

RE Policy

Religious Education is unique in the school 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'.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

"a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

Here at J.H. Godwin, we dedicate a lot of time teaching our children about the Equality Act: religion and belief is one of the protected characteristics set out in this legislation. Our children, and we ourselves, are exposed to bias against these protected characteristics on a regular basis in the forms of news reporting, social media and even from prominent public figures so it is important to balance this judgmental attitude with teaching tolerance, love and acceptance. Not understanding makes you fearful and judgmental so it's really important to learn about religions and to have an academic background that includes an understanding of the world's religions. We promote freedom of choice for everybody and understanding and conversation is important. We want our children to leave our school with an understanding of many of the world's religions, an opportunity to learn about some of their key celebrations and beliefs and view their places of worship so that they don't feel fearful of differences but rather empowered by their ability to challenge bias with knowledge and tolerance.

Aims

At J.H Godwin we aim that Religious Education will:

- Adopt an enquiry-based approach as recommended by Ofsted beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about or from religion.
- Incite challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging.
- Develop the children's understanding of world religions and traditions that examine these big questions; fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Encourage our children to explore their own beliefs (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious beliefs and faith and how these impact on personal and social ethics and to express their responses.
- Enable our children to build their own sense of identity and belonging, which helps them to flourish within their community.
- Teach our children to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice.
- Enable our children to consider their responsibilities to themselves and others, and to explore how they might contribute to their community and wider society.
- Encourage empathy, generosity and compassion.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder.

RE 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 our school's development as a Rights Respecting School.

Inclusion

The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for **all** pupils through a variety of approaches and tasks appropriate to the needs of the 'whole child'.

Assessment

Children are assessed in line with the assessment for learning policy. Assessment may take the form of observing children working, questioning the children and considering children's work (both written and verbal).

Every unit of work should begin with filling in a KWL grid to assess children's prior knowledge and the questions that they would like answering in order to develop a thirst for learning. Every RE enquiry should begin with a lesson from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into an investigation of the religion being studied. Their learning should be assessed either throughout the enquiry or at the end and they should be given the opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief.

Visits and visitors

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to our RE teaching and learning as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the teaching of RE.

Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

Leadership

It is the role of the RE lead to take the lead in policy development and help in the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in RE throughout the school; support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans, their implementation of the scheme of work and in assessment and record keeping activities.

Resources

We will use financial resources to build up an extensive collection of resources, artefacts and books to support the teaching and learning of RE.

Health and Safety

Children's health and safety is foremost in all planning and trips. Children are made aware of potential hazards. All RE teaching and learning is in line with the health and safety policy.

Related policies to be considered:

EYFS

Assessment for Learning

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Health and Safety