

RE

Policy

Acre Rigg Infant School

Last reviewed in	September 2025
Next review due	September 2026



Every child Every day Every way Experiencing success

Introduction:

THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes and the sixth form¹.

Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus, which is the statutory order.

Each Local Authority (LA) must have a SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) to advise the LA on matters connected with Religious Education. The SACRE may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus at any time. This is in addition to the requirement on LAs to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to reconsider the Agreed Syllabus every five years.

The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be nondenominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils. Teaching about denominations is not prohibited.

The Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The benchmark expectations set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages.

The headteacher must ensure the provision of Religious Education in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus. The school must ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education to meet statutory requirements. For LA maintained schools, the governing body and the LA must also exercise their functions in securing this provision.

Time Allocation:

Early Years Foundation Stage

Religious Education is statutory for all pupils on the school register. Religious Education may be taught at Reception stage within a themed programme but sufficient time should be given to ensure the Programme of Study for EYFS in this Agreed Syllabus is covered.

Key Stage 1

Religious Education must be taught in each year group. The recommended time for this is approximately 36 hours per year.

AIMS :

- develop deepening knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and non-religious worldviews so that they can:
 - describe and explain beliefs and theological concepts
 - describe and explain some sources of authority and teachings within and across religious and non-religious traditions
 - describe and explain ways in which beliefs are expressed
 - know and understand the significance and impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, communities and societies
 - connect these together into a coherent framework of beliefs and practices
- deploy deepening understanding of specialist vocabulary and terms
- know and understand about religious diversity within the region, as well as nationally and globally
- know and understand how religion can be defined and what is meant by the term “religious and non-religious worldviews” and with increasing clarity know that these worldviews are complex, diverse and plural
- gain and deploy skills that enable critical thinking and enquiry in relation to the material they study
- reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values and beliefs with increasing discernment *(p.5, Durham Agreed Syllabus, 2020)*
- *Article 14 – Children have the right to follow their own religion.*

OBJECTIVES:

At Acre Rigg Infant School R.E. should enable a child to:

- Discuss and debate, at a simple level, a variety of moral issues. Developing an understanding of what is right or wrong and why. *Article 12 – children have the right to be listened to.*
- Express care and concern for others.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder through discussion, reflection, sensory awareness and the use of imagination.
- Respect the rights and beliefs of others. *Article 1 – All children have rights.*
- Relate to and develop an understanding of significant celebrations and festivals in Christianity, Buddhism, and Judaism and value the customs held within a nations culture.
- Develop an awareness and understanding of acceptable behaviour and develop skills and personal qualities necessary to live and function effectively in society.

By using The Durham Agreed Syllabus as a framework for our own scheme these aims and objectives can be fulfilled. The Syllabus is designed to promote pupil's spiritual, moral and cultural development.

TEACHING & LEARNING

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 etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives from local places of worship to come to school and talk to the children.

There are 3 elements of R E.

- Knowledge and Understanding of religion; with skills of investigation, enquiry, application & synthesis.
- Critical Thinking; with skills of analysis, evaluation, interpretation & expression.
- Personal reflection; with skills of reflection, response & empathy.

PLANNING/ SCHEMES OF WORK

The schemes of work show progression and continuity across year groups. They are also clearly linked with the legally adopted Durham County Agreed Syllabus 2020. The schemes of work have been collated, and developed by the co-ordinator and distributed to the class teachers accordingly. A master copy is held by subject co-ordinator.

ATTAINMENT & ASESMENT

In Religious Education it is important that pupils:

- make progress in knowing about and evaluating the beliefs and practices of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews
- know and understand the progress they are making in Religious Education
- know and understand what they need to do to make further progress
- are challenged by the enquiries, activities and tasks in which they are engaged
- achieve standards which match their expected capabilities (attainment and achievement). End of year assessment will also help teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, planning and teaching.

The Benchmark Expectations in this Agreed Syllabus should be used as the basis of planning and assessment. (p.23, *Durham Agreed Syllabus, 2020*).

INCLUSION

RE can make a significant contribution to inclusion in its focus on promoting respect for all. There are three principles within planning which are essential

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to the diverse needs of pupils
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for pupils (support plans/ EHCP etc) Pupils for whom English is an additional language or from a range of diverse family backgrounds.

