



## **RE Policy for Helsby Hillside Primary School**

### **1) Introduction**

The United Kingdom is a multi-faith and multicultural society. It is important that Children in Helsby learn about people who may be seen as different to themselves and develop an Understanding of how individual faiths and cultures affect day to day living. In doing so we are Striving to develop tolerance, respect, empathy and understanding towards all people.

RE in our school is not only concerned with knowledge, it includes; exercising the imagination, exploring spirituality, exploring commitment, experiencing awe and wonder, sensing mystery, and reflecting on feelings.

### **2) Legal Position**

The Education Act (1996) requires that religious education in community and voluntary controlled schools must be provided for all registered pupils in accordance with the local agreed syllabus (Cheshire West 2019). That every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Britain. Parents have the right to request the withdrawal of their child from part of or all religious education and teachers have the right to withdraw from teaching the subject.

### **3) Intention**

It is our intention when teaching R.E. to:

- Relate religious beliefs, values and practices to the child's own life experiences
- Attempt to make the study of religion stimulating and relevant
- Focus on the similarities between major religions studied
- Encourage children to recognise religious places, people and objects
- Allow time for reflection • Develop higher level thinking skills
- Encourage opportunities for creativity and enquiry
- Introduce children to first-hand experiences of their own and other faiths, through a) role play and drama b) songs and music c) the daily act of worship d) multi-cultural projects e) visits to churches, chapels, synagogues and other places of religious worship f) celebration and festival activities g) faith visitors in school.

**The intended aims of Religious Education at Hillside, in line with the Cheshire West Agreed Syllabus are as follows;**

Religious Education at Helsby Hillside Primary should help pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of world faiths
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions in individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues
- enhance spiritual, moral and cultural development



- develop an awareness of fundamental life questions and respond according to personal experience, beliefs and values
- cultivate thoughtful self-expression and philosophical thinking skills;
- aspire to tolerance and nurture mutual respect
- empathise, evaluate, question, relate and express
- look at the world with an inquisitive and unbiased perspective
- develop a sense of awe and wonder • contribute to global learning skills

As we are not a faith school all RE teaching is delivered in a manner suitable for all to access, e.g “This is what most Christians believe” or “this is what some people think”. Some children do develop their own beliefs through RE lessons (whether this be through a particular faith, a sense of awe, or a decision to not believe) and all views are respected and developed accordingly.

It is important to keep in mind that R.E. makes a distinctive contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in that it is dealing specifically with the meaning, purpose and value of life. The importance of religious tolerance is also a key component of British Values and the Prevent Agenda.

#### **4) Implementation**

Our work is concept driven and we often focus on key enquiry questions to develop religious literacy and equip us with the skills which are needed to discuss religion. We don't use individual books to record our work as we are instead developing the skills needed to access Religious Education like debating and group work, however you can see samples of our lessons in our class big books. We currently learn about Christianity and Judaism in Key Stage One and Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Judaism in Key Stage Two. We are also introduced to Humanism as a non-religious world view with sessions in both key stages. We may also consider different religions alongside global learning and interfaith projects.

We have regular visits and visitors as part of our RE curriculum and have outdoor learning opportunities on our school grounds. RE lessons often include Philosophy for Children , circle time, critical thinking, learning from believers (email or twitter interviews, visitors, film clips) and opportunities to unpack concepts through drama, art and ICT. Our RE helps us to learn about diversity in the UK and around the world.

We follow the Agreed syllabus for the amount of coverage for each religion as follows;  
Foundation Stage – Explicit RE on Christianity although other religions may be touched upon as part of Knowledge and Understanding of the world.

Year 1 = 3 terms of Christianity, 2 terms Islam and a free choice unit looking at the symbol of light and how light is important in a range of world faiths. Majority Christianity with some sessions on different views on Creation and one unit on people of Faith and Courage from the Old Testament so also relevant for Muslims and Jews.

Year 2 = 1.5 terms of Christianity, 1 term of Judaism and a free choice unit

Year 3 = 1.5 terms Christianity, ½ term Islam, ½ term Hinduism and a free choice unit which will look at the Bahai Faith.

Year 4 = 1.5 terms Christianity, ½ term Judaism, ½ term Hinduism and a free choice unit which will look at Humanism

Year 5 = 1.5 terms Christianity (including Bible Explorer), 1 term Islam, ½ term Sikhism

Year 6 = 2 terms Christianity, ½ term Sikhism and a free choice unit based on Diversity and what it means to belong in a religiously diverse world.

Year Five complete a Bible Explorer course taught by an outside organisation over a six-week period. The focus for this is the Old Testament and is part of our work on Christianity.

Each unit of work includes studying key beliefs and teachings, practices, values, themes and concepts.

Please consult the school’s long term and medium term plans for details of units covered. These are available from the Co-ordinator.



In Key Stage 1 the requirement is for 36 hours per year/ 50 mins per week (less for Foundation stage)

In Key Stage 2 the requirement is for 45 hours per year / 1 hour per week The majority of our RE is delivered on a weekly basis although we often block hours to allow for deeper learning, visits, conferences and speakers.

