



St Newlyn East
Learning Academy



Religious Education Policy

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School or Trust Policy	School

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01637 303106 or email info@kernowlearning.co.uk.

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Aims and Objectives

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St. Newlyn East Learning Academy, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life.

Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

The aims of Religious Education are to help children:

- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition
- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to life questions
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today
- Develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues
- Have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

The legal position of Religious Education (RE)

Our curriculum for Religious Education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the Reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from RE classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the Local Governing Body (LGB). The Religious Education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the 2020 Cornwall Agreed Syllabus. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and Learning Style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali and Pesach (amongst many others) to develop their religious thinking. Through our use of the RE Today schemes of work, alongside the Understanding Christianity scheme of work, children carry out research into religious topics. They compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals.

At St, Newlyn East, we hold special festival assemblies at the local church to celebrate Christmas, Easter and Harvest, as Christianity represents the religious views of many families at our school. This also helps us to maintain a strong link with the local community. Where possible, we aim to have regular visits from local members of the church, who share stories from the Bible during assemblies and during RE lessons.

Curriculum Planning in RE

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build upon prior learning and that coverage of faiths is broad. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases; long-term (Cornwall Agreed Syllabus planning), medium-term (on each year group's Medium Term Plans) and short-term (weekly RE Today/Understanding Christianity planning).

Each class has a copy of all the units for their year group and plans are often discussed on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

Religious Education is taught to all children in years 1-6. In the Foundation Stage, children are taught through festivals that are relevant to the specific cohort as they take place throughout the year. As Foundation follow the 2021 Early Years Framework, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out under the Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Understanding of the World (UW) areas which are crucial to the development and progress of all pupils at this stage.

Cross-curricular Links

We often teach Religious Education topics in conjunction with other subjects (namely Literacy and PSHE), especially at Key Stage 1. These include:

English

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of Literacy in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children are often encouraged to make books and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Computing

We use ICT where appropriate in RE. The children find, select and analyse information, using the Internet. Teachers use interactive whiteboards for whole class or group teaching and use videos to help pupils understand religious stories or the lives of people who belong to specific faith communities.

Geography

Our class atlas' have become key parts of our RE lessons (and the wider curriculum). The children, as and where appropriate, use the atlas to locate specific, significant religious locations and centres from around the world. Our 'Knowledge Organisers' also have a key section which focuses on the location of the origin of each world religion.

History

History is integral to the teaching of RE. Our skilled team weave in historical facts and information to lessons as and where appropriate. A prime example of this is reference to our 'SNELA History timelines', which our teaching team will use to illustrate key teaching points. Another example would be in year 4 for their Tudors topic where planning for certain lessons is based around the formation of The Church of England.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility.

As part of our JIGSAW PSHE curriculum, we have 'Calm Me' time. This encourages pupils to calm their minds and prepare their minds and bodies for listening and learning but also teaches the children about respect and being able to stop and think, which is also at the core of many religions and religious practices.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through teaching Religious Education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions and link these themes to our whole-school Golden Rules/Roots ('We are gentle', 'We are kind and helpful', 'We listen', 'We are honest', 'We work hard' and 'We look after property').

Teaching RE to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At our school our RE curriculum is specifically designed and planned to enable all children, whatever their ability, to access the learning and engage with it. RE forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress.

We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to the local Church for the King's Coronation Ceremony, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe, appropriate and accessible for all pupils.

Assessment, Recording and Resources

We assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons and marking the work after the lesson (formative assessment). We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment verbally as necessary; on misconceptions or for an assessed piece of RE work. Work completed during RE lessons is recorded in pupils' RE books or whole-class floor books, depending on which is most appropriate for the activity.

We keep resources for RE in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each religion as well as a collection of books, videos/DVDs, photo packs and other teaching resources including religious artefacts. We also have a supply of RE topic books.

Monitoring and Review

Class teachers are responsible for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress in this subject area. The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the pupil's learning and the quality of the teaching in RE through termly learning scrutinies, pupil interviews and lesson observations. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE on request and through staff meetings. The RE subject leader is also responsible for the maintenance, ordering and upkeep of RE resources.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

Parents have the legal right to withdraw pupils from RE but this must be discussed with the class teacher, RE lead and Headteacher. A class teacher cannot make the decision to allow a child/parent to withdraw from RE lessons. If the parent chooses to go ahead and withdraw their child from RE this must be given to the school in writing by the parent. Staff should refer to the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for information about speaking to parents and withdrawing pupils from RE and the issues surrounding this, including the negative implications, must be highlighted to the parent (for example, missing lessons that may link to other subject areas, for example, Literacy lessons, which may have an impact on the pupil's progress and learning), as well as issues of discrimination. The withdrawal of a child from RE lessons should be the last resort as RE is an important part of learning and understanding about the world and community.