

# Religious Education Policy



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# **Religious Education (RE) Policy**

## **Introduction:**

At Ranelagh Primary School we believe that the learning and teaching of Religious Education (RE) plays an important part in the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development of each child.

We understand that National legislation requires that RE is part of the School Curriculum for all registered pupils. RE is included in the curriculum for all our pupils including all pupils within our Nursery and Reception Classes.

Our scheme of work based upon the **Newham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2016** – *‘Exploring Beliefs, Celebrating Diversity’*, is an integral aspect of our broad and balanced curriculum and aims to ensure that we prepare our pupils for life in modern Britain as well as foster in our pupils an interest in the world in which they live.

## **Aims:**

- Encourage pupils to have an understanding that they are equal, valued and valid members of a multi-faith School and Community.
- To promote respect, understanding and tolerance for all faiths.
- Develop an awareness of the spiritual dimensions of life.
- To promote a positive self-image and present pupils with a code of moral behaviour required for living in a harmonious community.
- To understand how religious beliefs, values and practices affect people’s lives.
- To develop a willingness to see that others have a right to a point of view.
- Encourage reflection, questioning and reasoning to enable decision-making.
- Provide opportunity for sharing knowledge and develop understanding of different faiths.

## **Implementation:**

In accordance with the Newham agreed syllabus we understand that RE is a core subject of the Curriculum for all pupils and aim to ensure that in key stages 1 and 2 RE occupies about 5% of curriculum time.

In more specific terms this means:

KS1	-	36 hours per year
KS2	-	45 hours per year

The Scheme of work is based on the Newham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2016). The content of this scheme has been adjusted and written to cover

the needs of our pupils. The class teacher is responsible for delivering the lessons in conjunction with the whole-school framework. The input of the teacher should enable pupils to examine and understand their own beliefs and experience, while appreciating the role of the community in respect to the child's own personal faith.

Religious Education is taught through class discussions, sharing of experiences and lifestyles, practical activities (art, drama, and educational visits to places of Worship in the local area, exploration of artefacts, songs, videos and visits from faith leaders).

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):**

In EYFS Religious education is not taught as a distinct curriculum area. However, many of the early learning goals lead into the new revised assessment statements' on each unit.

Children encounter varied RE related experiences and activities that follow three themes:

- **Celebrating special times**
- **Stories and what they tell us**
- **Aspects of identity and relationships**

### **Key Stage 1 and 2:**

There is a systematic study of Christianity and the other 5 principle religions in the UK (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism), along with Humanism. The units highlight opportunities to learn outside the classroom as well as creatively through the arts, and scheme of work has RE skill sets that children should acquire and build up on their time at school.

The KS1 curriculum is deigned to develop a theme which draws from a range of religious material.

The big questions of

- **What does it mean to belong?** (Year 1)
- **Can stories change People?** (Year 2)

encourage pupils to relate what they are learning to their own lives and others' experiences.

RE units, taught to Key Stage 2 pupils are deigned to develop a theme which draws from a range of religious material.

The big questions of

- **How are Symbols and Sayings important in religion?** (Year 3)
- **What is Special to me and the People in my Community?** (Year 4)
- **How do beliefs influence actions?(Year 5)**
- **How important are the similarities and differences between and within religions? (Year 6)**

encourage pupils to relate what they are learning to their own lives and others' experiences.

### **Equal Opportunity:**

In line with the other school policies, RE aims to meet the needs of all pupils through planned differentiation and resources. This will take into account the need to adapt lessons to account for children's different learning styles, especially those to whom English is an additional language (through use of suitable communication mode, visual aids and Communicator and/or Teacher of the Deaf support), pupils with Specific Special Educational Needs and the Higher Attaining pupils.

### **Assessment:**

Pupil progress is monitored and assessed by the class teacher against the following three areas of RE:

1. Learning about religion and world views
2. Expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews
3. Gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and world views

Places of Worship (POW) Week visits and art work competition allows teacher to assess children on a broader scale.

Parents are informed of their child's progress and achievements through reports and at Parent's Evenings.

### **Withdrawal Procedures:**

Parents who wish to withdraw their children, because of personal choice or religious affiliation, from some or all of the Religious Education delivered, are permitted to do so, once they have made a formal written request to the school. Teachers who wish to withdraw from delivery of Religious Education for similar reasons may also do so. (See Appendix 1).

