

Kirkburton Middle School

Religious Education Policy



Responsibility:	I Parker
Last reviewed on:	January 2021
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Approved by:	Governing body

Purpose of RE

- **Preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and, with confidence, to take the next step in their school career.**
- **Articulating personal beliefs & values and respecting the right of others to differ.**
- **Developing resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division.**
- **Raising awareness of other cultures and experiences.**
- **Developing critical thinking skills.**

Our vision for RE is based on the national guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 and the local agreed syllabus, 2019-24

Our world is enriched by a wide and profound diversity of cultures and beliefs. Human beings are strengthened and empowered by learning from each other. Engaging and stimulating RE helps to nurture informed and resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division. It offers a place of integrity and security within which difficult or 'risky' questions can be tackled within a safe but challenging context. Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

In RE pupils discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions, in local, national and global contexts, through learning about and from religions and other world views. They learn to appraise the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in society with its diverse understanding of life from religious and other world views.

Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

RE curriculum

In school, the curriculum is based on the Local Agreed Syllabus for Calderdale and Kirklees, produced by the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for teaching from September 2019

The syllabus has three aims for pupils:

- A. To know about and understand a range of religions and other world views;
- B. To express ideas and insights about questions of beliefs and meaning;
- C. To investigate and respond to important moral and ethical questions for individuals and the wider community.

At Key Stage 2 (Year 6), teaching and learning is focused around Christianity and Islam, alongside understanding of non-religious approaches to life.

At Key Stage 3, teaching and learning is extended to include Hinduism & Buddhism alongside understanding of non-religious approaches to life. Other faiths/non faiths will be studied alongside the core religions. Pupils will additionally study Christianity (through a variety of units of work across the key stage). This is to help prepare pupils for GCSE RE where these are the religious and non-religious beliefs that are studied as part of the AQA specification at Shelley College.

We also teach a number of units of learning which focus around key ideas and concepts which appear in religious and non-religious thought. These include how science provides an alternative explanation to religion for the creation of the universe and the presence of humanity as well as a unit of learning on evil and suffering which contains a case study of the Holocaust. We also teach a unit of learning which focuses on using religious art to experience and evaluate spirituality through the various avenues which religion has used art to express key ideas and beliefs.

To support delivery of the syllabus, we plan our lessons around the exemplar units of work provided through the SACRE. The RE coordinator then writes units of learning which is designed to meet the abilities, skills and needs of the pupils within the context of KMS. We then review and evaluate these units of learning each year and adapt or change as appropriate.

Achievement and Progress

We are currently working on changes to how we measure and record pupil achievement and progress in RE in line with the whole school changes. Enshrined within the RE assessment is a strict understanding that the purpose of RE assessment is not measure the religious beliefs/values which pupils may or may not hold. Rather formal RE assessment is guided by a 'light touch', through which we analyse and evaluate the knowledge and skills which pupils have gained during their time in RE.

We report to parents in line with school policy, through which we set out the subject content/skills which have been taught as well as the progress and achievement of pupils during the academic year.

RE lessons

RE is timetabled so that pupils are provided with 20 hours of RE each year in Year 6 and 40 hours a year in Years 7 & 8. Lessons will be delivered in weekly lessons. In Year 6 this done 1 hour per week for half a year (the other half of the year is dedicated to the PHSE curriculum). In Years 7 & 8 this is done 1 hour per week for the whole school year.

Lessons are normally taught by a small team of teachers. The RE coordinator teaches the majority of the lessons with other staff teaching a small number of lessons.

The RE coordinator supports teaching staff and monitors the subject.

We encourage and promote teaching and learning through a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which are laid out in the individual units of learning. In particular RE lends itself to discussion and debate between pupils and teacher. Teaching strategies to promote a variety of ways to achieve this are laid out within individual lesson plans.

The place of RE in our school

As part of enriching pupils' experiences, we visit our local church in Kirkburton. This plays an important role in enriching the Year 6 Christianity Unit of Learning. We also invite into school a speaker from Equilibria. They give a talk/lesson to pupils on the topic of "Life as a Muslim in modern Britain" to Year 6. In year 7 we invited in an Islamic calligrapher to run a session on artistic writing in Islamic culture and pupils learn to spell their name in Arabic. We also invite in a speaker from Humanists UK to talk to Year 7 on moral and ethical beliefs from a non-religious perspective. The RE coordinator is investigating links to the Holocaust project which has been set up at Huddersfield University.

