

# ***Tow Law Millennium Primary School***

## ***Religious Education (RE) Policy***



### **1. Intent**

At Tow Law Millennium Primary our intent for Religious Education is that our children develop a deeper understanding of the six major world religions, making sense of religion and belief, at an appropriate level of challenge for their age. We intend to help our children to build upon their knowledge and understanding and to develop sensitivity, empathy and communication with people who may hold different beliefs to their own. This begins in our EYFS where children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting local places of worship. Pupils in our school generally have a very inquisitive and respectful attitude towards other cultures, however our school is located in a predominantly white British area, therefore our pupils have limited personal experience of other cultures. Our curriculum addresses these limitations through first hand experiences, as well as including diversity units within our long-term plan, as we seek to extend our pupils' experiences. Our Religious Education curriculum is matched to the needs of our pupils and is in line with the 2020 Durham Agreed Syllabus for R.E. Each key stage has key religions to focus upon, whilst maintaining Christianity as the main area of study throughout school.

### **2. Implementation**

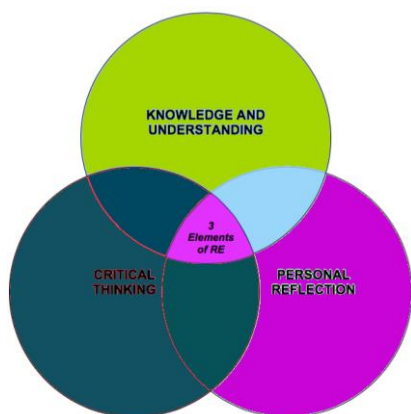
#### **a. Curriculum planning**

Religious Education at Tow Law Millennium Primary is taught either in blocks or weekly lessons throughout the year. Teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each blocked topic and consideration has been given to ensure progression across units throughout each year group across the school, in line with the Durham Agreed Syllabus 2020. The sequence of learning ensures that lessons are relevant and takes account of children's different starting points. Progression of knowledge, understanding and personal reflection is interwoven into each lesson. Consideration is given to how greater depth will be taught, learnt and demonstrated within each lesson, as well as how learners will be supported in line with the school's commitment to inclusion and equality. Throughout Religious Education lessons, all religious beliefs are treated with equal respect. We value the links, which are made between home, school, and throughout the North East. We acknowledge and appreciate that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils and seek to broaden their experiences beyond that of our immediate area. We promote teaching in Religious Education that stresses open enquiry and first-hand experiences wherever possible (which can be seen through our two-year

rolling programme of visits). Where required, CPD is provided to staff members to increase confidence and knowledge when teaching religious education.

## **b. Durham Agreed Syllabus 2020**

The three elements of RE are knowledge and understanding, critical thinking and personal reflection. The elements are interlinked and help our pupils to make good progress in Religious Education.



Knowledge and Understanding – pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of different religious and non-religious worldviews and consider their similarities and differences.

Critical thinking – pupils will develop their skills in analysing and evaluating. They will have the opportunity to give opinions, weigh up the views of others and respond to them.

Personal Reflection – pupils develop their ability to reflect on religious and non-religious worldviews in relation to their own beliefs, values and experiences and the influence of these on their daily life, attitudes and actions. This is not assessed by teachers. Personal Reflection makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).

## **Concepts of Religion**

The following four concepts are one way in which a religion can be defined and we use these as a basis for our RE planning. Each concept conveys a fundamental idea for understanding what religion is and how religion works.

### Belief

- What people believe e.g. about God, meaning of life
- Questions of meaning, purpose and truth e.g. God, the natural world
- Key beliefs of particular religions e.g. love, forgiveness

### Authority

- How people from different traditions know what to believe and how to act
- Different sources of authority e.g. holy books, leaders' teachings.
- How sources of authority may be understood differently by groups within a religion or belief system.

### Expressions of Belief

- How people express beliefs, feelings and commitment through worship, ceremonies, rituals and symbols
- Private and public expressions of belief including worship in religious buildings
- Differing forms of expression e.g. creeds, prayers, ceremony
- How beliefs and feelings can be expressed

### Impact of Belief

- How does belief and worship affect what people feel and think and how they act and behave?
- How rituals, ceremonies and symbols can make a difference to individuals and communities
- Values, attitudes and actions affected by beliefs
- Differing views on the impact of faith within and across religious and non-religious traditions
- Controversial issues affecting individuals, local and global communities

## **c. Key Religions across the Key Stages**

At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, we focus on key religions at different key stages:

EYFS	KS1	KS2
Christianity (plus aspects of the other principal religions as appropriate)	Christianity, Buddhism	Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, (plus a small special study of Islam)

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

During the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), Religious Education is taught as part of whole class topics or themes. At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, we use the themes 'Special' and 'Belonging' to explore religion:

- Special: times, people, places, objects, books (this includes stories)
- Belonging: how belonging and identity are expressed

### **Key Stage 1**

At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, pupils are taught about:

- **Christianity** - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.
- **Buddhism** - introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact.
- **Religious diversity** - introduction to the diverse religious and non-religious landscape in the local area (including differing denominations).

