



"Let Your Light Shine"

**Frieth C.E.C. School
Religious Education Policy**

Member of staff responsible: Krisztina Tyzack

Designated Governor: Paul Marston-Weston

Headteacher's signature

'Differences were meant not to divide but to enrich'. J. H. Oldham

'Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads as long as we reach the same goal? In reality, there are as many different religions as there are individuals.' Gandhi

Frieth School Vision statement:

'...Your light must shine before people, so that they see the good things you do.'

Matthew 5:16

Religious Education Vision Statement:

We support our children by inspiring them *to let their light shine* by developing their curiosity and understanding thus forming respectful and reflective global citizens, with an awareness of the religions, traditions and cultures influencing our multi-cultural society.

In preparing for adult life, children need to learn to respond well to a local, national and global landscape of religion and belief diversity. In the context of today's world, we are advocating that RE should help children and young people to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief, i.e. be religiously literate. The schools' curriculum for RE is a vehicle for delivering some aspects of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC), but SMSC should also permeates across and underpin the school's wider curriculum.

Values:

These are the Christian Values that you believe are both taught and learnt in our school.

Kindness
Honesty
Creativity
Responsibility
Resilience
Respect

The Legal Position:

The school, in accordance with its Trust Deed, provides religious education for all pupils registered at the school. Following advice from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, the Governors decided that religious education in our school should be based upon the Buckinghamshire agreed syllabus. Religious education has the same status and importance as any other subject and, as such, the same high standards are applied to this as to other subjects.

Intent

At Frieth Church of England School we are committed to developing religiously literate pupils, who acquire the knowledge and understanding of the principal religions through an engaging and nurturing environment. RE is used to engage, inspire, challenge and encourage our pupils, equipping them with the skills to answer challenging questions, explore different religious beliefs, values and traditions. Pupils experience and explore key religious communities and build an appreciation for their influence on individual's lives and behaviours. RE is enquiry led and develops their ability to reason and reflect upon religious and moral issues. RE promotes acceptance and enables pupils to combat prejudice, preparing them for life in a multi-cultural society.

RE is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values, and philosophy of the school. RE plays an important role in promoting the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of our children.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Reception, pupils are given the opportunity to learn and develop through their experiences of different religious traditions and communities based on their interests, backgrounds and child-initiated play.

RE sits firmly in PSED within the EYFS framework. This enables children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others and to learn how to form positive and respectful relationships. Children begin to understand and value the differences between individuals and groups within their immediate community. They will have the opportunity to develop their emerging moral and cultural awareness.

Early Learning Goals

Self-Regulation ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.

Managing Self ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.

Building Relationships ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Understanding the World

People Culture and Communities ELG Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts, and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

Children in Reception learn through a range of experiences and activities in an environment that enables active participation through:

- Our home corners
- Stories and role-play opportunities
- Dolls, small world toys and puppets from different cultures
- Artefacts, food and music
- Interest based topics e.g. Diwali
- Costumes for dressing up
- Painting, drawing and creative tasks.

In order to support our pupils in meeting their Early Learning Goals and the requirements of the Bucks Agreed Syllabus, the children engage in specific planned activities, relating to various festivals or special places, as well as unplanned opportunities for religious understanding through child-initiated play, circle times and everyday routines.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Aims of Religious Education:

- To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews, locally, nationally, and globally.
- To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value.
- To formulate reasoned opinion and argument.
- To enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed, and responded to in diverse ways.

The purpose of religious education does not include any attempt to alter a child's beliefs. Indeed, reflecting the inclusive ethos of the school our religious education programme is designed not 'to convert pupils or urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils.' (DFE circular 1/94 paragraph 32).

At Frieth we are clear on the understanding of RE's place in the curriculum and its contribution to the school as a whole and as a church school RE is firmly anchored within the goals and ethos of our school community.

