REED FIRST SCHOOL

"Learning Together, Learning for Life"

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Policy for Religious Education

The value of Religious Education (RE)

At Reed First School, Religious Education is taught following the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus 2023 – 2028.

RE is a statutory requirement in all state-funded schools. This Syllabus is based on a clear understanding of its educational value for pupils, schools and society as a whole.

It is our intent that RE is the open exploration of what people believe, their way of life and the impact of beliefs, values and ways of living in local, national and global communities. It engages pupils in the process of understanding what others believe, what is important to them, how they live their lives and what influences them. In doing this, pupils also reflect on their own beliefs and values and their main influences.

This process develops in pupils such skills as:

• critical, creative and reflective thinking about philosophical argument, theological (multi-faith) concepts and life issues

• questioning and interpreting 'Truth' claims

• ways of conveying meaning

• different ways of investigating the subject-matter, including a range of academic disciplines and approaches

• listening with understanding and compassion

• engaging positively with diversity.

This aspect of RE reflects substantive knowledge and ways of knowing.

However, it is also deeply personal, encouraging pupils to reflect on their own experience and raise challenging questions of meaning, purpose and value directly for themselves. RE enables pupils to engage in critical dialogue, with their peers and with people of different faiths, beliefs and backgrounds, about issues that really matter in people's lives. It is in this respect that RE contributes significantly to aspects of 'personal development' within the Ofsted Inspection Framework, not least through the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils (including Fundamental British Values) and the development of character. These more personal dimensions are an integral part of pupils' education and are central to the nature of RE. This aspect of RE reflects and deepens the third way of knowing identified by Ofsted: 'personal knowledge'.

High quality RE will be open to pupils of all religious traditions and none and will engage pupils, challenging them to reflect on the big questions life throws at us and some of the different responses to these from around the world and throughout history. It will help pupils to understand the world and to find their place within it. It will contribute significantly to building stronger communities in and around the school.

Our curriculum aims to:

- understand what religion is and understand why there are faith groups
- ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses
- provide eight Key Areas of study through which to plan the subject content and to devise key questions and enquiries
- spend an appropriate proportion of their time allocation for RE reflecting the background of our own pupils, whilst ensuring a broad and balanced RE curriculum that reflects the diversity within as well as between institutional religions and worldviews
- offer a flexible model of progression through expected learning outcomes at each Key Stage to support school assessment procedures
- enable teachers to recognise what it means to be 'religiously, theologically and philosophically literate' at each Key Stage
- engage pupils both academically and personally through memorable and meaningful experiences.

The purpose of Religious Education:

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus offers high quality RE for all. Teaching provides pupils with a systematic knowledge and understanding about Christianity, principal religions and worldviews, which guide people through life. RE aims to enable pupils to become religiously, theologically and philosophically literate so they can engage in life in an increasingly diverse religious and secular society. It is not about telling pupils what views they should have but rather assist them in gaining shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints.

"A worldview is a person's way of understanding, experiencing, and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. This includes how a person understands the nature of reality and their own place in the world. A person's worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments." (Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward p4).

Aims:

The Agreed Syllabus for RE aims to ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of **sources of wisdom**[3] **and their impact** whilst exploring **personal and critical responses.**

A. Sources of wisdom from religions and worldviews and their impact

All pupils should:

• know, understand and explore the significance and impact of sacred texts, other sources of wisdom and ways of expressing meaning

• express ideas and insights about the nature of beliefs, values and practices and their impact on the identity of individuals and communities locally, nationally and globally

• recognise and explore similarities and differences which exist within and between religious and non-religious worldviews

B. Personal and critical responses to religion and worldviews

All pupils should:

• express with increasing discernment their personal reflections, critical responses and connections to faith and belief enquiring into and responding to spiritual, philosophical, moral and ethical issues

• engage with the questions and responses offered by religions and worldviews concerning ultimate questions and human responsibility

• develop the skills required to engage with others in dialogue and to cooperate in society with respect and compassion

Curriculum content:

Statutory content at each Key Stage	
EYFS	Children will encounter Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community and beyond. RE will support a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, their own community and their place within this.
KS1 Years 1 and 2	Christianity and **at least one** other Abrahamic religion are to be studied in depth (Judaism and/or Islam), or the predominant additional principal faith represented in the school. Pupils may also learn from other religions and worldviews in thematic units.
Lower KS2 Years 3 and 4	Christianity and **at least two** other principal faiths are to be studied in depth, **one Abrahamic and one Dharmic**. (Recommended focus faiths for lower KS2 – Christianity, Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism). Pupils may also learn from other religions and worldviews in thematic units.