British Values

Religious Education has a significant role to play in the active promotion, exploration and evaluation of the British values. For example, the Religious Education curriculum gives opportunities to

- consider the right of the individual to freedom of belief (whether religious or non-religious) and the right to express this belief in differing ways
- explore how state and religious laws can differ and to consider the impact this can have for different individuals, communities and societies
- consider the difference between state law and moral ethical guidance/codes of conduct found in differing religious traditions.
- explore how some religious traditions have reacted/adapted in relation to changes in state law e.g. Equalities Law
- find out how and why some religious traditions or individuals have campaigned to change laws, exploring the relationship between religious convictions and actions
- explore what is meant by the words 'mutual respect' and 'tolerance' and the significance of these for community harmony and cohesion in our multi-faith/non-faith society
- encounter people from a wide variety of religious and non-religious worldviews through visits to places of worship, visitors to school or the use of technology to talk to and make links with individuals and groups.

In order to explore our complex, diverse and plural society in relation to religious and non-religious worldviews, this Agreed Syllabus requires all schools to include a unit of work on religious diversity at Key Stage 1, 2 and 3. These units will help pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about differing beliefs and practices in the local region, country and wider world. They enable pupils of all ages to meet with people from a wide variety of faith and non-faith traditions and find out about similarities and differences in people's beliefs, experiences, ideas, values and practices. By doing this, pupils have the chance to consider and counter any stereotypical views that they (or others) may have, appreciate diversity at first hand and develop positive relationships with others. The active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs is at the heart of this. *(p.126, Durham Agree Syllabus, 2020)*

PSHCE/SEAL

Spiritual Development

Religious Education contributes to pupils' spiritual development as it enables pupils to learn about and reflect on beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform people's perspective on life. Religious Education gives pupils the opportunity to consider what is meant by the intangible and to recognise and appreciate that there is more to life than the everyday routine. Religious Education asks ultimate questions and considers issues of truth and meaning.

Moral Development

Religious Education contributes to pupils' moral development as it provides opportunities for investigating and discussing how people make moral decisions and what people mean by the terms right and wrong. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn about how religious and nonreligious beliefs can affect the values and actions of people and how these can differ. They are given the opportunity to critically evaluate people's values and actions and reflect on their own views about a range of moral and ethical issues.

Social Development

Religious Education contributes to pupils' social development as it enables pupils to use a range of social skills whilst visiting places of worship and meeting people from differing religious and non-religious backgrounds. Religious Education gives pupils the opportunity to develop interest in, and understanding of the role religion plays in the way communities and societies function.

Cultural Development

Religious Education contributes to pupils' cultural development as it enables pupils to explore, understand and develop respect for religious and cultural diversity in the local, national and global context. Pupils have the opportunity to develop understanding about the role and influence of religion on shaping their own heritage and evaluate the issues surrounding interfaith dialogue and harmony. Religious Education provides

opportunity to explore and reflect on how literature and the arts are used to express beliefs and spirituality, locally, nationally and globally. (p. 124-5, *Durham Agreed Syllabus, 2020*).

RIGHTS RESPECTING

As a rights respecting school. Acre Rigg Infant school promotes children's awareness of their own and others' rights. Children lead the rights respecting school ethos through children's ambassadors and pupil voice.

At Acre Rigg Infant School RE will give children the opportunity to show respect by:

- Being sensitive to the feelings, ideas and concerns of others;
- Listening to and learning from others, even when those views are different from their own;
- Value differences and diversity;

CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS

English

Oracy - Purposefully plan opportunities which lead to discussion, debate and critical evaluation of material covered (Critical Thinking). Use structures to support pupils in articulating views, backing these up with sound reasons, and making a persuasive case e.g. Philosophy for Children, Question Time panels, circle time, pair and small group work. Model and encourage the use of increasingly complex specialist vocabulary and terms as appropriate for the age and ability of pupils. Plan opportunities for pupils to listen and respond to members from several religious and non-religious communities and organisations e.g. through visits and/or visitors. Use technology to listen to and respond to sermons, related speeches, vodcasts and other sources which consider matters of religion, philosophy and ethics e.g. thought for the day, pause for thought. Consider the style used by the speakers, their ability to make a case and the use of specialist vocabulary. Listen to primary sources (e.g. biblical passages) being read and discuss written style and oral delivery.

Reading - Plan to use a variety of sources which develop deeper understanding of beliefs and practices. Go beyond the textbook, worksheet and PowerPoint and include significant writings from religious and non-religious traditions, the authentic experiences of believers from a diverse range of religious and non-religious worldviews (including members of your local SACRE and faith communities), theologians and academics. Plan for a wide range of sources to be read and evaluated (as appropriate for the age and abilities of pupils) including academic publications and journals, webpages, sermons and speeches, news articles and editorial reviews on issues connected with beliefs and practices. Consider the different types of written genres used in primary sources of wisdom e.g. the Torah, the Bible. Read, use and recommend fiction to demonstrate and explore ideas, beliefs, values and theological concepts. This could include children's story books e.g. Goodbye Mog, The Lion Who Wanted to Love, You are Special. Choose texts and written sources which use specialist vocabulary and generate open questions and enable critical thinking, analysis, evaluation and debate. Discuss the effectiveness of the written word within religious communities. Give time for reading for meaning and decode and explain vocabulary, texts and passages so that all pupils grow confident in their reading ability.