Our ambition:

- To deliver a balanced RE curriculum with the aim of producing religiously literate pupils that includes aspects of the following disciplines:
 - 1) Theology (this is about believing): looking at where beliefs come from – how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.
 - 2) Philosophy (this is about thinking): finding out how and whether things make sense; dealing with questions of morality and ethics; taking seriously the nature of reality, knowledge and existence.
 - 3) Social Sciences (this is about living): exploring the diverse ways in which people practise their beliefs; engaging with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

- To create a safe and stimulating environment in which children are entitled to question, evaluate and express themselves through debate and discussion “disagree agreeably.”
- Teachers who are empowered through strong subject knowledge to have the skills to challenge conceptions, preconceptions and misconceptions.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 the children will study Christianity, along with Judaism in depth, and they will be exposed to other religious beliefs during the course of the individual units of study. In KS1, most learning will start with pupils’ own experiences, move into religious content and experience and through this, develop awareness of universal human experience and concepts.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 pupils will study Christianity, Islam and Hinduism in depth and have experience of other religious traditions during the course of individual units of study. In KS2, most learning will start with the religious content and concepts and then reflect back to the pupils’ own experiences and self-concept, developing awareness of universal human experiences and concepts.

Implementation

Our RE curriculum is based on the Oxford Diocese Scheme of work and Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and is taught for a minimum of an hour, once a week. At Frieth, it has been agreed that having considered the requirements and guidelines presented in the Agreed Syllabus, the following religions have been selected for study:

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Sikhism

As set out in the Agreed Syllabus it is required that:

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the learning outcomes are referenced to Christianity and as appropriate to a range of other beliefs and cultures.
- Key Stage 1 (KS1) - Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion in depth (the syllabus recommends Judaism). With reference to one Dharmic tradition and non-religious backgrounds (not necessarily a specific non-religious worldview)
- Lower Key Stage 2 (LKS2) - Christianity plus one different Abrahamic religion and one Dharmic tradition in depth (the syllabus recommends Islam and Hinduism. With reference to other religious traditions and non-religious perspectives as appropriate.
- Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2) - Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion and one Dharmic tradition (these could either be a continuation from LKS2 or different ones, the syllabus recommends continuing with Islam and Hinduism) and Humanism. With reference to other religious traditions and worldviews as appropriate.

Children and young people will develop a knowledge and understanding of:

- The major world religions and non-religious worldviews through:
 - 1) Theology: key texts and traditions; beliefs, teachings/doctrines and sources; practices and ways of life; forms of expression; identity and belonging.
 - 2) Philosophy: how religion has influenced humanities' search for meaning and purpose.
 - 3) Social Sciences: investigate and observe lived religious practices within local, national and international contexts; and consider how they have shaped and continue to shape society.
- Historical, geographical and scientific contexts.

Curriculum Design

Our belief is that, using an enquiry-based model will develop children's critical thinking skills, their motivation to learn, and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy for people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise. This approach takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief.

Our RE curriculum is mapped out so that big questions are linked to festivals and key events. This makes learning memorable. Our curriculum's main emphasis is on Christianity with additional in-depth studies of four world religions across the primary phase: Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. Within these topic areas discrete learning objectives, which are appropriate to the different age groups, are given, allowing opportunity to reach the attainment end points. These are linked to the curriculum policy and progression tables.

Cross Curricular Links

When planning lessons, teachers at Frieth consider other subjects and endeavour to make cross-curricular links. Planning shows continuity, progression and recall of knowledge and understanding of religions and a cross-curricular approach is evident through art, drama, poetry and music.

RE topics are carefully planned to allow regular opportunities for extended writing where it is appropriate. These are based on the RE content they have been focusing on within that unit. This enables them to use the vocabulary they have learnt creatively as well as familiarising them further with the range of writing skills they cover throughout the school. For example, writing tasks are often incorporated into lessons so that children have an opportunity to write down their ideas, opinions and views in a structured task (diary entries, letters or even stories). As well as being an opportunity to consolidate writing skills and reapply them in an alternative and more independent context, this type of activity also allows the children to put themselves in the shoes of the people that they are learning about and approach their learning from a different perspective.

Teachers also encourage drama/role-play to reinforce teaching points and to allow children to express themselves about a particular topic. These drama activities can increase pupil confidence, allow 'pupil voice' and provide valuable opportunities for personal and spiritual exploration.

RE plays an important role in promoting an understanding of fundamental British values. RE can be seen to support pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part. As a subject it looks to develop mutual respect, tolerance and pupil's character.

Resources

Resources for R.E. should be used in order to ensure that learning objectives can be met. They should also provide quality and interest. Artefacts from the main religions are stored in the Resource Area, as are tapes and videos. Books, articles and photographs are also stored in this area.