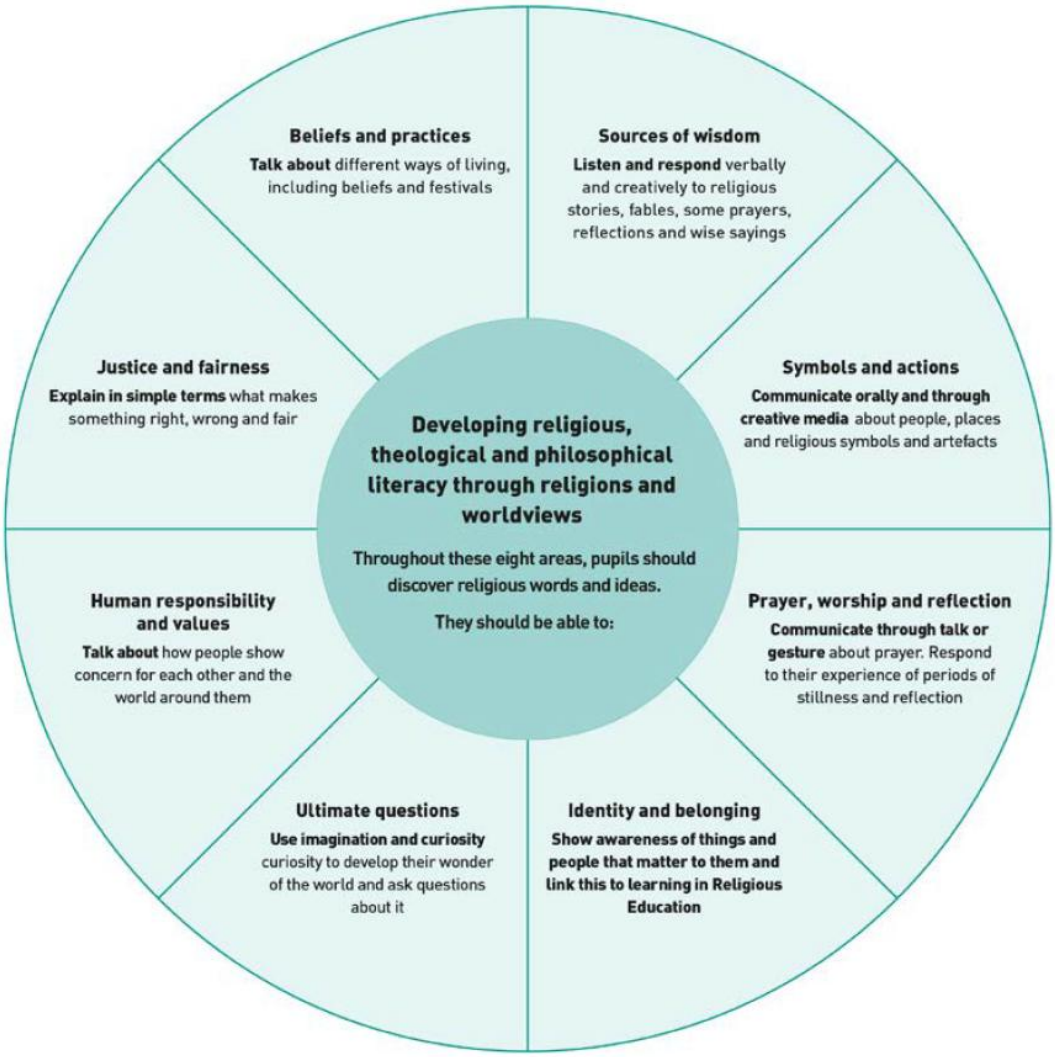
Programmes of study are set out eight Key Areas which aim to enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses.