### **The Religious Education Coordinator Role:**

The Coordinator draws up an Action Plan for Religious Education. The Action Plan outlines the development of RE in relation to the RE Policy, resources, monitoring of Religious Education and a budget plan.

The Coordinator is responsible for organising whole school assembly themes, arranging POW week visits, helping staff to plan Religious Education for a particular class or year group; monitoring planning; monitoring what is taught in Religious Education by looking at children's books and offering guidance and support to staff. Children's views are also taken into account through pupil voice and questionnaires.

The Coordinator attends courses and network meetings for RE and then feeds back to other staff where appropriate.

## Appendix 1

### Withdrawal Policy

#### **Advise on requests to withdraw from RE lessons**

This advice is to support a school if a parent asks for a pupil to be withdrawn from RE lessons.

(Please read in conjunction with DFES Circular 1/94)

These guidelines apply only to RE (not collective worship)

Text in standard type is from the 1/94 circular. *Text in italics is Newham's additional guidance.*

1. If a parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE in the school, then the school must comply. Parents are not obliged to give reasons for the withdrawal. *It is good to meet with the parents to discuss their concerns and in many cases, once the parents understood what RE is and is not they will want their child to continue*

*with their RE lessons. On some occasions, it is through a lack of understanding that withdrawal is requested, and discussion allows fears to be addressed. Newham SACRE faith members as well as the RE adviser are here to support a school in discussions with parents if that support is needed. Please contact the RE Adviser to make the necessary arrangements.*

2. A pupil may, if the parent requests this, be withdrawn from the school premises to receive RE elsewhere, so long as the Local Authority (LA) is satisfied that this will not interfere with the child's attendance at school other than at the beginning or end of any school session. If this is not possible and the parents wish their child to receive separate RE, the school is

required to allow such education to take place in the school providing it does not have to meet the cost and the request is not unreasonable. *These practical implications of withdrawal should be made clear to the parents at a meeting, and the school should be clear about what is reasonable e.g. space, supervision, the parents need to organise their child's work*

*for 1 hr a week in RE time – the school does not organise what the child does for this time – it is the parents responsibility.*

3. The school is responsible for the child, unless the child is receiving RE elsewhere.

4. If RE is taught as part of an integrated Humanities programme or in conjunction with other National Curriculum subjects, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from the RE elements of these programmes. *It is important that parents know when RE is occurring within such programmes. A leaflet or guide to the RE curriculum may be one way to*

*help parents and avoid withdrawals in such circumstances. If RE can not be separated easily from where other subjects are being taught children can not be withdrawn.*

5. When religious or spiritual matters come up in other areas of the curriculum – both planned and spontaneously – this does not constitute RE in the legal sense. Parents could not insist that their child be withdrawn every time such issues arise. *These issues are helping the child in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this will need to be explained to parents who want their child withdrawn.*

6. *It is best practice for a school to have a withdrawal policy statement of procedures, so that all teachers are clear how to handle such a request or demand from a pupil or parent. In your copy of the Agreed Syllabus there is a list of who has been part of making Newham's Agreed Syllabus and have given it their approval. This is a useful place to start in a discussion with parents as sometimes once they understand what is going on in their child's RE lessons, and they find out it has been passed by their faith leaders and the majority of faith groups in Newham they are not so worried about their child receiving RE.*

7. *A child or young person can not be in for the teaching of their religion in RE and out for all the others. They are either withdrawn from everything or nothing. If the parents are choosing to withdrawal their child it is often good to emphasis that this is a shame as it will mean that their child will not have the opportunity to talk about their families faith and how they 'do' things in their home or place of worship, the beliefs that are important to them.*

#### **Advise on concerns about RE**

If a family wishes to raise concerns or has a complaint about RE within their child's school there are protocols to be followed. It is important in the first instance that this matter is raised

with the school directly. If parents/faith communities are still unhappy with the response they receive then they can make contact with Newham's SACRE. Sacre will make contact with the school and the parents/faith community and see if they can help to resolve the matter. If the parents/faith community is still unhappy with this response then they can take their complaint onto the council's curriculum panel for their attention. Obviously we would hope that this would never be necessary. The decision of the curriculum panel would be final in all matters.