

# HEWORTH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Religious Education Policy

**Member of staff responsible:** *Kate Durham*

**Focus Group responsible:** *Curriculum and Pastoral*

**Governor responsible:** *Michael Woodmansey*

**Approved by Governors:** Spring 2017

Heworth CE Primary School's RE Policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Flourish Curriculum' document available on the school's website - [www.heworth.york.sch.uk](http://www.heworth.york.sch.uk).

Our school's aim is 'Helping Each Child to Flourish'. Our approach to Religious Education supports this and all of our school values: Compassion, Trust, Forgiveness and Endurance.

At Heworth Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Religious Education is unique in our curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'. At Heworth, a CE School, RE has an important and central place within our curriculum. Concepts and values are explored both through discrete RE lessons and through Key Stage and whole school Collective Worship. The Governors, in consultation with the Head teacher and following advice from the diocese, have decided to adopt the Diocesan Syllabus.

We believe RE has an important place in the development of every pupil, and this has been summed up perfectly by The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Dr John Sentamu:

*"At its very best, education should enable the flourishing of all children and young people as they grow into all that God has created them to be. RE plays a crucial role in this flourishing as RE looks at what it is to be human and how we engage well with one another, with the world around us, and ultimately with God. In spite of secularist agendas, religion continues to shape us and our world, and studying RE can give children and young people tools with which to examine beliefs, attitudes and values that mould us and guide us in life."*

**In particular, through our RE curriculum, we aim to help children to:**

- develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shapes British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- contribute to pupils' own spiritual/ philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and belief
- enable pupils to learn about the other principal religions of Britain, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the life of their adherents

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-

based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

## **Personal development and well-being**

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. RE is an important subject in contribution to the schools development as a Rights Respecting School.

## **Teaching and Learning RE at Heworth**

The RE curriculum at Heworth CE School is designed to deliver specified elements of the Programme of Study outlined in the *York Diocesan Board of Education Primary RE Syllabus*. The curriculum is organised into two-year cycles of units for each class, to ensure children in mixed-age classes do not repeat units.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

## **Time Allocation**

A minimum of 5% of curriculum time is given to RE. Currently RE is taught as discrete lessons either weekly or blocked with additional opportunities provided by "Big RE" days.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

During the EYFS, children's learning in Religious Education contributes to both the prime and specific areas of learning, in particular Personal Social and Emotional Development and Understanding of the World. This enables them to work towards the Early Learning Goals.

## Objectives

The learning objectives, content and activities undertaken by the children at each Key Stage aims to fulfil the Attainment Targets described in the *York Diocesan Board of Education Primary RE Syllabus*. See appendix A for National Expectations in RE at each level.

### Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religions and Beliefs

- *knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources*
- *knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles*
- *knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning*

### Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religions and Beliefs

- *skills of asking and responding to questions of identity, diversity and belonging*
- *skills of asking and responding to questions of meaning, purpose and truth*
- *skills of asking and responding to questions of values and commitment*

## Curriculum Content

In accordance with the structure of the Diocesan Syllabus we have agreed that:

At KS1 pupils mainly study Christianity and Islam.

At KS2 pupils mainly study Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.

## Assessment

A system of assessment is currently used, based on criteria outlined at each level, to ensure effective monitoring of teaching and pupil progress. The form of assessment includes:

- pupil self assessment
- teacher observations during peer and class discussions / activities
- pupils' written work
- personal responses through art, drama, dance or other creative work.

Pupils' progress is carefully recorded and tracked alongside reading, writing & maths on pupil assessment trackers and data snapshots.

## Responsibilities for RE within the school

The **co-ordinator** will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, regular communication with staff responsible for the teaching of RE, and through checking of pupils work.

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, **the governing body and head teacher** should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation

- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

## The Right of Withdrawal from RE

At Heworth we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Heworth.

### Managing the Right of Withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss

the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.

- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

## Appendix: National Expectations

The following table shows the current National Expectations in RE. These outline the criteria for each level throughout the primary years and are a useful aid when planning for progression in knowledge and skills.

Level	AT 1: Learning About Religions	AT2: Learning From Religions
1	Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols, and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression.	Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings, what they find interesting or puzzling and what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.
2	Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance to people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.	Pupils ask, and respond sensitively to questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings. They recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. In relation to matters of right and wrong, they recognise their own values and those of others.
3	Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.	Pupils identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. They ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses. They make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.

4	<p>Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.</p>	<p>Pupils raise and suggest answers to questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.</p>
5	<p>Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They describe why people belong to religions. They understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.</p>	<p>Pupils ask and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. They explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.</p>