RE also contributes to oracy and literacy through developing pupils' ability to express their own and other people's ideas, beliefs and points of view. This is done both verbally and through writing within class. We use a variety of strategies to support and develop pupils' abilities in this regard, within a framework of a safe classroom.

RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' SMSC development in the following ways:

SPIRITUAL: It provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and what it means to be human.

MORAL: It tackles issues of rights and wrongs and raises awareness of different strategies and frameworks that pupils may consider when making moral & ethical choices in their

lives. It also asks pupils to consider the moral & ethical choices which other people make within their community, society and global context.

SOCIAL: It encourages pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and others. It encourages a sense of empathy, generosity and compassion. It teaches pupils to develop respect for both themselves and others and to challenge prejudice, intolerance and stereotyping.

CULTURAL: It enables pupils to develop and build a sense of their own identity and belonging which helps them flourish as members of a diverse society. It also requires pupils to understand other individuals, communities and societies sense of identity and belonging.

The subject links to PSHE education by developing an awareness of the political, moral, religious context in which pupils make informed choices about their actions and lives.

RE supports our commitment to equality through the teaching of a range of religious, non-religious, moral and ethical beliefs. Through this we raise awareness of the importance of understanding the reasons why and how people might hold different beliefs and attitudes but within a framework of the core British/Fundamental values in particular that of mutual respect, individual liberty and the tolerance (acceptance) of other faiths.

We value the support given to RE through links with the local and wider community, such as visits to our local church, the development of visits to other places of faith and through the development of visitors into school from the local and wider community.

Withdrawal from RE

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw a child from religious education. If a parent is considering withdrawal from RE we will listen to their concerns, inviting them to do so with the Headteacher or other representative of the school. We work hard to ensure that any reservations or doubts may be accommodated to avoid withdrawal but recognise that a parent has this right if reservations cannot be resolved. Any formal decision to withdraw should be made in writing to the Headteacher. The school will arrange for appropriate arrangements to be made to supervise the pupil in school during RE lessons.

Enquiries and questions

The school welcomes enquiries or questions about RE. In the first instance parents should contact their child's class teacher or the RE co-ordinator (Mr Parker).

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis in conjunction with the governing body timetable.

APPENDIX A

KMS R.E. AND BRITISH/FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

Below are listed the 4 fundamental British/Fundamental values

- Democracy.
- The rule of law.
- Individual liberty.
- Mutual respect for and tolerance (acceptance) of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

R.E. at KMS plays an important role in the teaching and learning of these values. Listed below are some of the ways in which the taught RE curriculum delivers and supports the teaching of these fundamental values. This is not an exclusive list as the teaching of RE by its very nature involves a large degree of discussion and debate. Therefore these values may well be encountered across the RE curriculum. However these beliefs are always taught and explained to pupils as underpinning, fundamental features of British/Human society.

Democracy:

RE teaches pupils the skills of debate and discussion which are a fundamental component of a democratic society. Pupils learn how to formulate an argument that corresponds to their beliefs and to express these both verbally and in written form. Pupils also learn how to listen to other's points of view and understand how and why these might differ from their own. Pupils also learnt about various historical figures e.g. Ghandi who campaigned using democratic methods.

The Rule of Law:

RE explains the concept of religious law to pupils and gives examples from a variety of religions. Pupils are taught how UK law is superior to religious law and that religious law must conform to parliamentary law. Students are taught how in British society parliamentary/democratic law is the highest form of law and that all citizens are bound by this law within UK society.

Individual Liberty:

Pupils are taught about different religions and beliefs across the RE curriculum. Pupils are taught that religious belief/non-belief is a matter of personal, individual choice both for themselves and others. Pupils are taught that the law does not permit bias/discrimination based on religious/non-religious belief and there is a clear legal framework of individual rights and liberties of which religious faith is a component part.

Mutual respect for and tolerance (acceptance) of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith:

This is clearly an aspect of the fundamental values that RE can contribute heavily towards. Within the RE curriculum there is explicit units of work which teach a variety of different faiths and non-faith perspectives. Pupils are taught to understand how faith and non-faith perspectives may differ within a framework of respect and tolerance/acceptance. RE clearly offers an opportunity to correct misconceptions, misunderstandings and stereotypes with regards to people of different faiths and non-faiths. Pupils are continuously taught about the reasons for a respect of others with different beliefs and why and how British society functions within a framework of tolerance/acceptance of personal beliefs.