



Religious Education Policy

Alexandra Infants' School
Coordinator: Miss Thompson

Alexandra Junior School
Coordinator: Mrs S Wilton

Introduction

At Alexandra Infants' and Junior School, 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, especially Islam, Judaism and 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. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

At Alexandra Infants and Junior School, Religious Education plays an important part, in association with other subjects, in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Both schools follow the new agreed Stoke on Trent Syllabus for Religious Education 2021-2026 alongside using resources from Understanding Christianity. Both schemes of work are from RE Today Services. Within the syllabus is states, 'The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.' (Stoke on Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026, Page 7)

The aims of RE

The principal aims for religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principle aim. The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs
2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs
3. Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied

The aims can be found in detail on Page 8 of the Stoke on Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026

Teaching and Learning Style

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, Eid-ul-Fitr, Diwali and Passover 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.

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);
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.
- The use of stories in EYFS and KS1 is of prime importance.
- Allowing the children to work in a range of ways i.e. group work, class discussions, class drama activities, visits to places of worship, visiting speakers.

RE is taught for a minimum of one hour a week, each half term or term a learning question is set and explored. See Long Term Plan or Implementation and Intent documents for more information. These can be found on each school's retrospective websites.

RE in the Foundation Stage

Children in the foundation stage are taught RE in accordance with the Stoke-On-Trent Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026. In Reception, they have 6 key questions to cover over the year - 3 of which are systematic units with a focus on Christianity and 3 that are thematic units.

The 6 questions covered in Reception are:

- F1 - Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?
- F2 - Why is Christmas special for Christians?
- F3 - Why is Easter special for Christians?
- F4 - Being special: Where do we belong?
- F5 - Which places are special and why?
- F6 - Which stories are special and why?

The five areas of learning within the Early Learning Goals Framework, which most closely relate to RE are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Planning

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Stoke-on-Trent's LA's Agreed Syllabus. 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.

In KS1, we carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases - a long term plan, a medium term plan and a flipchart plan for the delivery of the session. The long term plan has been created by the Coordinator which outlines which units are to be taught in each year group and in which term. The medium term plan gives a detailed breakdown of the unit into the lessons for the half term/term, the learning questions are taken from the syllabus or from the scheme Understanding Christianity. The class teacher then uses the medium term planning to create lesson flipcharts for each week. The flipchart planning must clearly show the lesson question and accompanying success criteria. Flipcharts must include; a starter (can you still, retrieval of information), discussion questions, task and plenary (cloze activity/multiple choice quiz). The flipcharts are to be saved on the shared area as they may be needed during an informal discussion with the RE subject leader. All work completed in the lesson is put into an RE Floor book (KS1 only).

In KS2, we carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan has been provided by the Coordinator which outlines the units to be taught throughout the year (flexibility is given to allow units to be swapped as long as every unit is taught)

The medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term can be found in each classroom and are taken from the Agreed syllabus.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. They keep these individual plans and may discuss them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Assessment

In EYFS, any RE work that takes place will be recorded on Tapestry and evidenced within the tracking books. Discussion is a key part of assessment within the foundation stage, children's responses will also be recorded.

In KS1, formative assessment is carried out throughout the lessons with children's responses being noted down on a class success criteria sheet which is then highlighted at the end of the lesson in accordance to the success criteria. All work is kept and class discussions are recorded on IWB which are printed

and put into the floor book. The assessment sheets from each lesson are used when completing an end of unit assessment sheet.

In KS2, the children are continuously assessed before, during and after the lessons. After each lesson, the children will be assessed using an 'I can' statement. For each lesson, there will be a knowledge learning objective and a skill learning objective. This will be shown on the appropriate page in the floor book. The children will be RAG rated on how they have achieved the particular knowledge or skill they have been working on. Green will show that the child has achieved ARE within that lesson. If the name is not coloured, then that means that they are not working at ARE. The word 'absent' will be put next to the name if the child was away during the lesson. This assessment will inform a teacher's judgement as to whether they are age related at the end of the unit. Any of the 5Es that are relevant to the lesson will be noted next to the learning objective on the 'I can' statement.

At the end of a unit, the teacher will fill in an assessment grid which will assess the children based on the outcomes from the entire unit. Retention of knowledge is supported and assessed through a range of mini quizzes revisited regularly.

Learning Recovery (KS2)

In light of missed learning due to COVID 19, recovery provision has been planned for and is detailed in specific year group catch up plans. These have been formulated through collaboration of SLT, subject leaders, teachers and across the Key Stage with the feeder Infant School. These plans will be reviewed, modified and RAG rated regularly to inform future teaching & learning. For further detail please see each year group's separate plans.

Inclusion

At Alexandra Infants' and Junior School, it is our belief that all children have an equal right to a broad and balanced curriculum, which enables them to meet their full potential. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of

those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those who are deemed more able and talented and those learning English as an additional language, and we make all reasonable adjustments to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; SEND Information Report; Equality policy and scheme; Able and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

As a school we strive to ensure that all children, staff and members of our school community are treated fairly and equally. All children have equal rights to access all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and disability. Within this subject area, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff endeavour to provide the appropriate provision for this to occur. This policy follows the guidelines and practices that are stated and outlined in Alexandra Infants' and Junior Schools Equality Scheme. Please see this policy for further detail.

Changes to the RE Syllabus

In June 2021 the Stoke-on-Trent Agreed Syllabus changed and was launched to schools. Following this, the new syllabus is being implemented at Alexandra Infants' School and Alexandra Junior School in the academic year 2021-22.

This policy will be reviewed annually.