

# THORPE LEA PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



*"A dedicated community working together, nurturing a safe happy school where all children can achieve their potential"*

# Religious Education Policy

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## **Introduction**

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).

This fits with our school ethos of being "*A dedicated community working together, nurturing a safe, happy school where all children can achieve their potential*"

Thorpe Lea Primary and Nursery School is a community school. We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus provided by the Surrey County Council. We use the Kapow as our scheme of work. The Kapow Primary R&W scheme of work fulfils the requirements outlined in the Curriculum framework for Religious Education in England.

In April 2024, Ofsted published Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report, offering insights into Religious Education across England. The report focuses on the content and substance of RE. It states that at its best, RE is crucial for helping pupils understand the complex world around them, including the diverse religious and non-religious beliefs, values and ideas of its citizens. Ofsted notes that although many schools in various contexts deliver high-quality RE, significant work is still needed to ensure that 'all pupils have access to a rigorous and challenging curriculum'.

The Religion & Worldviews (R&W) scheme, created by subject experts, selects the most important content and concepts for teachers. It focuses on key substantive concepts, including:

- Beliefs
- Wisdom and morality
- Practices
- Community and belonging

These overarching concepts are broken down into conceptual building blocks and explored through specific examples from different worldviews. Kapow Primary's spiral curriculum design enables children to explore these concepts in depth and revisit them as they progress through their primary education.

The scheme uses the name Religion & Worldviews to reflect the focus on both religion and worldviews as personal and diverse. It reflects changing beliefs in modern Britain and around the world and teaches children that everyone, including themselves, has a unique perspective that shapes how they see the world.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report, Ofsted 2024 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-religious-education/deep-and-meaningful-the-religious-education-subject-report>)
- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf))
- RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 ([www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential))
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)

### **Curriculum aims**

Kapow Primary's Religion and worldviews (R&W) scheme of work aims to inspire pupils to become curious, reflective and open-minded thinkers. The intention is for pupils to develop the confidence to ask meaningful questions, explore a range of beliefs and worldviews and reflect on their own values and those of others.

The scheme aims to raise awareness of how religion and worldviews influence individual lives, communities and cultures over time. Its goal is to encourage pupils to become respectful and thoughtful citizens who can engage with diversity and contribute positively to a pluralistic society.

The scheme supports teachers in developing their subject knowledge and confidence, enabling them to deliver engaging and inclusive lessons. The curriculum is designed to be both accessible and ambitious, ensuring that all pupils participate fully and achieve their potential.

### **Broad and balanced curriculum**

#### **The R&W curriculum is organised under the following three key strands:**

- Substantive knowledge.
- Disciplinary knowledge.
- Personal knowledge.

Kapow Primary's R&W curriculum has been planned with these strands running through each unit, ensuring balanced coverage of the different aspects of R&W and

opportunities to develop both substantive and disciplinary understanding, alongside personal reflection.

### **Disciplinary knowledge**

Developing the skills and understanding of religion and worldviews, through methods and approaches from different academic disciplines.

### **Substantive knowledge**

Building pupils' factual understanding of the key concepts that underpin both religions and non-religious worldviews. It consists of two elements: conceptual knowledge and worldview-related knowledge.

### **Personal knowledge**

Enabling pupils to think about their own positionality, recognising people approach learning from a particular worldview shaped by family, culture and experience.

## **Expectations**

### **National Curriculum - end of KS1**

- Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.
- Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come.
- Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.
- Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make
- Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.
- Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.

- Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.
- Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different.
- Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.

### **National Curriculum - end of KS2**

- Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their significance.
- Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.
- Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.
- Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.
- Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews.
- Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry.

- Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.
- Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.

### **How is RE organised in Thorpe Lea Primary School and Nursery?**

At Thorpe Lea Primary School and Nursery, RE is taught once a week from Year 1-6 and once every two weeks in EYFS. Teachers use the resources from the Kapow scheme of work to plan and teach lessons. Lessons are recorded in children's topic books. As RE is such an enquiry and experience based subject, the children are given opportunities to meet religious representatives and experience authentic cultural and religious events through assemblies, trips to places of worship and visitors from the local community, for example visits from the local church.

### **SEND and Inclusion**

The Kapow Primary R&W scheme of work is designed to be fully adaptable for pupils with SEND. Every lesson includes an adaptive teaching section, providing clear guidance on how activities can be modified to meet the needs of all learners.

Children learn in various ways. As such, Kapow Primary R&W lessons include a range of strategies to support and challenge every pupil, such as: Scaffolding – activities are designed with flexibility in mind, allowing for additional support or challenge where needed. Multi-sensory approaches – lessons incorporate different elements to engage all learners. Clear instructions and structured tasks – ensuring clarity and reducing cognitive load for pupils who benefit from additional support.

Opportunities for collaborative and independent learning – allowing pupils to work at their own pace while building confidence and independence. By embedding adaptive teaching throughout, the scheme ensures that all pupils, regardless of their starting points, can access and succeed in their learning. In addition, the step-by-step

curriculum design supports pupils with SEND, avoiding sudden jumps in complexity at transition points and allowing for steady, manageable progression

## **Assessment**

### ***Formative assessment***

Every lesson begins with the 'Recap and recall' section, designed to help pupils practise retrieving key knowledge related to the upcoming lesson. This section also provides teachers with an opportunity to informally assess whether pupils have retained prior learning and are ready to progress.

Each lesson also contains an 'Assessing progress and understanding' section, which helps teachers to identify those pupils who are secure in their learning or working at greater depth. These assessments can then be recorded on the R&W: Assessment spreadsheet, which supports teachers in identifying learning gaps among the class or in individual pupils.

### ***Summative assessment***

Each unit of work assesses children's understanding and retention of key knowledge using an Assessment quiz with multiple-choice and open-ended questions.

Depending on the needs of the cohort, Assessment quiz questions may be read aloud and completed in small groups or as a whole-class activity, rather than being completed independently. In addition, each unit contains a Knowledge catcher. This can be used at the beginning or end of a unit, giving pupils the opportunity to further demonstrate their understanding of the key concepts covered. Assessment quizzes and Knowledge catchers provide teachers with a record of summative assessment as evidence of progression throughout the year and as pupils move between key stages. It is recommended that teachers keep all forms of assessment as pupils progress through primary school. This ensures that the subject lead and teachers have a record of pupils' progression.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The RE subject leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

### **External contributors**

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.

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

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

### **The Learning Environment**

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

### **Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues**

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

## **Involving Parents and Carers**

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents/carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- RE curriculum page on the school website
- Displays

## **Withdrawal from RE lessons**

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. 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 will be made aware of the 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. 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. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

## **Links to other policies and curriculum areas**

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Equality Information and Objectives
- Child Protection Policy
- British Values
- Prevent Strategy
- PSHE and RSHE Policy

### **Training and support for staff**

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills.

Opportunities are provided, for staff to identify individual training needs and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is, incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

### **Dissemination**

This policy is available on our school website, where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff, on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.