## Key Stage 2

At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, pupils are taught about:

- **Christianity** - beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.
- **Hinduism** - some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities
- **Judaism** - some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities
- **Religious diversity** - the diverse religious and non-religious landscape across the region, including a special study of a local Muslim community
- Similarities and differences within and between religious and non-religious worldviews through at least one **thematic study** e.g. about ritual, the environment, care for others

## d. Statutory Requirements of Religious Education

Tow Law Millennium Primary School has adopted the Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020.

Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum. Each local authority must have a SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) to advise the Local Authority on matters connected with Religious Education. The Agreed Syllabus must be reviewed by SACRE every five years.

The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be non-denominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils.

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes.

Religious Education must be taught for approximately 5% of curriculum time. The recommended teaching time for Key Stage 1 is approximately 36 hours per year and 45 hours per year for Key Stage 2.

Daily worship is an important part of Religious Education at Tow Law Millennium Primary School. Assemblies are either whole school, Key Stage or classroom based.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education and religious worship in school classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors.

#### **e. Multicultural**

The inclusion of a multicultural element in our school is morally imperative if we are concerned about our children's attitudes to themselves and to others. Knowledge and understanding of other cultures is worthwhile in itself and as a means to good race relations. A complete understanding of one's own culture depends upon knowledge and understanding of others with which it can be contrasted.

Contemporary British Society contains a variety of social and ethnic groups; this diversity should be made evident to the children to promote an understanding of cultural differences. We have a two-year rolling program of visits to places of worship for some of the main religions. We also encourage parents and other relations to come into school to share their religious stories and experiences, so as to make pupils aware that cultural or religious diversity is a meaningful part of our nation's and local area's heritage.

#### **f. SMSC**

At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, we recognise that the personal development of pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve and RE is a vital part of this. In RE, they can explore how people make moral decisions and what people mean by the terms right and wrong. The children use a range of social skills when visiting places of worship and meeting people with differing beliefs. They have the opportunity to explore cultural and religious diversity in our local area. We explore Britain as a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. For further information regarding SMSC, see the SMSC policy.

#### **g. British Values**

At Tow Law Millennium Primary School, we promote British Values in many ways. The Durham Agreed syllabus requires schools to include a unit of work on religious diversity at Key Stage 1 and 2. These units help our pupils to explore differing beliefs and practices in the local area and North East region. Through our rolling programme of visits to places of worship and visitors invited into school, as outlined above, our children are taught mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

#### **h. Resources**

We have resources in our school to support our religious education teaching units, and have boxes for Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. We keep resources for religious education in a central store. The school library has some RE topic books to support the children's individual research. We have membership with Durham Learning Resources which allows us to order resources to support teaching. We actively encourage visitors into school and visits to places of worship.

#### **i. The Foundation Stage**

We teach Religious Education to children in Foundation Stage as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the Reception class is part of the Foundation Stage, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Curriculum which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the Early Years Outcomes of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world and to develop personal qualities.

#### **j. Teaching Religious Education to Children with Extra Needs**

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which provides a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with SEND, those who are more able and talented and those with English as an additional language and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. Where children have been identified as having SEND, teachers will provide appropriate RE lessons and support which meets the needs of all children.

### **3. Impact**

#### **a. Assessment and Recording**

Outcomes in Religious Education books evidence a broad and balanced RE curriculum and demonstrate children's acquisition of identified key knowledge and vocabulary. The Benchmark expectations from the Durham Agreed Syllabus (2020) form the basis of planning and assessment in RE in our school. Through the use of pupil voice, personal reflection is evident and respect and sensitivity towards others who may have differing beliefs to their own. Children are taught to value and respect the religious backgrounds of all people in our school, wider community and beyond, asking thoughtful questions about the beliefs of others as well as questioning and reflecting upon their own thoughts and ideas.

#### **b. Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in RE is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and RE lead. The intention of our monitoring process is to assess progress in teaching and learning and to support colleagues in the teaching of RE. The monitoring process may include -

- lesson observations
- discussions with staff
- learning walks
- pupil voice
- work scrutiny
- analysis of teacher planning
- use of assessment data
- assessment for learning by class teachers to inform planning

**Signed:** H McNally

**Policy Reviewed:** Summer 2025

**Review Date:** Summer 2027

If you require this information summarised in another language or format  
please contact the school office on:



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