Developing religious, theological and philosophical literacy through religions and worldviews permeates all Key Areas of the programmes of study.

Beliefs and practices	**Sources of wisdom**	**Symbols and actions**	**Prayer, worship and reflection**
Identity and belonging	**Ultimate questions**	**Human responsibility and values**	**Justice and fairness**

The following eight Key Areas of RE may be taught in any order:

Early Years:



By the end of EYFS the religiously, theologically and philosophically literate pupil should:

Share their family traditions and the joy of celebrations, beginning to explore those of other belief communities. Respond, through talk, gesture and play about religious stories, objects, people and practices. Use some basic religious vocabulary and use their imagination and curiosity to develop their interest in the world around them. Ask questions about the meaning and importance of what they are learning.

To support our play based learning in Early Years, our skilled Early Years teachers will identify and plan opportunities for all children to develop key knowledge and skills which will support them in successfully accessing the Religious Education Curriculum and Syllabus for RE. Our curriculum map ensures learning opportunities significant and relevant to the children in EYFS will be used as opportunities for learning at the level appropriate to 3 to 5 year olds.

All planned opportunities over the year are as a result of teachers making informed decisions about what a child needs to learn and be able to do next, this will ensure there is clear evidence of the depth in learning in history through Understanding of the World. The evidence will come from teacher knowledge of every child and use of floor books to record learning journeys.

We follow the statutory framework for the Early Years foundation stage: The most relevant statements for Religious Education are taken from the following areas of learning:

