ROWLEY HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

'To nurture happy, healthy, confident learners who always aim high!'

Religious Education (R.E) Policy

Approved Autumn 2025
To be reviewed Autumn 2027

Signed and approved by ..... Date .....

Rowley Hall Primary School
Religious Education Policy

As dictated by the National Curriculum:

(2.1) Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

(2.3) All state schools are also required to make provision for a daily act of collective worship and must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage.

Schools have to teach RE but parents can withdraw their children for all or part of the lessons.

Aims

At Rowley Hall Primary School, using the Sandwell agreed syllabus (SACRE), all pupils develop understanding of Christianity in each Key Stage. In addition, across the age range, pupils will develop understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK, in-line with the law. These are Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented through the teaching of worldviews, including for example Humanism.

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

It also helps pupils to develop their own understanding of the world and how to live, in the light of their learning, developing understanding, skills and attitudes. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as providing important opportunities for exploring British values.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils can:

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
- explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
- recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation

2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

3. Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses

- challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

The RE curriculum provides opportunities for consideration of different beliefs and ideas to one's own, and promotes anti-racist education and community cohesion and harmony through encouraging tolerance, respect and understanding towards those who have different viewpoints to one's own. RE successfully promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils. Affirming and supporting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils prepares pupils for life in a diverse society.

The Curriculum

Religious Education is a core subject within the National Curriculum and has been planned in accordance with the Sandwell agreed syllabus. Five percent of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education at both Key Stages (this equates to one hour per week or 36 hours over the school year). Religious Education is taught as a discreet subject but cross-curricular links are exploited in conjunction with the rest of the planned curriculum.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about beliefs and practices of Christianity and other faiths, mainly through thematic and generic approaches in line with the Early Learning Outcome; learning about People, Culture and Communities.

In Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, the scheme of work is based on Sandwell SACRE RE syllabus reviewed for 2024-2029. The syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils, and specifies for teachers what shall be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE, and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject. The topics, set out in the Whole-School Curriculum Overview for Religious Education, plan for progression by building upon prior learning and offering increasing challenge. Children of all abilities are given opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in each unit of work. The whole-school curriculum overview is available on the school's website and can be printed if requested by parents/carers. Half-termly Knowledge Organisers are shared with children and parents (via Class Dojo), also outline upcoming coverage.

In addition to weekly R.E. lessons, special events in the religious calendar may also be recognised e.g. Christmas, Eid, Easter. Class teachers are responsible for ensuring the coverage of the R.E. curriculum based on the Whole School Curriculum Overview.

Cross Curricular

Opportunities are used to draw RE experiences out of a range of activities in other subjects to enable children to apply and use RE in real life and academic contexts.

- English: RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English by promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Computing: We use ICT where appropriate to find, select and analyse information, through using a range of ICT resources and the internet, ICT can also be used to evaluate and improve presentation of their work.
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and British Values: Through RE we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. RE promotes the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility.
- Collective Worship is separate to the teaching of RE, though content of assemblies may be drawn upon during whole class learning.

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching methods should be used to teach RE, such as role play/drama, stories and music. Visitors to school should also be encouraged to give children the opportunity to listen to and ask questions about another person's experiences of living/celebrating through different faiths. The Foundation Stage and KS1 forms the basis of children's future understanding and therefore should begin with children's own experiences and feelings, particularly around 'special times, people, places and objects/symbols. Many opportunities should be given for thinking, talking, listening and responding to others respectfully. Much emphasis should be placed on valuing and caring for other people in our local community and also for children to relate their understanding to a wider/global community. In KS2, similar opportunities should be offered and children should be encouraged to openly discuss their understanding, opinions and attitudes about religion. They should be given time to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them and promote their own spiritual growth and development.

Resources

The Sandwell SACRE RE syllabus (2024-2029) provides a range of links to resources within each individual unit plan. Teachers will be advised to use this alongside relevant resources currently available in school and online e.g. reference books and photographs, as well as arranging talks from visitors (including contacts with the local Church) and visiting places of worship. Resources are centrally stored in the RE cupboard, and include books, pictures, artefacts, posters. All materials should be handled very sensitively and with respect.

Equal opportunities and Inclusion

This policy relates directly to the school's aims with emphasis on the development of self-esteem and confidence in the beliefs and values of the individual. We have high expectations of all pupils regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity or background and everyone will be supported in learning, expressing views and understanding the beliefs of others. The guidance can be found from p 111 in the Sandwell SACRE; this is used to provide further support in planning and assessing those with SEND.

Religious education is a compulsory subject and all pupils, who are not withdrawn from RE by the wishes of their parents, participate in RE throughout their school life. Religious Education does not attempt to alter a child's personal beliefs but merely contributes to the rich, broad and balanced curriculum at Rowley Hall Primary School. Religious education is open to all: female and male pupils; believers of principal religious traditions, minority faiths; all ethnic, racial or cultural groups; those who are unsure about religion and belief and those who have no religious faith. Belief on the part of the pupils is in no way assumed by the syllabus, nor are pupils penalised if they have no faith. It is likely that a teacher may have their own religious beliefs/faith. The teaching of RE is not used to indoctrinate or challenge children's faiths/beliefs which may be different from their own. Teachers must be sensitive about the language that they use, for instance swapping, 'I go to church on Sundays' to, 'Christians go to church on Sundays'. All teaching is in line with the Rights of the Child.