Writing - Give time for thinking and planning for writing to enable pupils to produce written work which demonstrates depth of understanding about beliefs, expressions of belief and their impact on individuals and communities today. Give considerable planning time for evaluative writing to ensure that pupils can make a clear, coherent and detailed case with sound and cogent reasoning (age appropriate). In the secondary phase, do not just require writing only for examination purposes and examination practice but

promote and require detailed and depth of writing which goes beyond examination marks and criteria. Ask pupils to produce real and authentic writing e.g. writing a letter to a faith member, writing a speech on religious diversity, for a podcast on what it means to be human, for a website of a faith tradition, for an editorial on a matter relating to religious beliefs and practice. Ensure specialist vocabulary, including vocabulary which explores key theological beliefs and concepts, is used appropriately in all written work and regularly assess accuracy and depth of understanding of this e.g. through knowledge and spelling tests. Use writing strategies as appropriate and model good writing by planning and writing alongside pupils. *(p.127, Durham Agreed Syllabus, 2020).*

Maths

Collecting, recording, presenting and interpreting graphs and charts where appropriate.

Science

Exploring how human beings care for each other and their environment. How they use the worlds resources and how the world has evolved. Appreciate the wonder of the world in which we live, its beauty, order, shape, pattern and mystery. Topics relating to light, colour, sound, seasonal changes, ourselves, creation and the natural world.

Computing

Use of interactive whiteboard, internet and I-Pads to annotate religious material such as stories, passages from scriptures, hymns and prayers. They will assist in evaluating different aspects of religious beliefs and practices. I-Pads and CD players to listen to and record songs, hymns and stories.

History

Researching local saints and people from the past who have made a significant contribution to our lives and community. Exploring religious events, myths and legends.

Geography

Exploring places of worship in our local area and how it is used and supports the local community. When researching other areas and countries compare their religious beliefs and what impact it has on their communities.

Design and Technology

Designing and making religious artefacts. Exploring the design of religious buildings and making replicas of artefacts, cards, models and explore special food that may be prepared for celebrations or worship.

Art and Design

Exploring and copying/drawing/painting religious pictures, scenes, designs and artefacts. Eg after studying stories or visiting churches. Exploring symbolism, pattern, themes and design in religious art.

PE

Performing dances from different religious traditions and cultures. Learning the value of rules and fair play.

SMSC

Understanding and empathising with others' social, moral, spiritual and cultural values and beliefs.

Encouraging self-reflection; following a moral path in order to live life as a British citizen.

Music

Learning/listening to Christian songs and hymns and songs and hymns from different cultures and beliefs.

Exploring symbolism, moods and feelings in and through religious music. Periods of stillness and quiet will be used and valued.

EYFS

See foundation stage planning for links made to world religions as and when they link to child-initiated learning. RE is linked by the 'Understanding the World' statements in the Early Years curriculum and related assessment criteria.

Health and Safety

Class management and expectation is outlined clearly to all children.

Resources

RE resources are requested from Durham Learning Resources. Online resources to be accessed via IWB, laptops and I-Pads.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Religious Education

The implementation of this policy is to be monitored by the RE Co-ordinator, the Head-teacher and staff in conjunction with the school guidelines. This is to be reported to the governors and fed back to staff.

RIGHTS OF WITHDRAWAL

It is the right of the parents to withdraw their children from religious education on spiritual and moral grounds. This withdrawal must be made by a personal approach to the school by the parent / guardian of the child concerned. Where the withdrawal from RE is total, the school will provide alternative curriculum activities and if required, within another teaching group. In cases of partial withdrawal, (for instance when the parent / guardian is objecting to parts of the RE curriculum) the school and parent will agree by consultation those elements of the curriculum for the child. It is permissible for the child to study elements of their own religious beliefs using the teachings of their own religious leaders and/or parents.

Due to the nature of the primary curriculum there may be a circumstance where questions of a religious nature arise, not specifically in RE. Parents should be aware of this and realise in such cases it is impossible to withdraw children.

ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER

The main responsibilities of the RE co-ordinator are:

- Support staff when planning/ resourcing;
- Monitor provision across school;
- Ensure CPD is delivered when required;
- Prepare RE policy & action plan;

This policy will be reviewed September 2026