

Religious Education Policy

Brixworth CEVC Primary School



Last reviewed on: February 2024

Next review due by: February 2027

Approved by:

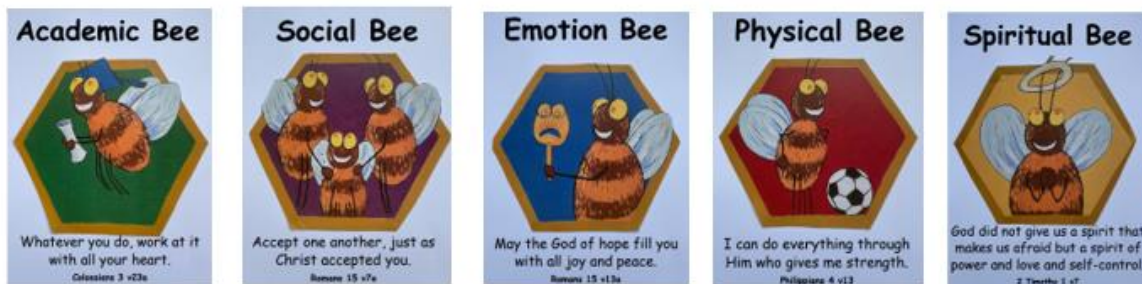
Brixworth School Vision



School Vision – ‘Be the best that you can be’

academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually within a safe, healthy, inspirational and enjoyable environment.

Through our school vision, we want every child to reach their God given potential.



Introduction

“Religious Education in a Church School should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person”. (*Taken from the Statement of Entitlement – Church of England Education Office 2019*).

We aim to provide a high quality RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews (the term worldviews refers to a persons way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world). As a Church of England School, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our R.E. curriculum. Through the ‘Understanding Christianity’ resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the children’s own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the Diocese of Peterborough R.E. Syllabus, we learn about other religions and worldviews, fostering respect for them. Links to our Christian values and vision, and support for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our R.E. Curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a range of opportunities for our children to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

Aims and Purposes

The principal aim for R.E. is **“to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief”**. (Taken from the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus)

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of R.E. in Church Schools as taken from the “Church of England Statement of Entitlement 2019”.

We aim for children to:

- know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs, using an approach that critically engages with biblical text;
- develop an understanding of the diversity of life in modern Britain
- gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied;
- engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience;
- recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain’s cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places;
- explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum, children are able to:

- give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith;
- show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning;
- engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none;
- reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Please refer our leaflet for parents and carers about the teaching of R.E. in our School.

Cross-Curricular Links

R.E. supports the development of a wide range of educational skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to children’s SMSC development. It addresses issues, which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama, history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

National and Local Context

We provide a range of opportunities for learners to make links between beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Teaching and Learning in RE contributes to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the following ways:

- Discussions about God and why people believe in God
- Learning about other faiths and cultures and how lives are affected by belief
- Teaching respect, tolerance and understanding of others
- Promoting the caring, sharing family ethos of our school
- Encouraging learners to reflect upon questions of meaning and value, including those of life and death
- The provision of opportunities for learners to experience awe and wonder ('Wow' moments)

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school's curriculum.

Our RE curriculum:

- contributes to British Values (mutual tolerance, respectful attitudes, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews;
- enables pupils to develop their religious literacy;
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas;
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews;
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and a wide range of skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs;
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it;
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Curriculum Balance and Time

As a Church of England School, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus we expect a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE based upon the law and Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office – <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/RE%20Statement%20of%20Entitlement%20for%20Church%20Schools.pdf>

In accordance with statutory requirements we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The equivalent of 45 minutes per week for KS1 and 1 hour per week for KS2 is allocated for the teaching of R.E. This may be organised as a longer block over a shorter period.

Teaching and Learning

Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all our children, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. R.E. lessons, provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. Our children experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning.

Teaching in R.E. challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the pupil's own lives. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

At Brixworth Primary School we teach the fundamental skills, knowledge and concepts of R.E. as set out in the New Agreed Syllabus. We use the Diocese of Peterborough R.E. Syllabus and the 'Understanding Christianity' materials to support our teachers in developing and delivering excellence in Religious Education. The syllabus sets out an approach to teaching and learning, supporting teachers to help children encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs.

The Syllabus is underpinned by three core elements (Text/Beliefs, Impact and Connections) which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, thus supporting the aims of R.E.

Learners are enabled to explore questions of faith and are able to explore and make decisions about their personal response. Their faith and that of their families is respected. Similarly, they are encouraged to respect the belief and viewpoint of others.