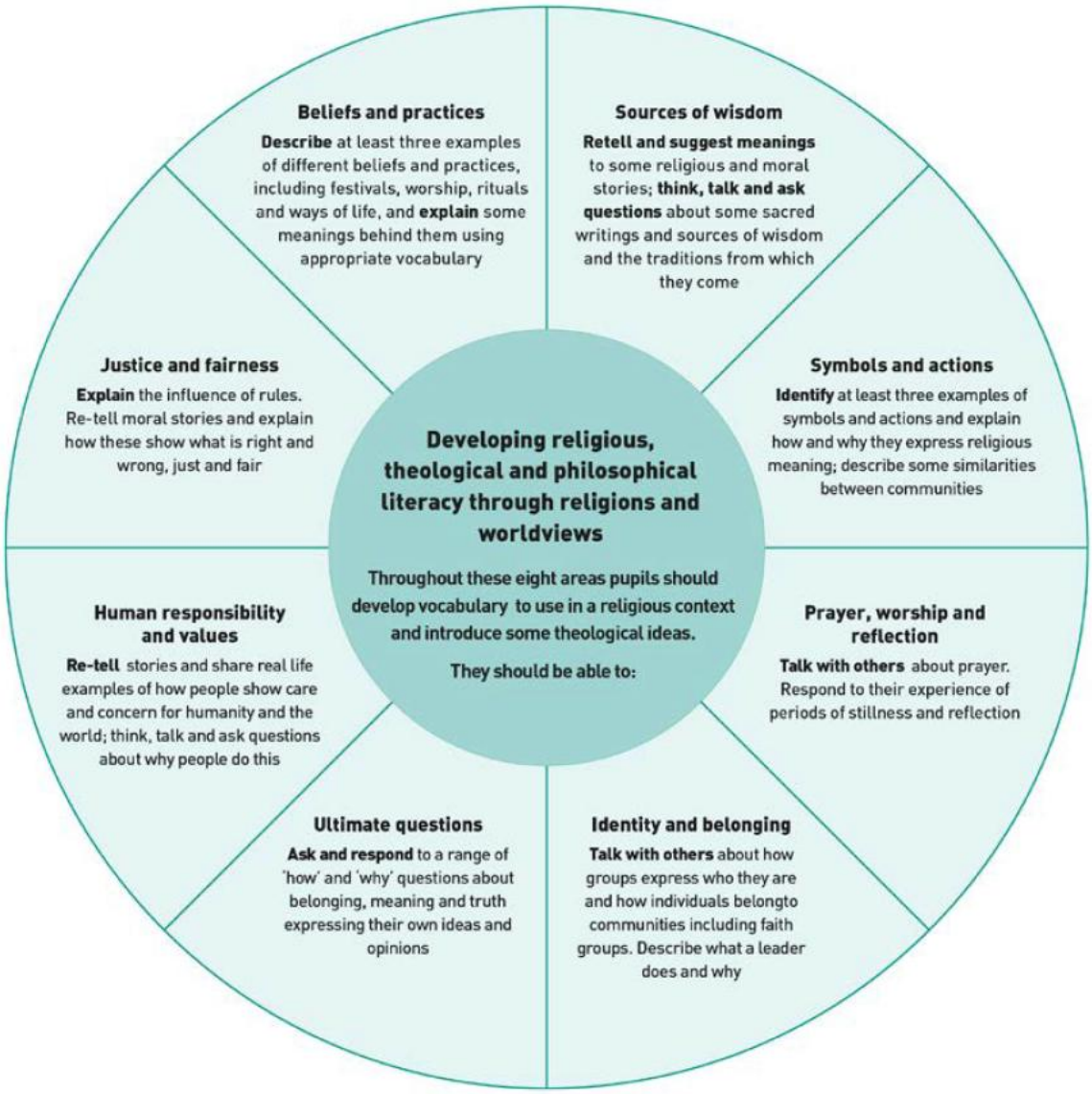
Past and Present ELG

• Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.

People Culture and Communities ELG

• 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.

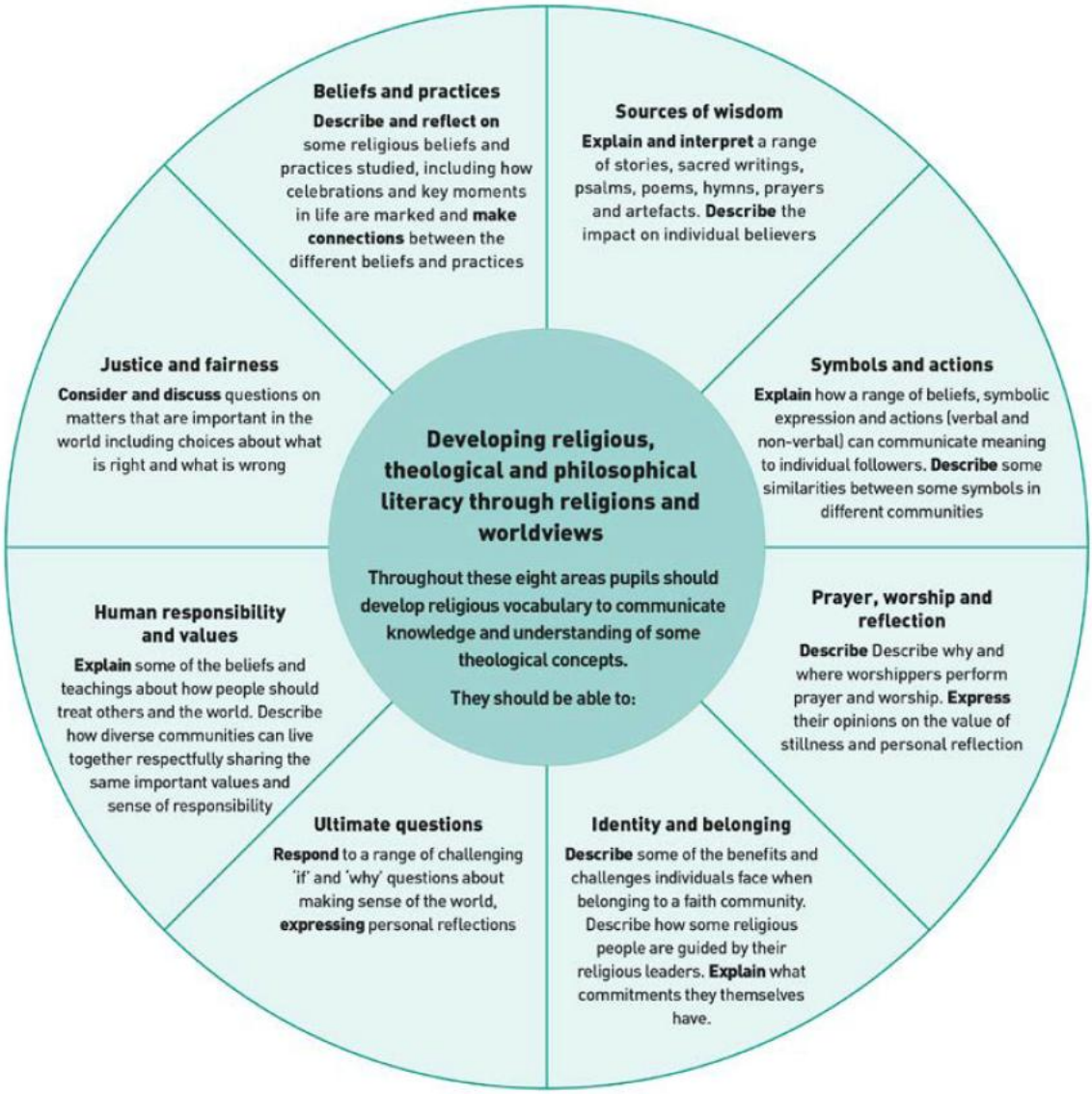
Key Stage One:



By the end of KS1 the religiously, theologically and philosophically literate pupil should:

Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions. Explore and develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. Use appropriate vocabulary to think, talk, ask and answer big questions about religion and belief. Begin to articulate key beliefs, practices and experiences at the heart of the religions and between communities. Reflect on and respond to some of the big questions about life, such as 'why do we celebrate certain things?'

Lower Key Stage Two:



By the end of Lower KS2 the religiously, theologically and philosophically literate pupil should:

Reflect upon and make connections between their knowledge and understanding of some religions and worldviews, developing religious vocabulary. Examine the different views and shared ideas about religious experience in religions and worldviews. Understand the impact of faith on believers within local, national and global contexts. Demonstrate respect and compassion, recognising a range of viewpoints about identity and belonging. Explore shared human responsibility through enquiry and experience and express personal reflections and curiosity about ultimate questions. Consider and discuss important issues and moral choices.

Resources

As a school, we have access to NATRE, the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, stands as the premier subject teacher association dedicated to supporting and empowering professionals in the field of Religious Education (RE). With a strong commitment to educators across diverse schools and institutions, NATRE provides invaluable resources and comprehensive guidance. This also includes research and resources on line as well as a magazine with reflective articles, up to date guidance and lesson ideas.
We also have resource and artefact boxes to use in the teaching of the faiths covered in our curriculum map.

Assessment KS1 and 2

During each lesson, it will be made clear to the children which of the 8 key areas they will be focusing on and where they are considering Beliefs and Practices or World Views. These will also be detailed in a sticker stuck in their individual or class floor book. Every time the child has shown evidence of knowledge and skills, an assessment sheet will be dated with a reference or annotation to the evidence of attainment. This will mean that a judgement can be made as to whether the children have met age related expectations.

Differentiation and Special Educational Needs

All children are taught the RE curriculum, unless parent choose to withdraw them. We recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies which are differentiated by task, expected outcome, the grouping of the children, resources provided and/or support from peers or adults. Tasks will be adapted where needed to ensure RE objectives can be met and that barriers from other areas, for example, reading or writing do not stop children from becoming historians.

Recording pupil knowledge will be seen in different ways, for example: a debate, a presentation, drawing, verbal recording, adult scribing.

Inclusion and the RE Curriculum

This policy relates to the school's philosophy for promoting equal opportunities. Children, irrespective of ability, race or gender, are given full access to the RE curriculum.

Through the teaching of RE, we aim to develop awareness of ethnic, cultural and economic diversity of human society and to foster positive attitudes to all people. Care is taken when selecting source material that a range of perspectives and viewpoints are represented including those of men and women from different racial, national and religious groups. Societies are not just represented from the British perspective but also from their own. The importance of the pupils own cultural background is recognised as a resource which may give an alternative perspective.