Equal Opportunities - How delivery and content will be made accessible to all pupils including SEND

At Frieth we pride ourselves on supporting all pupils to reach their full potential. As with all our teaching at Frieth, we provide a suitable learning environment and use appropriate strategies at all times, which allows us to meet individual needs in all lessons. We provide all children with the tools and support to be involved and access every RE lesson. All teaching and support staff do their best to ensure that all children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic origin, social or physical circumstances have equal access to the R.E. curriculum.

We are an inclusive school. As with all subject areas, delivery of RE is made available to all pupils through Quality First Teaching, which considers the learning needs of all the children in the classroom. Effectively including all children with SEND and ensuring they cover the school curriculum is a strength of this school. In RE teachers plan for inclusion to ensure full coverage. Reasonable adjustments are always made to ensure access to this curriculum is effective for all children.

Withdrawal from religious education

Pupils may be withdrawn from RE or part of RE by a parent or guardian (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; teachers can also exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from part of RE and can do so without giving any explanation.

Teachers also have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. However, this does not apply to teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE. If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the head of the school and its chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the school must still make provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE.

When a request to withdraw is received by a school, the request should be granted without delay. The school may offer to speak with the parent to try to understand the basis for the withdrawal but only after the request has been granted. The school must make clear that the parent's right to withdraw their child has been granted and that parents are not required to give reasons for their request.

Should parents take up the offer of a discussion, the school may seek to establish the religious issues about which the parent objects to their child being taught. Discussion may include the practical implications of withdrawal and the circumstances in which it may be reasonable to accommodate their wishes. Practical examples of how a school may reassure a parent who has withdrawn their child may include inviting the parent to observe a RE lesson, discussing curriculum documents and discussing the aims of RE in the school with them.

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC)

All National Curriculum subjects provide opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Explicit opportunities to promote pupils' development in these areas are provided within religious education through varied activities, trips, visitors and assemblies.

Religious Education has a significant role for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes respect and open-mindedness towards others with different faiths and beliefs and encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging through self-awareness and reflection.

Theme Week

As a Church of England school, we aim to celebrate our pupils place in a culturally diverse society. This is achieved through our Religious Education curriculum and the spiritual life of the school. Assemblies and class work promote the diversity of society and the right for each person to be respected and valued equally. Our Celebrating Multicultural Britain week also strives to develop the understanding of different faiths and beliefs to our pupils and wider community. We celebrate this week by visiting places of worship for other faiths and receiving visitors from other faiths in school, recognising and celebrating cultural celebrations for children from different countries within our school and raising money for those in need locally and internationally.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. Work is marked once it has been completed and commented on as necessary. End points are clearly identified on the progression of skills maps which are used for assessment.

Summative assessments are carried out at the end of each term and is recorded on INSIGHT. Pupils' overall summative attainment and achievements will be reported to parents in annual reports at the end of the academic year.

Teacher assessment labels are: working towards, working at the expected standard, or working at greater depth or working below year group within RE.

Responsibility for R.E.

The R.E. subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in Religious Education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of R.E. and for being informed about current developments in the subject. The R.E. subject leader is supported by the Head teacher and the R.E. Governor as appropriate.

Impact

The children at Frieth enjoy learning about other religions and are curious about human life. Through their RE learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world, developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life. As such, R.E. is invaluable in both local and global contexts.

At Frieth, we envision RE enabling pupils to develop the skills to act as:

- **Theologians:**

- 1) analyse a range of primary and secondary sources;
- 2) understand symbolic language;
- 3) use technical terminology effectively.

- **Philosophers:**

- 1) interpret meaning and significance;
- 2) evaluate and reflect upon beliefs and ethics and how they impact upon the lives of others and themselves;
- 3) refine the way they think about the world and their place in it;
- 4) consider moral principles, including the nature of good and evil.

- **Social Scientists:**

- 1) respectfully critique and value the wide range of beliefs and cultural influences
- 2) that have shaped their own heritage and that of others, considering both differences and commonalities;
- 3) recognise bias and stereotype;
- 4) represent a range of views, other than one's own, with accuracy.

The range of outcomes generated through writing, drama, art and class discussions can be seen in children's RE books.

The curriculum may also develop the following:

- a moral compass - recognise the difference between right and wrong and readily apply this;
- reflection upon their own beliefs and cultural practices;
- make informed personal choices;
- empathy with and an understanding of others.