



## **Religious Education Policy**

Policy written – March 2023

To be reviewed – May 2025

## Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at The Acorn Federation. It was developed with reference to the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020 – 2025) and the Church of England's Understanding Christianity approach. It is taught as part of the Primary Curriculum 2014.

## Aims of Religious Education

RE supports the aims for education, outlined in the National Curriculum 2014, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. RE should enable pupils to participate in an on-going search for wisdom, through exploring questions raised by human experience and answers offered by the religions and beliefs of the people of Derbyshire and the wider community, to promote their personal development.

## Principles of the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education

The broad aims of RE in Derbyshire schools are to learn about religions and beliefs and to learn from religion and belief.

In line with the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus, our aims in teaching Religious Education at The Acorn Federation are to:

- Ask **challenging questions** about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- Develop pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, other principal religions and traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions.
- Offer **opportunities for personal reflection** and spiritual development.
- Enhance pupils' **awareness and understanding** of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- Encourage pupils to **learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions** while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.
- Challenge pupils to **reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate** issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.
- Encourage pupils to **develop their sense of identity and belonging**.
- Enable children to **develop individually within their communities** and as citizens in a diverse society and global community.
- Enable pupils to **develop respect for and sensitivity to others**, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- **Promote tolerance** and enable pupils to combat prejudice.

## Religious Education Curriculum Planning

Our RE Knowledge Progression document is based on the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020-2025), and supported by resources from the Church of England's Understanding Christianity approach.

EYFS learning links to the Early Years Statutory framework and Early Learning Goals, particularly Understanding the World and People, Culture and Communities.

KS1 (Garden Class) follows a 2-year Long Term Plan and the Meadow Class a 4-year Long Term Plan. Units of work are presented as a question e.g. at KS1, "How and why do we celebrate special times?" and at KS2, "What makes a leader worth following?" World Faiths and religious themes are revisited throughout KS1 and KS2. Over the 2-year cycle, our curriculum covers

Christian, Jewish, and Muslim beliefs and people; this prepares children for learning in KS2. The 4-year KS2 programme covers Christian, Jewish and Muslim beliefs and people, also introducing a focus on Hindu people, not studied in depth in KS1. It also covers non-religious beliefs.

RE teaching ranges from 36 hours a year in the Foundation Stage and KS1 to 45 hours a year at KS2. This amounts to approximately 5% of Curriculum time following government guidelines. (Part of this time allocation enables us to spend time preparing for important festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter services.)

When planning, the Subject Leader follows the Knowledge Progression, which identifies the key learning for each unit. Short-term lesson plans then identify activities and resources for individual lessons. For our mixed age classes, knowledge is defined for each year group.

### **Teaching Methods**

Teachers across The Acorn Federation follow the planning provided by the Subject Leader. Individual teachers then adapt lesson plans, e.g. for children with SEND, also providing support or challenge for the diverse range of ages and needs in their class. Pupils work within a class group, in small groups or individually. Activities may include: direct teaching, discussions or debates, creative activities e.g. poetry, art or drama, and debate, research (using topic books or the Internet, digital activities, e.g. presentations or Word documents. We have a continuing relationship with the Open Centre in Derby and where possible arrange visits to places of worship and welcome visitors to the classroom.

### **Special Educational Needs**

So that SEND pupils can access the planned curriculum, teachers adapt planning to ensure that the RE curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. This might be through differentiation of teaching methods, e.g. adapting tasks, or resources, or alternatively, providing adult support.

### **Equality/Diversity**

It is a legal requirement that Religious Education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools, except to those withdrawn by their parents.

All children, including SEND, will be given equal access to all learning in school. World faiths are taught as part of our Curriculum and this supports children's understanding and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs. Our teaching of British Values also underpins our commitment to equality and diversity within our schools.

### **Assessment**

Learning Outcomes are specified in the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for each unit of work. These are designed to ensure coverage, continuity and progression. Our RE Knowledge Progression document is based on these outcomes and contains the knowledge and learning expected for each year group. Progression Grids using these criteria are completed by teachers at the end of each term to determine whether children have met the outcomes for that unit. Subject Leaders will use this information to inform future planning. Sources of assessment might include: written work, discussions, questioning, photographs of activities and observations of pupils.

### **Resources**

Resources are stored in general resource areas at both schools and also in the class rooms. These resources include religious artefacts, DVDs/CDs, photographs, topic books and Bibles.

## **Subject Leader's role**

The role of the Subject Leader is to:

- Lead curriculum development and ensure the implementation of the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus, ensuring progression in learning across the school.
- Support colleagues where necessary, e.g. in subject knowledge or assessment.
- Monitor RE progress and activity and advise the Head Teacher of any action needed.
- Purchase and distribute RE resources.
- Keep up to date with developments in Religious Education, e.g. attending Network meetings, and communicate information to colleagues as appropriate.

The Coordinator will review this policy on a 3-yearly basis. (Note: The Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus was last revised in 2020.)