At Brixworth we ensure that a variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted in our teaching of R.E. to allow access for all children including adaptation for children with SEND. The variety enables our children to encounter their preferred learning style as well as to experience alternative styles too. The teaching and learning styles used promote a range of skills such as thinking skills, reasoning, enquiry and research.

Examples of active learning strategies and activities we use are:

- Class/paired/group discussions;
- Dramatic conventions;
- Group work;
- Individual reflection;
- Use of music and art;
- Artefact handling;
- Visits and visitors;
- Use of ICT and Multi Media;
- Use of photos, posters, DVDs, online videos.

Resources

A good range of resources are available for teachers and children to access for supporting in their R.E. lessons. These are all suitably boxed according to religion with images and notes to support where necessary. Age appropriate bibles are available in each classroom. Resources are stored in the shelving at the back of the main hall cupboard, and should be returned after use. Resources from Understanding Christianity and The Diocese of Peterborough Syllabus for Religious Education are used to support and enhance R.E. lessons where appropriate.

Children are supported to treat and handle all resources with respect.

These resources include:

- Artefacts
- Bible
- Books
- Posters/photos
- Reference materials from the school library
- Online videos/internet sites
- ICT is a resource which may be used for reference, research or word processing
- Understanding Christianity resources are supplied with scheme

The school is also able to utilise resources from the local Church, including the Vicar and members of the PCC.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in R.E. on different occasions, for example when pupils:

- Handle artifacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to the guidelines set out in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Assessment

Assessment is used to guide the progress of individual learners in R.E. and target where the next steps in their learning should be. Teachers assess informally in the course of their teaching, through group and individual discussions, observations, written work and independent

assessment activities. Assessment data is collected termly and data is used to inform planning. Data is evaluated across the school by the subject leader and strengths and areas to develop are shared with SLT and class teachers.

Assessment in R.E. will:

- involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work/resources used such as “Understanding Christianity”;
- be directly related to the expectations of the Diocesan Syllabus. Further detail including End of Phase Learning Outcomes, Unit Outcomes and Pupil Speak Unit Outcomes can be found in Section D of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus;
- seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge but also personal knowledge and disciplinary knowledge.
- recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop;
- include pupil self-assessment;
- enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil’s knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development;

Attainment in RE is reported to parents in end of year reports alongside other curriculum areas. Pupils are graded on effort and attainment.

Legal Requirements and the Right of Withdrawal

RE must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents’ request. (*DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28*). The law relating to RE for pupils who are not yet in Key Stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As RE must be taught to ‘all registered pupils at the school’, it includes pupils in reception classes.

In keeping with the law, parents/carers may withdraw their children from RE provided they give written notification to the headteacher. Parents/carers are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. The school will ensure that suitable supervision is provided for the pupil. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all pupils admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making such a decision.

Subject Leadership

R.E. is a core subject in all Church of England schools. RE has equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing.

The Subject Leader for RE has the following roles and responsibilities:

Policy, knowledge and development

- Devises a Long Term Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Decides which religions are to be included at which key stage, based on the syllabus requirements;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient;

- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting children's work
- Ensures that our school inclusion policy is promoted in RE;
- Promotes RE with staff, pupils, parents / carers and governors;
- Promotes displays of pupils' work in RE;
- Audits available resources, buys new ones and deploys appropriately;
- Keeps up-to-date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

- Reviews, monitors and evaluates the provision and the practice of RE;
- Identifies trends, makes comparisons and knows about different groups within our school;
- Monitors planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
- Provides observation feedback and reports on findings;
- Samples pupil's work;
- Evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment;
- Sets overall school targets for improvement.

Supporting and Advising

- Prepares a subject action plan, including short and long-term targets and a funding policy, which builds on existing practice and strives for continuous improvement;
- Leads curriculum development and ensures staff development through courses, in-house meetings and training;
- Keeps up-to-date with new developments and resources, including accessing the Diocese of Peterborough termly RE Newsletter;
- Work termly with the Diocesan School Consultant to monitor and develop the subject.
- Supports non-specialist teachers and staff;
- Works alongside colleagues to demonstrate good practice;
- Prepares statements about RE for parents/carers and governors, as required;

Striving for Excellence

We know that R.E. makes a powerful contribution to children and young people's learning. It provides them with the chance to explore the big ideas of religion and belief and to think about what matters in their own lives. We look at the continuing role of religion in contemporary British and global society.

We aim to make our school a challenging but safe space for children to explore their own and others' religious, spiritual and philosophical convictions critically and responsibly. We give opportunities to engage in dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews. High quality RE supports the development of the whole child.

We continuously strive for excellence for all our children in RE.