



# DRONFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

## Policy for Religious Education

Revision No:	1
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Committee:	Full Governors
Date Adopted:	23 November 2020
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***This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff. It was approved by governors in November 2020 and will be reviewed in November 2023. The RE policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, including Collective worship, SMSC, Anti-bullying and Positive Behaviour Policy.***

At Dronfield Junior School our Religious Education is based on the Derbyshire and Derby City Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, 2020-25. This is the statutory basis for RE in Derbyshire and Derby City.

### **Intent:**

#### **Our visions for RE.**

Pupils who follow the RE programme at Dronfield Junior School will gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings, practices and life stories expressed in a variety of ways within Christianity and other principal religions and world views. We aim to provide *rich opportunities for children to learn about things that matter in the lives of many people in the local area and wider world.* Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others, having an increased tolerance which contributes positively to the creation of a better world for all.

### **Rationale, aims and definitions**

#### **Aims and purposes of RE at Dronfield Junior School**

The National Curriculum states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society and which prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. All state schools must teach RE to pupils at every key stage. This RE Syllabus for Derbyshire and Derby City establishes what shall be taught in RE, providing teachers with practical support and guidance about how to teach RE effectively.

#### **Principal aim**

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

The **threefold aim** of RE elaborates the **principal aim**.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

**1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses, offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

**2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

**3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

**Note:** These aims incorporate the former attainment targets of 'learning *about* religion' (**religious perspectives**) and 'learning *from* religion' (**human experiences**) which can be found in the National Curriculum 2014.

***The new Derbyshire and Derby City Syllabus for RE aims:***

- To ensure that every pupil's statutory entitlement to RE is met, irrespective of their faith or belief, and within this to encourage pupils to explore questions of spirituality, identity, ethics, discrimination and prejudice.
- To enable pupils to develop religious literacy and conceptual understanding of what it means to be a person of faith or no faith.
- To encourage pupils to articulate their own ideas and experience of religion, belief and spirituality.
- To encourage all pupils and teachers to experience RE as an exciting subject that feeds into an understanding of what it means to live in Derbyshire and Derby City and our wider world communities and to promote harmony and good community relations.
- To encourage teachers to produce RE lessons that are challenging, inspiring and engaging to everyone.
- To assist pupils to engage critically with ideas and understanding of religion and belief systems, given the nature of our society, its speed of change and growing social media influences. RE studies how religions and world views shape and are shaped by the societies in which pupils live, promoting deepening understanding of those belief systems.
- To promote interactive, creative and experiential learning that promotes social and ethnic accord alongside the endorsement of fundamental British Values, so that schools will be supported in visiting places of worship, community meeting places and communicating with different social groups across the local community.

*(Derbyshire and Derby City Agreed Syllabus 2020 – 2025)*

# **Implementation:**

## **Objectives in RE**

**The Contribution of RE to wider school aims and ethos RE plays a significant role in the personal development of children and young people.** At its heart is the intention to enable children and young people to become “religiously educated” in order to face the demands of the contemporary world. What does it mean to be a ‘religiously educated person’? Some possible responses include someone who...

- Has a depth of understanding and insight into religion and belief, and their impact in the lives of believers and society, including the implications for their own lives;
- Is confident and thoughtful about, and able to express, their own beliefs;
- Acts in accordance with their beliefs;
- Is interested in, and respectful towards, the beliefs of others;
- Is interested in building up their understanding of different religions and beliefs;
- Is able to think for themselves and recognise where others may be trying to influence them;
- Continues to explore the questions of meaning that life throws up in light of the insights of faith.

Given the opportunities for encountering people of different beliefs, cultures and lifestyles, RE also has a key role to play in fostering respect, tolerance and social cohesion. As well as being “religiously educated”, RE helps pupils to become “skilled cultural navigators”, able to handle the differences of faith and belief around them, as well as establish their own sense of identity and belonging.

RE plays an important part in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, making a unique contribution to their spiritual development in particular.

At the root of RE’s significant contribution to pupil development, are the specific skills and attitudes that are at the heart of the process of teaching and learning in this subject. In the process of exploring religion and belief, RE seeks to develop the ability of pupils in:

- **Investigating**
- **Analysing**
- **Interpreting**
- **Synthesising**
- **Reflecting**
- **Applying**
- **Evaluating**
- **Expressing**
- **Empathising**

Discerning RE encourages the development of:

- **Self-understanding**
- **Commitment**
- **Respect for all**
- **Fairness**
- **Open-mindedness**
- **Critical-mindedness**
- **Curiosity and wonder**
- **Enquiry**

### **Principles of teaching and learning**

RE will be taught for a minimum 45 hours across the academic year. Time allocated to the subject does not have to be every week, it can be taught in longer sessions over fewer weeks if the teacher feels this will enhance the delivery of the topic they are teaching.

Activities and teaching will be suited to the abilities and interests of the full range of pupils, enabling them to develop the knowledge, understanding and attributes appropriate to their level, and to the experience, enjoyment, satisfaction and success in the subject. Teaching may be aimed at the whole class, groups and individuals depending upon what the teacher deems appropriate.