Right to Withdraw

Teaching staff

The Education Act 1944 states 'No teacher…shall be required to give religious instruction or receive any less emolument or be deprived of, or disqualified for, any promotion or other advantage by reason of the fact that he does or does not give religious instruction or by reason of his religious opinions or of his attending or omitting to attend religious worship…'

If a teacher does not want to teach Religious Education, in the first instance, they should speak to the headteacher.

Pupils

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from all/part of the RE curriculum. If the request to withdraw is made, the school will communicate with parents/carers what the RE syllabus covers and emphasise that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. RE is open, broad, and explores a range of religious and non religious worldviews. Parents/carers will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and will be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.

An annual review of the request to withdraw will be suggested. It will be made clear that the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right will be respected.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, they will be supervised as part of another class or within a small adult-led group where other learning is taking place. If this is not possible, the child will remain in the classroom and be offered alternative activities which may include activities provided by parents/carers.

If the parents/carers wish for their child to receive an alternative R.E. education, this will be discussed. Suitable RE will be provided if this is reasonably convenient. If this is not practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE. Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Health, Safety and Well-Being

Visits to places of worship and other RE related venues are encouraged as an important part of developing a child's understanding of the role religion plays in communities. Prior to all visits, staff will carry out a formal risk assessment, if necessary, visiting the venue prior to creating the risk assessment. Staff will ensure that the context of the learning that will take place during the visit will not undermine a child's own faith or challenge their belief and will only be presenting a knowledge base about a faith. Permission will be sought from parents/carers for each child to attend the visit. We acknowledge the sensitivity that some families may have with regard to their child visiting another place of worship, staff must ensure that they do all they can to assure parents and encourage pupil participation.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Children's learning will be assessed on their achievement towards the key skills in Religious Education using the Sandwell SACRE '8 Steps Up' (Appendix 1) assessment guidance (p104-108 of the Sandwell SACRE)

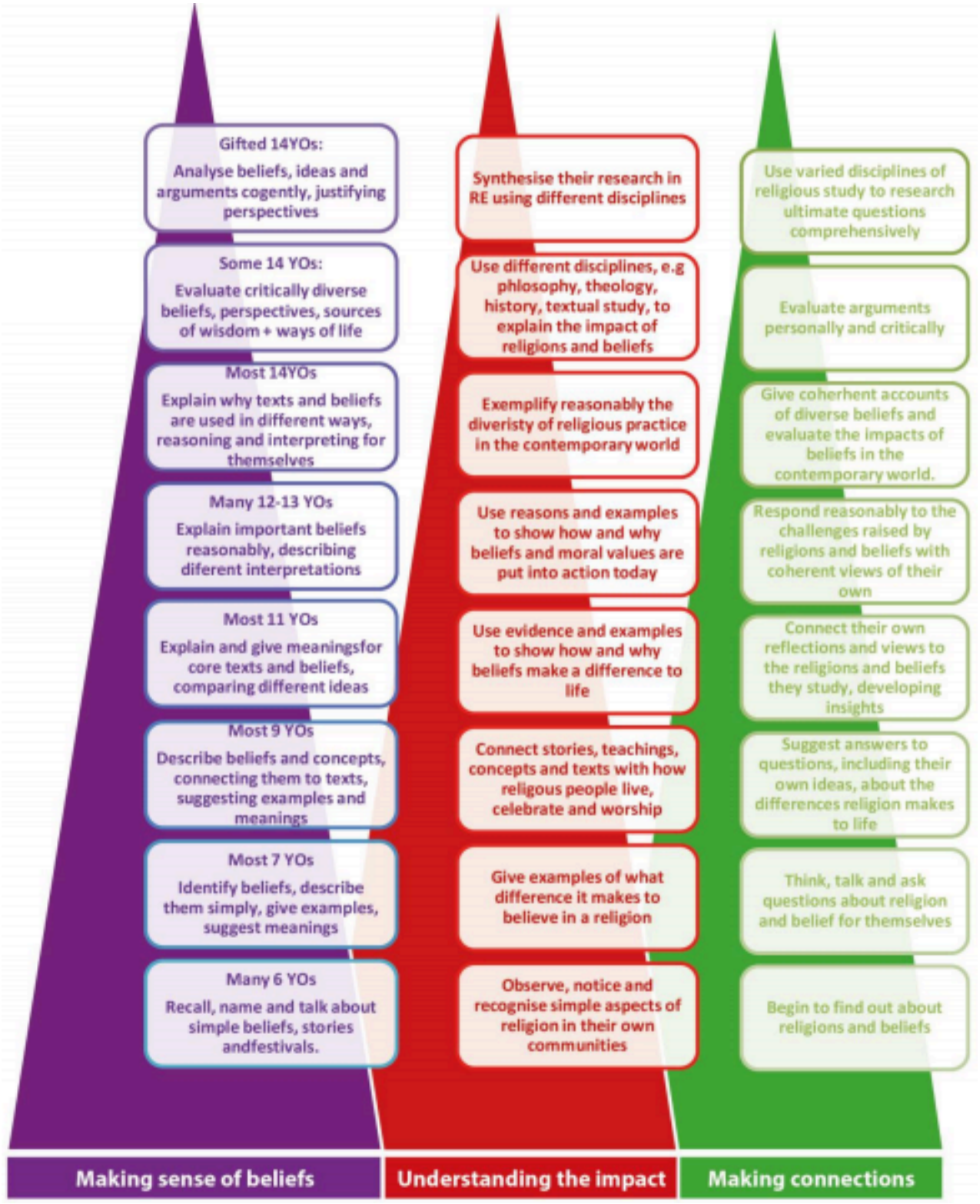
Teachers will use ongoing formative assessments to make an end-of-year judgment as to whether each pupil is working towards the expected level, at the expected level or working at greater depth within the subject. Pupil progress will be shared on written reports sent home at the end of the year.

