



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Agreed: Autumn 2022
Review: Summer 2023

24 C & L

Our Vision

Education in a caring, safe positive environment where all are welcome and valued.

Pupils will enjoy life whilst flourishing academically, spiritually and personally.

The school will foster a joy of learning, love for all, forgiveness and respect, creating strong life-long values.

Children will know that they are loved by God and as part of the Valley End Family.

Galatians 5:22 – *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.*

Valley End Golden Rules

We love and care for each other

We look after property and God's creation

We are honest and always tell the truth

We always try hard to do our best

Our vision is at the centre of all we strive to achieve both within the school and within the wider community and our golden rules are intrinsic to all the experiences we aim to share with the children on a daily basis.

All maintained schools are required by law to provide religious education for all registered pupils. RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus (The Revised Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Surrey Schools 2017 - 2022). Valley End is a Church of England controlled school and as such follows the Agreed Syllabus for Surrey.

As a church school, we value the place of RE in the school curriculum very highly and we aim to provide a rich and varied RE curriculum that enables learners to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Christian faith. Learners also have the opportunity to learn about other faiths and this is always approached in an inclusive and respectful manner.

Religious Education gives children in our school a unique opportunity to reflect on and learn from the faiths and beliefs of those around them. World and local events reported through the media engage the curiosity of all children and cause them to question how such events can happen: in these days we are all too well aware of the migration of people who make our country their new home, and the many complex and varied reasons for this. Effective Religious Education has much to offer our children as they prepare for life in this rapidly changing world, where critical thinking and discernment will be ever more important and valuable.

The teaching of RE aims to enhance pupils' spiritual moral and cultural development and we recognise the importance of helping children learn to respect religious faith and gain a broader understanding of the moral and spiritual world.

RE at Valley End C of E Infant School provides opportunities for children to:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of the nature and belief and the important contribution of religious and spiritual insights and values to the individual's search for the meaning of life, whilst acknowledging that this may also come from a non-religious perspective
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of the other principal religions and beliefs represented in Great Britain
- Develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion & beliefs and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and promote empathy, generosity and compassion
- Enable children to develop the ability to make reasoned, informed and creative responses to religious and moral issues and therefore develop respect for others
- Recognise the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on the individual, on culture and on communities throughout the world and therefore encourage children to consider their responsibilities and how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society.

Breadth and Balance

The following will be studied: -

Early Years Foundation Stage: - **For EYFS the approach is Thematic – topics are based upon children's own lives and experiences, and introduce pupils to Christianity, and other religions and beliefs represented within their own class and / or school.**

- The RE syllabus for EYFS is presented as six topics exploring one of the key questions and building understanding of core concepts (specialness, celebration and belonging) from both the child's and a religious point of view
- These topics will be taught in line with the DfEs EYFS Profile (Development Matters): learning in RE should start from the child's own experience and from within the EYFS curriculum through planned, purposeful play, with a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities

Key Stage One: - Introducing the study of Christianity and aspects of Judaism and Islam and incorporating, where appropriate, consideration of non-religious worldviews

Skills, processes and attitudes developed through RE

Reflection

- On feelings, relationships, experiences, beliefs and practices.

Empathy

- Considering the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others
- Identifying feelings such as love, wonder and forgiveness.
- Seeing the world through the eyes of others, and seeing issues from their point of view

Investigation – this includes: -

- Asking relevant questions; we encourage children to think of 'big' questions, which help children to challenge their thinking and progress with their understanding.
- Knowing how to gather information from a variety of sources.
- Knowing what might constitute evidence for justifying beliefs in religion.

Interpretation – this includes: -

- Drawing meaning from artefacts, works of art, music, poetry and symbolism.

- Interpreting religious language.
- Suggesting meanings of religious texts.

Evaluation – this includes:-

- Debating issues of religious significance with reference to evidence and argument.

Analysis – this includes:-

- Distinguishing between opinion and fact.
- Distinguishing between different features of different religions and beliefs.

Synthesis – this includes:-

- Linking significant features of a religion together in a coherent pattern.
- Connecting different aspects of life into a meaningful whole.

Application – this includes:-

- Making the association between religion / belief and individual, community, national and international life

Expression – this includes:-

- Explaining concepts, rituals and practices.
- Expressing views and responding to questions of religion and belief through a variety of media.

At Valley End Infant School, we also aim to develop self-awareness, respect for all, open-mindedness, appreciation and wonder as attitudes that are at the heart of RE.

Areas of Learning

Within the Surrey Agreed Syllabus, learning in RE is divided into two distinct but complementary areas: knowledge and understanding and expressing ideas, beliefs and insights.

Knowledge and Understanding

Children should know about and understand religion and, where appropriate, non-religious world views, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs, teachings and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between religious and non-religious communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews (including the key texts, the teachings of key leaders, and key thinkers from different traditions and communities)
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning

Expressing ideas, beliefs and insights

Children should express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religion and beliefs, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or belief

Teaching and learning

In Key Stage One, RE is taught as a discrete subject and is allocated 1 hour per week of teaching time. In EYFS, RE is taught through a themed topic approach. The RE whole school planning document shows progression and coverage for each year group. This plan links weekly RE themes to the Agreed Syllabus for Surrey. RE is also found in other aspects of school life such as PSHE, celebrating festivals, collective worship, class discussions and circle times or stories with a moral or cultural theme.

Children learn about Christianity and aspects of Judaism and Islam through encountering some of the important places and objects connected with the religions that are studied. Children become familiar with stories about key people and learn about practices, celebrations and events as well using stories and symbols.

Through the teaching of RE, children develop positive attitudes towards other people. They also enhance their own moral and social development by:-

- Responding to stories from the Bible and stories from other religious traditions.
- Realising that Bible stories and stories from other religions often deal with feelings and situations similar to their own.
- Talking and thinking about puzzling questions which arise in life.
- Talking and listening to others about personally important matters.
- Exploring the sense of belonging to a community and especially belonging to a Christian community.
- Exploring the difference between right and wrong, fair and unfair.
- Expressing themselves in art, drama or dance.
- Expressing themselves creatively and thoughtfully with times of reflective meditation and quiet.
- Responding to the wonder and beauty of creation.

Assessment

Assessment in RE is concerned with pupils' growing knowledge and understanding and their application of skills. It is NOT used to make judgements about personal beliefs, views or behaviour.

In EYFS, assessments are made using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile within the

Prime areas:

- **Personal, social and emotional development**
- Physical development
- **Communication & language**

Specific areas:

- **Literacy**
- Mathematics
- **Understanding the world**
- Expressive arts and design

RE can make an active contribution to all these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to those highlighted in bold text above.

In Key Stage One assessments are based on looking at the end of key stage expectations for knowledge and understanding and expressing ideas, beliefs and insights and measuring children's

increasing understanding in these two areas of learning using end of key stage expectations (emerging, expected, exceeding).

SEND provision

As a highly inclusive church school we look at individual children's needs and differentiate lessons accordingly to make sure all are valued.

The right of withdrawal

Parents have a legal right of withdraw their child from RE and from acts of collective worship on religious grounds. Should the school receive a request, close consultation with the parents as to the nature of religious education that would be acceptable would need to be sought and a mutual agreement reached.

Links to other policies:

Collective Worship

PSHE

Teaching and Learning

Assessment

Equalities

Special Educational Needs

Safeguarding and child protection

Anti-bullying