



Religious Education Policy

Riverside Federation

Approved by:	Executive Head Teacher
Last reviewed:	Spring 2022
Next review due:	Autumn 2025

This policy is in support of the Riverside Federation's vision:
Small schools providing opportunity, delivering challenge, building respect.

1. Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of life's most fundamental questions. We develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, 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 and world views. 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 religion and belief as well as about religions.

The aims of Religious Education are to help children:

- Develop an understanding of the word religion
- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and world views.
- 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 judgement about religious issues.
- Have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

2. The legal position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA states 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 this should only be done once the parents 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. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

3. Teaching and Learning Style

"A broad understanding of enquiry-based learning which encompasses an environment in which learning is driven by a process of enquiry owned by the children. This syllabus advocate that

enquiry based learning 'inspires children to learn for themselves, bringing a real research-oriented approach to the subject'.

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.

Our teaching and 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 on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in class or assemblies.

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, providing scaffolding for those who need it so all children have the same knowledge

4. Curriculum planning in Religious Education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with Cambridgeshire's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunity 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 term during each class. The RE subject leader works out this plan in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus programmes of study for Foundation stage, KS1 and KS2.

Our medium term plans give details of each unit of work for each half term. We ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus.

The teacher plans lessons with specific learning objectives with the help of the children. The content of these plans will differ from class to class, dependant on the line of enquiry that is created. S/He discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

5. Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class. In reception classes, religious education is taught through a scheme of work based on the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. This scheme acts as an introduction to the key concepts that will be studied in depth at a later date. Aspects of religious education also form an integral part of the topic work covered during the year.

6. 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.

7. 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, 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. We take into account the targets set for individual children.

8. Resources

We have resources in our school to support our teaching of religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in the staff room/store room. These are age appropriate bibles or bible story books and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. We also have access to the Diocesan Resource Centre at Diocesan House. Teachers are encouraged to use this resource and hire equipment as and when it is needed.

9. Monitoring and review

The subject leader and Executive Head Teacher are 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.