



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) POLICY

January 2024

# COLESHILL HEATH SCHOOL

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) POLICY

### Vision for Religious Education at Coleshill Heath

Pupils at Coleshill Heath appreciate and celebrate the similarities and differences between Christianity and other principal religions through gaining a deep knowledge and understanding of their teachings and practices. They understand how religion is important to different people around the world and why.

Pupils understand the impact that people with strong beliefs or opinions can have on the world. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values they grow in respect for themselves and others and understand that all people have the right to hold, or not to hold, religious beliefs.

Pupils appreciate the way in which religious beliefs shape life and how these beliefs contribute to personal morality and social responsibility. Through Religious Education they feel able to imagine (and contribute to the creation of) a better world.

### **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).

At Coleshill Heath School, we deliver RE in line with the Solihull R.E. Agreed Syllabus, 'Discovery RE' programme, and we use the CHS small steps which encompasses the learning objective and progressive knowledge of the 5 major world religions.

Christianity is taught in every year group, with an aspect of Christmas and Easter taught in Autumn 2 and Spring 2 every year, developing children's learning in a progressive way. Each year group is taught one other faith (Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) across three units, enabling children to gain a good understanding of that faith by the end of the academic year.

### **The aims of our RE, using the Discovery RE Scheme of Work**

Discovery RE meets the requirements of our locally agreed syllabus and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above. By following Discovery RE at Coleshill Heath school we intend that Religious Education will:

- **adopt an enquiry-based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.

- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (religious or non-religious), 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.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- **prompt pupils to 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.
- **develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.**
- **nurture children's own spiritual development.**

### **How is RE organised in this school?**

Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

RE is taught weekly at Coleshill Heath School. Each lesson is around 45 minutes long and it is taught discretely from other subjects.

### **Differentiation/SEN**

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential.

### **Assessment**

Learning is assessed throughout each unit and is linked to a final low stakes assessment which contributed towards tracked data. Teachers use this assessment knowledge to inform next steps in planning which will address misconceptions.

### **Monitoring**

The RE 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.

### **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. The British Values agenda is intrinsic to Discovery RE. Opportunities to enhance the children's learning and understanding are continually sought out by the RE lead. Numerous visitors provide the opportunity for religious assemblies and learning opportunities. These sessions are linked to what is being taught during that

unit of work and we have found this to be an invaluable experience for our children to further their understanding of different faiths. 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. At Coleshill Heath School, we ensure pupils in UKS2 have an awareness of the terms 'extremism' and 'radicalisation'.

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.

### **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 headteacher 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.

### **Resources**

There is a range of resources available to enhance the teaching of RE. These include artefacts, posters, books and audio-visual aids. The resources are organised into boxes, one or two for each Faith (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism). These boxes are stored in the resource cupboard in the Phase 3 corridor. We have many Religious books in the enquiry hub which can be used during lessons and each class has a bible and several books on the particular religions they are studying.

### **Discovery RE Content**

Discovery RE covers all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion is taught in each year group. In Spring 2, all children complete a core content unit set by Solihull agreed syllabus. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group.

### Foundation Stage 1/2:

In Early Years, opportunities are given for children to learn about different religions. Through stories, books and artefacts, children are able to have a better understanding of different faiths including Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Children are able to know some similarities and differences between some different religious and cultural communities in this country. These special Religious festivals are celebrated: Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Easter, Ramadan and Eid. Please see the Early Years policy for further information.

### Units updated

#### Year 1:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions studied:</b>
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem?	Christianity
What did Jesus teach about being kind?	Christianity
Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity by the crowds on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Does celebrating Chanukah make Jewish children feel close to God?	Judaism

#### Year 2:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions studied</b>
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world?	Christianity
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life?	Islam
What happened when Jesus went into Jerusalem?	Christianity
Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim?	Islam

### Year 3:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions Studied</b>
Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?	Hinduism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
Why is Jesus called the Saviour?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Hinduism
Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu?	Hinduism

### Year 4:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions studied</b>
How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God?	Judaism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?	Judaism
What does the story of 'The Lost Sheep' mean? <b>AND</b> Is forgiveness always possible?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

### Year 5:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions studied</b>
How far would a Sikh go for his/ her religion?	Sikhism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
Are Sikh stories important today?	Sikhism
What does 'Christian Love' require of a person <b>AND</b> Did God intend Jesus to be crucified and if so was Jesus aware of this?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Sikhism
What is the best way for Christian to show commitment to God?	Christianity

### Year 6:

<b>Discovery Enquiry</b>	<b>Religions studied</b>
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother?	Christianity
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Why for many Christians is Easter so important?	Christianity
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

Policy Name:	<b>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)</b>
Staff Responsible:	Mrs D Hall
Governor Responsible:	Scrutiny & Outcomes Committee
Date for Review:	January 2026
Signed Headteacher:	Miss N Fowles
Signed Chair of Governors:	Mrs M Fitter
Date Approved:	Scrutiny & Outcomes Committee – 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2024