

Glenfield Infant School



Religious Education Policy

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Approved by: Clare Clifford (Headteacher) **Date 4.12.25**



Religious Education at Glenfield Infant School follows the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth, and Southampton "Living Difference IV."

Vision statement for Religious Education

Every child at Glenfield Infant School will be encouraged to foster curiosity concerning the puzzles of life and be given opportunities to develop spiritual awareness. They will be given a chance to reflect on cultural and moral issues and explore their feelings and those of others. Children will be encouraged to respect the opinions and beliefs of others while exploring their own views and beliefs in a safe environment. They will be taught key aspects through Christianity as our main faith plus various others reflecting our current cohorts.

Our Aims for Religious Education are to:

- Foster curiosity concerning the puzzles of life
- Develop a reflective attitude and encourage stillness of being
- Encourage opportunities for spiritual, cultural, moral and social development
- Develop an appreciation for the rhythm of nature
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder and care for the natural world
- Raise an awareness that people have beliefs that are important to them
- Encourage children to respect the opinions and beliefs of others whilst exploring their own views and beliefs in a safe environment
- Engage with concepts that are common to religious and non-religious experience alike (e.g. remembering, specialness, celebration, rights, duty, justice)
- Teach what Christians believe and to explore the beliefs of one other religions represented within our school and community

Teaching Approaches

The teaching approach encourages open enquiry and is not based on a particular belief or religious stance. The RE covered at Glenfield Infant School is taught as part of our curriculum in units across all year groups, which in KS1 amounts to 36 hours over the course of the academic year. All RE units in KS1 begin with the sharing of a 'Knowledge Organiser' with pupils, which highlights the key learning they will be doing in their half-termly RE units and also includes a diagram of the enquiry cycle outlining the five steps of enquiry which will be followed during that unit.

EYFS precedes KS1. Religious education curriculum making for Year R children in EYFS should ensure continuity and progression for children as they move towards and on to KS1.

Each unit of study in a Year R class will be an enquiry into the children's experience of the concept/word and link strongly to the EYFS characteristics of learning and include at least one *golden thread* concept/word (*community, belonging, special* or *love*). Another concept/word that might be particularly appropriate for Year R children would be the A concept/word of *celebrating*. For some Year R classes, it may be useful for children to explore their experiences of the same concept/word more than once but with a different context, for example, *special clothes* and *special people*.

Children in KS1 will continue to explore and reflect on their own way of life, and feelings about this, and will also continue encountering religious and non-religious ways of living.

Teachers will begin a sequence of religious education lessons (sessions) by (re)creating the experience of the concept/word for the children to experience. For example, by a shared experience together such as a *celebration* or activity to evoke the experience of *belonging*.

Children will therefore have opportunities first to explore and then later to share their own experiences of the concepts/words studied. In this way they will begin to be attentive to other people's experiences of concepts/words found in religious and non-religious ways of life.

At this key stage the enquiry into what it means to live a religious and non-religious life will be concerned with enquiring into concepts/words common to all people (A concepts/words), where children will engage within their own experience.

Golden thread concepts/words will be introduced across the whole key stage, alongside others that are also evident in religious ways of life, for example *happy, sad, remembering* and *thanking*.

Towards the end of the key stage children should begin to explore concepts/words that are shared across many faith narratives (B concepts/words).

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship (these may be virtual) or visits from members of local faith communities to the school (either in person or virtually).

The RE topics aim to build on the children's own experiences and progressively develop an understanding of the key features, beliefs, celebrations and values of different faiths whilst fostering within the children an appreciation of the significance of faiths to their followers. When appropriate, references to RE may be made in other subjects. There may be occasional reference to other faiths where opportunities arise.

The cycle of enquiry

Living Difference IV approach to teaching religious education will always begin with the teacher finding interesting ways to bring the concept/word alive for children and young people. This experiential moment is there to ensure that religious education always starts with real and concrete situations and encounters, and also makes room for the different ways in which children and young people experience what they encounter.

The journey around the cycle of enquiry then usually moves into the **Communicate** step where children and young people are introduced to the concept/word and invited to share their experiences in different ways. This can be a creative response and may not always require words, especially with younger children. At the **Apply** step the teacher opens up the classroom conversation so that children and young people can become aware of the experience of others, beginning with those in their class.

