



Religious Education

The UK has a rich heritage of culture and diversity. This is continuing today in an era of globalisation and an increasingly interdependent world. Religion and belief for many people forms a crucial part of their culture and identity. Religion and beliefs have become more visible in public life locally, nationally and internationally. The impact of religion on society and public life is constantly brought to public attention through extensive media coverage. The rapid pace of development in scientific and medical technologies and the environmental debate continue to present new issues which raise religious, moral and social questions. The internet enables learning and encourages participation in public discussion of issues in a new and revolutionary way.

At Wandle Valley, we recognise that RE subject matter 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.

In summary, religious education for children and young people:

- provokes 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
- encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are 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. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- teaches pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- prompts 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. RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled.

At Wandle Valley, Religious Education is not currently taught discretely, but is meshed into other areas of the curriculum, namely SMSC, Personal Development, British Values, Relationship and Sex Education, Citizenship, PSHE, Diversity activities, Celebration Days and Charitable Fund Raising days.

Examples include:

Assemblies – **Major religious celebrations** are discussed and explained

Workshops – **The Big Question** Anti-Extremism activities and **Breaking the Cycle** Forgiveness Project

Educational Visits – Annual **Remembrance visit** to local C of E church

SMSC Tutor Resources – Used in **extended tutor** to learn about all major religions and celebrations

SMSC school-wide curriculum – **Changing the World** theme, lends itself to learning key aspects of **40+ worldwide countries**

Pupil Passport – Numerous tasks identified for pupils to participate in, including **Learning about a new religion and Visiting a Place of Worship**

Cultural Steering Group – **Staff focus group** who meet termly to discuss and plan whole school activities to promote **awareness and appreciation of Diversity**

Debate club – Offered during Enrichment, where **pupils debate key topical issues**

Relationship and Sex Education – Focus throughout on how cultural and religious beliefs impact **rules, trends and customs globally**

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE. 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. Where parents request that their child is withdrawn, their right will be respected. Due to the fact that RE is integrated into the wider curriculum at Wandle Valley, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. If pupils are withdrawn from RE, the school have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching. Pupils will remain on school premises.