

Religious Education Policy



Religious Education (RE) is a statutory subject to which every pupil has an entitlement at every key stage. At St John's, we deliver RE in line with the Newcastle Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020.

Aims

RE is key to enabling pupils to grow up in a diverse, multi-faith and multi-cultural society. RE aims to give pupils the knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs and to contribute towards the development of pupils' own beliefs and values.

In accordance with the Newcastle Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020, pupils must be taught:

- about matters of central importance to the worldviews studied, how these can form coherent accounts for adherents, and how these matters are interpreted in different times, cultures and places.
- about key concepts including 'religion', 'secularity', 'spirituality' and 'worldview', and that worldviews are complex, diverse and plural.
- how patterns of belief, expression and belonging may change across and within worldviews, locally, nationally and globally, both historically and in contemporary times.
- how worldviews develop in interaction with each other, have some shared beliefs and practices as well as differences, and that people may draw upon more than one tradition.
- the role of religious and non-religious ritual, practices, foundational texts and the arts in both the formation and communication of experience, beliefs, values, identities and commitments.
- how worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions of meaning and purpose raised by human experience, and the different roles that worldviews play in providing people with ways of making sense of their lives.
- the different roles played by worldviews in the lives of individuals and societies, including their influence on moral behaviour and social norms.
- how worldviews have power and influence in societies and cultures, appealing to various sources of authority, including foundational texts.

Newcastle's Agreed Syllabus for RE aims to ensure that all pupils and students:

- a) know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- *describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.*
 - *identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews*
 - *appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of expressing meaning.*
- b) express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
- *explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.*
 - *express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.*
 - *appreciate and appraise different dimensions of a religion or worldview.*
- c) acquire and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:
- *find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.*
 - *enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the well-being of all.*
 - *articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives, authority, including foundational texts.*

Legal Requirements

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 to a particular religion.

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from R.E. Where a pupil or student has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil or student to receive. Such RE can be provided at the school in question, or the pupil or student can be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided, if this is reasonably convenient. If neither approach is practicable, external arrangements can be made to provide the pupil or student with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil or student may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend such RE. External arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the local authority (LA) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or the end of a

school session.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from teaching RE.

Curriculum Time

Early Years: 30 hours per year

Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year

Key Stage 2: 39 hours per year

Collective worship is not part of the taught day and therefore cannot be considered part of the recommended time for teaching RE.

In the foundation stage, RE is linked to the Early Learning Goals and provides children the opportunity to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects.

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. 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. We also teach and promote British Values through religious education. At St John's, these are reinforced in the following ways: *democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance*.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching 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 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 so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Pupils with SEN

All children have the right to access the RE curriculum. In order to ensure that children with special educational needs achieve to the best of their ability, it may be necessary to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for some pupils. We teach the RE curriculum to all children, whatever their ability. Through the teaching of RE 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. Where appropriate we may support SEN children in small groups or on a one to one basis.

Assessment

Assessing RE is an integral part of teaching and learning and central to good practice. It should be process orientated reviewing the way that techniques and skills are applied purposefully by pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and skills that they have developed during a particular unit. As assessment is part of the learning process it is essential that pupils are closely involved. Assessment can be broken down into:

Formative assessments are carried out during and following short, focused tasks and activities. They provide pupils and teaching staff the opportunity to reflect on their learning in the context of the agreed success criteria. This feeds into planning for the next lesson or activity.

Summative assessment should review pupils' capability and provide a best fit level. Use of independent open ended tasks, provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate capability in relation to the term's work. There should be an opportunity for pupil review and identification of next steps. Summative assessment should be recorded for all pupils showing whether the pupils have met, exceeded or not achieved the learning objectives. Teachers will use assessments to form a judgement as to whether each child has reached the targets for each key question in their year group. Evidence of work will be shown and recorded in children's books and on Seesaw with photographs, videos and notes on discussions with children etc. This will demonstrate achievement of objectives.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring will support the self-evaluation process identifying areas of strengths as well as those for development. The RE Lead is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

Through monitoring the coordinator will:

- ensure that there is clear progression throughout the school.
- analyse assessment data and pupil progress.
- ensure that there are suitable resources to help with the teaching and learning of RE.

Agreed: December 2021

Review: Biennially - May 2026