### **5) Impact**

Alongside the development of unit specific knowledge and understanding we would also be looking for the development of skills and attitudes throughout the school.

**Religious Education should help pupils to:**

- cultivate philosophical thinking skills within the pupils
- improve mental focus and develop the ability to sustain it
- develop critical thinking skills
- empathise, evaluate, question, relate and express
- apply the lessons of the classroom to their personal interactions
- discover how philosophy helps them understand life and ask questions that further improve their understanding
- learn to apply rigorous academic standards to issues of ethical and philosophical importance
- look at the world with an inquisitive and unbiased perspective
- use religious and philosophical thought to suggest solutions to human problems
- have a sense of awe

Our ongoing skills development include critical thinking, religious tolerance, investigation, interpretation, reflection, evaluation, analysis, synthesis, application, expression, self-understanding, communication, problem solving.

Our developing attitudes in religion and world views include self esteem, curiosity, fairness, respect, empathy, wonder, open-mindedness, working with others, sense of community.

### **6) RE's contribution to SMSC (including British Values)**

#### **Spiritual Development by:**

There are many opportunities for spiritual development within religious education and can be developed through:

- reflection on a range of human questions and experiences
- insight and inspiration at our deepest level
- exploring ultimate questions and trying to contemplate the deeper questions of human existence
- exploration of the sacred
- Showing an awareness of the ways in which people are connected to one another

#### **Moral Development by:**

- reflection on behaviour, principles, laws and societal expectation
- development of qualities that foster wellbeing, kindness, selflessness and generosity
- awareness of how moral choices are applied to their own experiences

#### **Social Development by:**

- acquiring knowledge and attributes that provide pupils with a willingness to participate and work cooperatively
- learning about society, the family and community
- recognising the importance of social and political aspects of life
- participating in democratic activity

#### **Cultural Development by:**

- broadening an awareness of forms of expression
- reflecting on a range of cultural expression
- identifying the link between culture and identity
- being able to analyse and question the validity of culture and expression

#### **Contributes to British Values and Prevent agenda by:**

- We enhance pupils' understanding of different faiths and world views through high quality RE provision
- We have faith visitors in school and also visit places of worship in Helsby and Liverpool
- We learn about differences, diversity and similarities in RE
- Children are taught to tackle prejudice and recognise stereotypes
- A unit of work in Year 6 looking at our religiously diverse world includes tackling Islamophobia and preventing extremism
- We have strong international links with schools in South Africa and Zimbabwe including hosting international visitors which emphasise global issues, providing real and relevant opportunities.
- Pupil understanding of the importance of RE with their own lives

### **7) Faith Visitors and Visits**



We welcome visitors from faith traditions into our school to develop dialogue and children are prepared and aware that these speakers are presenting their own point of view. These sessions are valued and essential to the development of understanding of a faith. Families and friends of the school are welcome to talk about their faith. Reverend Graham Green from St Paul's Church is a regular visitor to school, delivering monthly assemblies in the form of moral stories. He also supports several classes in their teaching of Christianity when needed. Reverend David Bintliffe, a parent and vicar at the local Methodist church is also a regular visitor to school along with his colleague Catherine Clarke delivering assemblies throughout the year. Year 5 & 6 participate in Bible Explorer which is a national interactive course exploring the key parts of the Old and New Testament led by a local resident. All visitors follow school safeguarding procedures.

We visit Main Street Church for the Christmas and Easter Journeys organised by Frodsham Churches Together in Years 2 and 5. The annual Harvest festival is held at St Paul's Church and our year 6 children attend the Remembrance Service. All children have the opportunity to visit all local places of worship.

Those children with their own experiences of a faith community will be given the opportunity to talk to children in their own class and around the school if they wish to do so. Children with a particular interest in RE will be encouraged to research further but will not be indoctrinated to a particular faith group. More able pupils need the opportunity to move rapidly through elementary stages and progress quickly to enriched, enhanced and advanced resources. They need the opportunity to work independently make choices and develop skills in investigation and research.

### **8) Co-ordinator Role**

Mrs Fletcher-Curran is the Religious Education co-ordinator at Hillside. She is responsible for the ongoing development of an RE Policy and 'Scheme of work' for Whole-School RE. She will attend any relevant Training Courses in order to keep updated with current trends within the RE curriculum.

### **9) Assessment and Reporting**

Assessment will be made in accordance with the End of Key Stage Descriptions and attainment levels in the County Syllabus and the Non – Stat Framework. Throughout the year there will be opportunities for assessment and examples of work are in the class big books. A number of assessment strategies will be employed to assess a child as we often find that deeper learning is demonstrated through lessons which are not restricted to literacy skills. It is a legal requirement to report to parents on progress in Religious Education.

### **10) Right of Withdrawal**

Parents may withdraw their child from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. Parents may be asked to supervise their child during the lesson and provide appropriate lesson material based on their belief. However, we hope that all parents would feel comfortable with the type of Religious Education being taught at Hillside and lessons can often be made to fit with individual beliefs and values. There are currently no children withdrawn from Religious Education.

Reviewed by	Gill Fletcher-Curran	12/01/23
Approved by	Full Governing Board	25/01/23
Next Review Date		January 2026