The teacher then introduces the material and additional vocabulary to be encountered and studied, usually at the **Inquire** step. Here children and young people engage with the dimensions, manifestations, words and concepts of religious traditions and practices. The material a teacher selects will most frequently be new to the children and young people. However, there may be occasions where material previously encountered and/or studied by the children and young people could be revisited and studied in new ways. This is to broaden and deepen children and young people's understanding, ensuring they are knowledgeable and well-informed about the matters at the end.

Living Difference IV is interested in the lived experience of what it means to live a life with a religious or other orientation, therefore formal study of a tradition or other way of life will always include living examples or *case studies* where the material studied can be seen in real life context(s). These are introduced at the **Contextualise** step.

Children and young people begin to discern value at the **Evaluate** step. This happens in two ways. First, value is discerned for those living within the context studied. The second part of the **Evaluate** step is where children and young people are brought to discern the question of how the material encountered and studied might matter in their own lives.

Living Difference IV acknowledges the diversity of experiences that children and young people will have concerning what is studied. Therefore, children and young people's experience must be acknowledged so religious education can make a positive contribution to their ability to come to discernment about how all this might matter in their own lives.

While the whole approach and all parts of the journey of the cycle are important, it is anticipated that earlier on with younger children, the emphasis will be on the experiential moment in the **Communicate** and **Apply** steps. Over time, the intellectual moment increases in duration, so that, again over time, children and young people are given more opportunities to come to discernment.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching of RE is planned with due regard for the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

Children with Special Educational Needs are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the school curriculum. Those with specific needs are catered for as appropriate.

Children who are Able and Talented in RE are identified and their needs are catered for in line with the Able, Gifted and Talented policy.

Assessment of Religious Education

Within each RE unit, teachers assess pupils at different points during the 'Cycle of Enquiry', through written responses, drawings and anecdotal evidence of verbal responses. Here are the End of Year Expectations suggested by Living Difference IV:

By the end of Year 1

In an age-appropriate way, through a well-made KS1 curriculum that is taught well, children in Year 1 will have encountered, studied and had the opportunity to discern value in relation to two of the *golden thread* concepts/words of *community, belonging, special, love as well as* other A concepts/words chosen by the teacher and children themselves (pondering time).

Consequently, children can

At Communicate	... express creatively their response to their own experiences of the concepts/words introduced.
At Apply	... recognise their responses relate to events in their own lives.
At Inquire and Contextualise	... recognise what has been taught about the concept/word and how they are used in the tradition studied.
At Evaluate	... in simple terms children recognise something of the value of these concepts/words in the lives of those living in the traditions studied as well as for their own lives and communities.

By the end of Year 2

In an age-appropriate way, through a well-made KS1 curriculum that is taught well, children in Year 2 will have encountered, studied and had the opportunity to discern value in relation to at least two *golden thread* concepts/words of *community, belonging, special, love*, including those not studied in Year 1, **as well as** other A concepts/words chosen by the teacher and children themselves (pondering time) and a B concept/word at the end of Year 2.

Consequently, children can

At Communicate	... express creatively their response to their own experiences of the concepts/words introduced.
At Apply	... recognise (in a different way to Year 1) how their responses relate to events in their own and sometimes other people's lives.
At Inquire and Contextualise	... simply describe what has been taught about how the concept/word and how it is used in the tradition studied.
At Evaluate	... in simple terms children can discern something of the value of these concepts/words in the lives of those living in the traditions studied as well as for their own lives and communities.

Monitoring of Religious Education

The RE Coordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of the assessment tasks completed by pupils during the Cycle of Enquiry, pupil interviews, work scrutiny, observations of displays and drop-ins.

Right of Withdrawal

At Glenfield Infant School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties they may have about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Glenfield Infant School.

In accordance with DES circular 3/89 V.1, the legal right of teachers to withdraw from the teaching of RE is recognised. Any teacher wishing to withdraw must confirm this in writing to the Headteacher/Governing Body. In the event of this right being exercised, the teaching of RE will be implemented by another member of staff.

Alternative Arrangements

Parents are entitled and welcome to come into school to support their child's religious development during the time that their child is withdrawn.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed 2 yearly. The next review will be December 2027.