R.E will be taught in a manner which considers the developments of the Derbyshire and Derby City Agreed Syllabus (2020 - 2025), which includes:

- Better strategies and resources to reduce prejudices and racism and promote racial equality and respect for community cohesion.
- Rising standards of teaching and learning in R.E

Dronfield Junior School will teach the statutory core content at KS2 laid down in the Derbyshire and Derby City Agreed Syllabus for RE (2020 - 2025). As a school we use a range of resources to complement this.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

RE teaching draws on a wide range of key strategies for learning, including:

- Open questioning
- Thinking skills
- English within RE
- Discussion
- Expressive arts and creativity for learning
- Visits and visitors
- Practical approaches

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT, works of art, artefacts, visits and visitors.

Across the whole curriculum we strive for 'quality first teaching', so this applies to RE.

Differentiation is used appropriately in order to ensure that children of all abilities, including less able, those with special needs and more able or those with gifts or talents make good progress and enjoy RE.

## **Teaching and learning**

Our RE topics (key questions) are listed in our curriculum map these will be used to aid the teaching of **Believing** (Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth), **Expressing** (Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity) and **Living** (Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments) across KS2.

## **RE across the school.**

In addition we believe that RE should make a significant contribution to the school's multi-cultural, spiritual, curriculum and to its ethos through the encouragement of:

- Flexible, supportive teamwork
- Enthusiastic, committed staff
- Good relationships and positive caring attitudes between staff, staff and pupils, staff and parents, school and visitors, pupils, the school and the community, including places of worship, the school and external agencies, the school and the local secondary school, and the school and its ex-pupils
- Good home school liaison through an open door policy for parents, the use of parental volunteers in the classroom and within school
- A sense of belonging and self-esteem among adults and pupils.
- The promotion of clear values and principles through our written aims, policies, mission statement, code of conduct and daily practice
- Assemblies, introduced by music from around the world, where the pupils have opportunities for thoughtful reflection and contemplation
- School assemblies where pupils' topics/visits/achievements are shared and special events are celebrated.
- Circle time – the opportunity to share hopes, fears, expectations, joys, opinions etc
- The study of a range of faiths
- A sense of pride in the appearance of the school and a celebration of pupils' work through careful display, extending to a concern for the care of their local environment through local geography and history, knowledge and understanding studies, visits, visitors and walks
- Celebration of individual, group and school successes and a house point system which promotes care, consideration and conscientiousness
- Multicultural weeks
- Extra-curricular activities
- School productions
- Opportunities for residential experiences, day visits to Art Galleries, Museums and Places of Worship etc.

## **Visits and visitors**

We are able to visit places of worship in the immediate vicinity of the school, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class.

Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at Dronfield Junior School.

- **Year 3 – Local Church**
- **Year 4 – Hindu Mandir and Local church**
- **Year 5 – Sheffield Mosque**
- **Year 6 – Faith Speakers visit school**

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits.

## **Impact:**

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

The Derbyshire and Derby Agreed Syllabus (2020-25) provides descriptions of progress and attainment, which Dronfield Junior School records on a tracking sheet as a basis for reporting at the end of Key Stage 2. We make specific, individual and accurate comments on each child's progress in RE in annual reports, based on regular monitoring of work and transfer this information to new schools when pupils leave us.

A folder of examples of pupils' work, which is designed to help teachers make judgments about attainment and progress, is available in the RE lead's classroom. The subject leader will co-ordinate the addition of pupils' work that provide clear evidence of progress and attainment. However, these are only examples and there does not need to be more examples that are useful. This approach to exemplifying standards aims to clarify our understanding of what makes for quality RE.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

We intend that this policy should operate for the next three years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to share a copy of the planning for RE with the subject leader each term. The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. The RE lead has time to observe the teaching and learning of RE throughout the school, talk to the children about their learning and monitor folders to raise achievement in RE. We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.

### **Self-Evaluation**

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with OFSTED guidance [*new Ofsted guidance from January 2019*] about self-evaluation and review.

### **Staff training and CPD**

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or from an external provider. The RE subject leader also attends and leads local network meetings.

### **Transition**

We ensure that transition across key stages (including to KS3) includes a simple statement of the religions and topics that pupils have covered alongside their progress and achievement.

## **The Role of the RE lead**

The RE lead, working with all staff, is responsible for the progression of R.E throughout the school. She will be available for advice and consultation by providing;

- Provide curriculum leadership across the school
- Monitor and evaluate provision for RE within the school
- Monitor and evaluate standards of RE within the school
- Being informed about appropriate resources for the effective teaching of RE
- Keeping up to date with local and national developments in RE
- Being the first point of contact between the school and the wider community with regard to any issues or initiatives involving RE
- Liaising with outside speakers and agencies, such as The Open Centre and Ofsted
- Actively promoting effective RE within the school and its community and to keep the profile of RE high within the school.

## **The Right of Withdrawal and Legal Responsibilities**

This was first granted when religious education was religious instruction and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE has been very different to this for some time. It is inclusive and wide-ranging, exploring a range of religious and non-religious world views. However, in the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE/RME on the grounds that they wish to provide their own religious education. (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3)). This will be the parents' responsibility. However, it is good practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of RE before honouring this right. Following this discussion, any parent wishing to withdraw their child(ren) from RE must notify the Headteacher in writing.

A parent may request

- That the pupil may be wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education given in accordance with the school's curriculum.
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the parents elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day.
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the school.

## **RE link governor:**

**RE lead: Lyndsey Grogan**

**November 2020**

**Review date: November 2023**