Monitoring and Review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The R.E. subject leader presents the Senior Leadership Team with monitoring reports in-line with the monitoring and assessment calendar.

The subject leader has allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work, conducting pupil interviews, analysing planning and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject in line with the school's monitoring calendar.

Appendix 1



Teaching and learning approach	End of KS1, aged 7 *Pupils can …*	End of lower KS2, aged 9 *Pupils can …*	End of KS2, aged 11 *Pupils can …*	End of KS3, aged 14 *Pupils can …*
Element 1: Making sense of beliefs and ideas Identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions; recognising how and why sources of authority (such as texts) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways; and developing skills of interpretation.	• identify some core beliefs and concepts studied and give a simple description of what they mean	• identify and describe the core beliefs and concepts studied	• identify and explain the core beliefs and concepts studied, using examples from texts/sources of authority in religions	• give reasoned explanations of how and why the selected core beliefs and concepts are important within the religions studied
	• give examples of how stories show what people believe (e.g. the meaning behind a festival)	• make clear links between texts/sources of wisdom and authority and the core concepts studied	• describe examples of ways in which people use texts/sources of wisdom and authority to make sense of core beliefs and concepts	• taking account of context(s), explain how and why people use and make sense of texts / sources of wisdom and authority differently
	• give clear, simple accounts of what stories and other texts mean to believers	• offer informed suggestions about what texts/sources of wisdom and authority can mean, and give examples of what these sources mean to believers	• give meanings for texts/sources of wisdom and authority studied, comparing these ideas with some ways in which believers interpret texts/sources of authority	• in the light of their learning, explain how appropriate different interpretations of texts / sources of wisdom and authority are, including their own ideas

Teaching and learning approach	End of KS1 *Pupils can …*	End of lower KS2 *Pupils can …*	End of KS2 *Pupils can …*	End of KS3 *Pupils can …*
Element 2: Understanding the impact of beliefs and ideas Examining how and why people put their beliefs into practice in diverse ways, within their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world, appreciating and appraising different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.	• give examples of how people use stories, texts and teachings to guide their beliefs and actions	• make simple links between stories, teachings and concepts studied and how people live, individually and in communities • describe how people show their beliefs in how they worship and in the ways they live	• make clear connections between what people believe and how they live, individually and in communities	• give reasons and examples to account for how and why people put their beliefs into practice in different ways, individually and in various communities (e.g. denominations, times or cultures; faith or other communities)
	• give examples of ways in which believers put their beliefs into practice	• identify some differences in how people put their beliefs into practice	• using evidence and examples, show how and why people put their beliefs into practice in different ways, e.g. in different communities, denominations or cultures	• show how beliefs guide people in making moral and religious decisions, applying these ideas to situations in the world today

Teaching and learning approach	End of KS1 *Pupils can …*	End of lower KS2 *Pupils can …*	End of KS2 *Pupils can …*	End of KS3 *Pupils can …*
Element 3: Making connections Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the key concepts and questions studied, so that pupils can challenge the ideas studied, and consider how these ideas might challenge their own thinking; and discerning possible connections between the ideas and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world, expressing critical responses and personal reflections.	• think, talk and ask questions about whether the ideas they have been studying have something to say to them	• raise important questions and suggest answers about how far the beliefs and practices studied might make a difference to how pupils think and live • make links between some of the beliefs and practices studied and life in the world today, expressing some ideas of their own clearly	• make connections between the beliefs and practices studied, evaluating and explaining their importance to different people (e.g. believers and atheists) • reflect on and articulate lessons people might gain from the beliefs/practices studied, including their own responses, recognising that others may think differently	• give coherent accounts of the significance and implications of the beliefs and practices studied in the world today • evaluate how far the beliefs and practices studied help pupils themselves, and others, to make sense of the world
	• give a good reason for the views they have and the connections they make	• give good reasons for the views they have and the connections they make	• consider and weigh up how ideas studied in this unit relate to their own experiences and experiences of the world today, developing insights of their own and giving good reasons for the views they have and the connections they make	• respond to the challenges raised by questions of belief and practice, both in the world today and in their own lives, offering reasons and justifications for their responses