



Subject Policy

Religious Education

Reviewed by: Julia Bacon

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INTENT: At Debden Church of England Primary Academy, all of our curriculum disciplines are used to underpin our school vision, which is to ensure that the children in our care:

- *Progress exceptionally well academically, across a broad and knowledge-rich curriculum;*
 - *Develop into confident compassionate, well-rounded individuals, in a safe, caring, Christian environment;*
 - *Become equipped with the learning and communication skills needed to deal with future challenges;*
 - *Create happy, positive memories of their childhood.*
 - *Care for others through service, kindness, and a sense of justice, becoming active global citizens.*
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- Our syllabus promotes a multi-disciplinary study of religion and worldviews, developing students' knowledge, critical faculties and curiosity about the world in which they live. It prepares them both for life in the community and also in the wider world, where they will encounter a huge range of ideas and beliefs.
 - Our high-quality RE will support pupils' religious literacy. In the context of our syllabus, being religiously literate means that pupils will have the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and worldviews. Pupils will be able to make sense of religion and worldviews around them and begin to understand the complex world in which they live. RE is primarily about enabling pupils to become free thinking, critical participants of public discourse, who can make academically informed judgements about important matters of religion and belief which shape the global landscape.
 - RE is a valuable part of the curriculum offering opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally and cross culturally. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge discrimination.
 - *In-line with The Essex agreed syllabus for religious education 2023 we aim to ensure pupils-*
 - Engage with challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
 - Explore their own beliefs in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics, and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society learn to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
 - Consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their

communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

Our RE curriculum has been tailored to our school's individual context. For example, owing to our Anglican church denomination, there is a heavier emphasis upon learning related to Christianity.

Furthermore, the following concepts run through the curriculum – *beliefs, way of life, places of worship, traditions/celebrations/festivities, prophets/holy people and holy texts*. By ensuring that these concepts are covered within each unit, we are able to ensure that children are able to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between religions and denominations.

In planning our curriculum, special consideration has been given to the time of year concepts are taught (e.g. 'Jesus' last week' is covered in the lead-up to Easter) and the concurrent themes that are being learnt in collective worship. In every unit, students are asked to consider questions relating to their own personal spirituality.

IMPLEMENTATION:

At Debden Primary Academy, we follow the programmes of study from the Essex agreed syllabus for RE (2023). For each year group Christianity is the majority religion studied and includes at least 50% of the RE curriculum time and lesson time covers 5% of the total curriculum time. The following religions are covered throughout the school-

EYFS: Christianity and Hinduism

KS1: Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism

KS2: Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam

Why have we chosen the other religions?

-Studying Judaism is important because it helps pupils understand the roots of Christianity and the shared stories that shape both faiths.

-Hinduism is important because it introduces pupils to one of the world's major religions and helps them appreciate the diversity of global beliefs and cultures. Learning about Hindu stories, values, and celebrations encourages respect, curiosity, and open-mindedness, especially in a community with limited local diversity.

-Studying Islam is important in a school with many military families because it helps pupils develop accurate, respectful understanding of a faith they may encounter in different parts of the world. Learning about Islamic beliefs and practices challenges stereotypes and prevents prejudice from taking root, helping children grow into compassionate, open-minded individuals. This understanding supports them in forming positive relationships wherever they move.

Each class will teach the areas of RE identified in the school's long-term plan to ensure coverage of knowledge and skills. In these lessons RE will be taught explicitly, however it may also be covered in a cross-curricular manner through other subjects. Equally, Collective Worship and participation in church services will enable children to explore themes which will contribute to their wider RE understanding.

RE is about developing religious literacy, therefore this syllabus promotes an understanding of religion and worldviews which best fulfils this purpose. This is rooted in a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject, which provides a balanced diet ensuring that pupils are seeing religion and worldviews through different lenses, and places RE within a strong, and well-established academic tradition.

In our syllabus we assert that RE is rooted in three key disciplines or disciplinary fields. These are theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences. In this syllabus they are re-contextualised for the school context in the following ways:



Theology Lens - Thinking through Believing

- Ask questions that believers would ask
- Think like theologians
- Explore questions and answers that arise from inside religions and worldviews



Philosophy Lens – Thinking through Thinking

- Ask questions that thinkers would ask
- Think like philosophers
- Explore questions and answers raised through considering the nature of knowledge, existence and morality



Human & Social Science Lens – Thinking through Living

- Ask questions that people who study reality would ask
- Think like human and social scientists
- Explore questions and answers raised in relation to the impact of religions and worldviews on people and their lives

IMPACT:

Assessment

We assess children against both the requirements and standards of the National Curriculum through a 15-mark assessment. This also includes a chance to answer the unit enquiry question in depth with opportunities for more reflective thinking.

Monitoring:

We believe that the most effective way to monitor the impact of the RE policy is to utilise and triangulate a broad range of moderating activities, involve our stakeholders, and apply these regularly, consistently and robustly.

-Lesson Observations and Learning Walks - The Subject Leader undertakes planned lesson observations and learning walks. These have a clear focus, and the feedback and findings are used to inform individual and whole school Continuing Professional Development (CPD), school development planning and future monitoring activities.

-Work/book scrutinies are carried out by the Subject Leader with the teaching staff.

-Pupil Progress Meetings - Half-termly pupil progress meetings are held between class teachers and the Headteacher. These review the progress of each child as an individual and ensure high quality teaching.

-Governor Visits - As part of the Governors' Monitoring, Evaluation and Review cycle, the lead Governor for this subject will monitor RE alongside the Subject Leader. Monitoring activities include a range of teaching and learning observations, discussions with Subject Leader, meetings with pupils, work scrutinies and Subject Leader reports.

-Pupil interviews – The Subject Leader and Governors take regular opportunities to listen to the views of pupils in relation to their experience of RE at our school and their feedback actively informs subject development through our curriculum action plan.