy, comfort, meaning and a lens to interpret life's trials. RE's unique position to explore topics theologically and philosophically means that pupils are able to engage with a part of their being which directly influences the person they are to become.

RE also allows pupils the opportunity to engage with moral topics in a safe space where they are able to disagree, debate and change their minds. Pupils are also given the opportunity to encounter cultures and societies which are different from their own. This broadens their horizons and enables them to see how much more to life there is to explore beyond the physical and material.

At Whitegate, we want to be a place where pupils can realise their full potential and we see RE as pivotal in this pursuit due its direct relationship with spirituality and morality.

Through our RE lessons, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin choices and behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required within British Values and 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.

Assessment/Planning/Record Keeping and Reporting

Planning for RE is found in two main formats: long term and medium term. The LTP maps the RE topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium-term plans (MTP) give details of each unit of work for each term. Teachers use their plans to create their own learning objectives (presented inside a fish) that support the pupils to reach the outcomes expected for each unit (which are found in the MPT).

The class teacher uses the syllabus units and MTP to set relevant, creative, effective and challenging tasks using a wide range of teaching strategies.

Informal assessment is undertaken on a lesson-by-lesson basis through observation of children at work, discussion and questioning so that any misunderstandings or problems can be identified in the lesson. This assessment is reinforced by the marking of children's work. Each child in Key Stage 2 will have their own RE book and each class in KS1 has a RE 'floor book'. By the end of Year 1, pupils will also have their own RE book which will be used in conjunction with the floor book. The floor book will contain evidence of children's discussions, comments and ideas, visits and visitors, photographs, group work, post-it-notes and printed work from the interactive whiteboard. In addition to this, evidence for RE can be found in the formal assessment proforma that are carried out by teachers up to four times a year. Evidence for these judgements comes from books, informal conversations and from evidence on Blipit.

Adaptive Teaching

At Whitegate, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability or starting point. RE forms part of the school curriculum to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Adaptions to learning are made by teachers and could include: adjustments to methods of recording such as verbal, visual or computing based, additional scaffolding and the prioritising of core knowledge and skills.

Equal Opportunities

It is our aim to offer equal access to the curriculum to all children irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability and social circumstances, so that each child has the greatest opportunity to progress. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice in equal opportunities. Please refer to our Equality Policy which can be found on the school website.

Parental Involvement

At Whitegate, we believe education to be a joint venture between home and school and are aware that one of the most significant factors influencing children's attainment at school is parental involvement. We therefore encourage the support of parents. Parents' evenings are held twice a year during which parents and teachers discuss their child's progress in RE along with other subjects. Further information is provided in a school report which is issued in the summer term. Parents can contact the school at any time if they have concerns regarding their child's progress in Religious Education. Parents are also invited to school church services and individual class' collective worships. Parents are also involved through half-termly homework that focuses on the school values. The tasks set often have a Biblical or spiritual aspect to them which enables parents to have an active role in their children's spiritual development.

Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School

Parents may withdraw their children from RE as they may in any school. The worship and RE provided is approximately split 70:30 with 70% of curriculum time being spent on Christianity. This reflects Whitegate's Christian heritage, history and original purpose. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the teaching of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from worship and/or RE (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school. If a request for a withdrawal is made, the headteacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation.

Date of Policy: May 2025

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APPROVED:	06.06.25
SIGNED:	J BANCROFT
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