Religious Education Policy

Oakley CE Junior School

The following policy has been put together based upon the vision and aims of Oakley Junior school with the aims and key vision of the school:

Great expectations for all through courage, respect and grace

Our vision at Oakley is to create great expectations for all, using our Christian values and the teachings of Jesus to allow our children and community to flourish.
Rooted in the Christian belief that every person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and deeply loved by Him, we are committed to nurturing a community where all can flourish.
Inspired by Jesus' promise of "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10), we set high expectations for every member of our school family — spiritually, academically and socially.

In addition, this policy document follows guidance from the Hampshire County advisor/inspector for religious education and the guidance provided by the locally agreed syllabus, Living Difference IV. In addition, the planning and delivery of Christianity within RE lessons is complemented with resources from the Church Of England's Understanding Christianity publication, allowing for children to understand the big story of the Christian Bible and to explore life's big questions, considering the part the children can make to our world. Religious Education is an implicit part of the life of Oakley Junior School. Children are given the opportunity to examine this through work in the classroom, through the Big Frieze and Community display boards and on some occasions can be reflected in collective worship.

As Oakley Junior School is a voluntary controlled school, RE follows the legal requirements of the LEA's Agreed Syllabus, *Living Difference* IV (2022), and will be amalgamating this with resources from the Church Of England's *Understanding Christianity* publication. This allows for children to understand the big story of the Christian Bible and to explore life's big questions, considering the part the children can make to our world.

Aims

Religious Education should foster in pupils a reflective approach to living. To inquire and develop their knowledge and understanding, and to enable and enrich this process through their study of living faiths. This includes acknowledging that religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian, while also taking into account the other principal religions—and those of no religion—represented in this country. Religious Education should support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as to foster a mutual understanding between pupils and staff of differing religious and cultural backgrounds.

Planning/coverage

To ensure continuity and progression, Christianity is planned using the Living Difference IV syllabus using the planning sheets and booklets, where available, ensuring that two thirds of the themes covered are Christian. Over the course of their time in the Junior School, as part of their learning, children are introduced to the Hindu faith and Humanism, and explore Jewish and Islamic traditions in greater depth to develop a broader understanding of diverse worldviews. The recommendation is that 45 hours per school year should be devoted to the teaching of Religious Education. This equates to 7.5 hours per half term. RE is taught in blocked units across a dedicated 'Concept' fortnight.

The medium-term plans developed by the RE co-ordinator provide the coverage, breadth and balance required by the Agreed Syllabus. Class teachers work alongside the RE co-ordinator to share ideas and resources and also to ensure that assessment is in place to monitor children's progression and to inform planning at the mid-term and short-term stages.

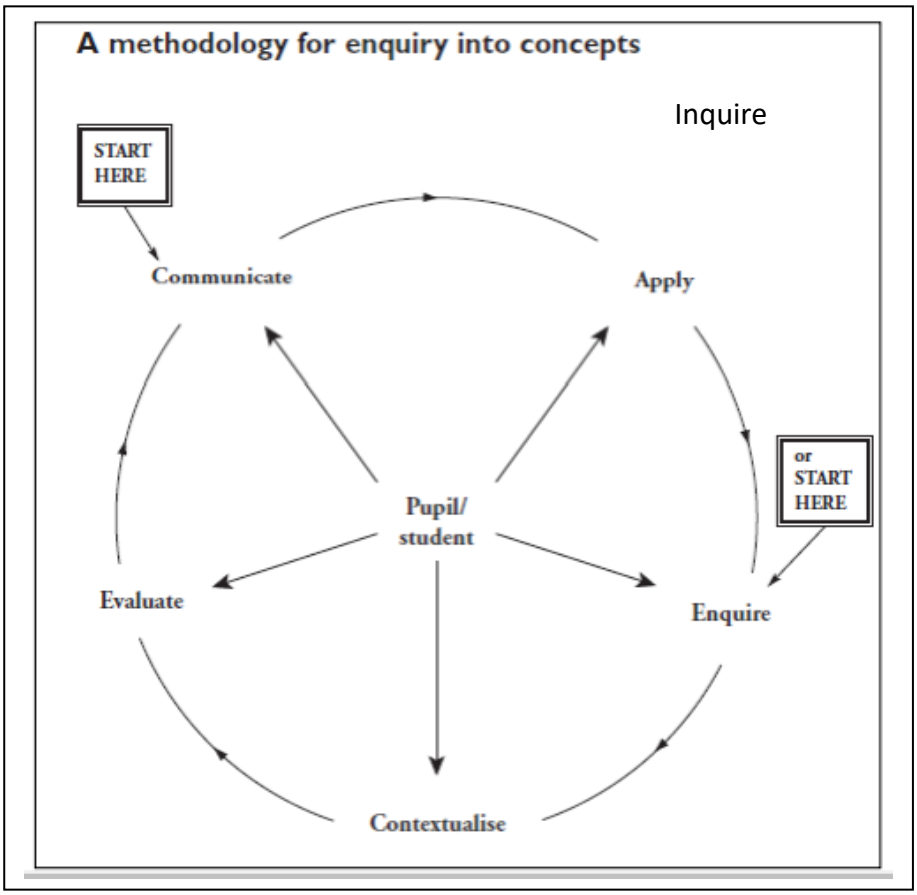
Parents are kept informed about which areas of RE are being studied. These are clearly on termly overviews on the school website.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in RE is in line with the school's teaching and learning policy. Pupils are involved in quiet reflection, listening to stories, expressing themselves through discussion, research, writing, creative arts, drama etc. Pupils also have opportunities to explore religious artefacts, engage with visitors, and visit St Leonard's Church to enrich their understanding of different faiths and worldviews. Learning is appropriately scaffolded so that all pupils can fully access the curriculum, with scribing support used to ensure barriers to recording do not limit progress. Strong links are established with the local church and wider community. The Rector of St Leonard's Church, along with the Curate and Youth Leader, regularly support the teaching of Religious Education by visiting classes during each concept-focused two-week block across the school. Their contributions help to deepen pupils' understanding and support staff in delivering high-quality RE lessons. RE is a philosophical inquiry, based upon the learners' own perceptions and understandings of each concept which should remain fluid and develop as the leaners' progress through the cycle of learning (see diagram below for the learning cycle). The *Living Difference IV* syllabus is used to guide concept driven learning, encouraging children to begin from their own personal point of view and how other religions would view these ideas. Teachers adapt RE medium term planning so that it is suitable for their class where necessary.

Assessment, Recording & reporting arrangements for RE

The RE leader is responsible for organising what will be assessed and how this assessment will be recorded, both whole class and individual (1 of each ARE, SEND, and GD). Class teachers are responsible for recording the progress in RE at each stage of the cycle once each year (i.e. 5 stages to the cycle and 6 half-terms means that one part of the cycle is recorded twice in the course of the year). The RE leader will facilitate training on how to assess and record progress in RE. Each term the RE leader will monitor the recording of assessment in RE and annually will consider the implications following this assessment to monitor pupil progress in all areas of the cycle.



Resources

A central resource area is available to support the delivery of the RE curriculum. Many units of work are accompanied by planning and resource booklets provided by the County Council to aid teachers in their delivery. Cross-curricular links are fostered through collaboration with other subject coordinators, enriching the overall learning experience. Resources are regularly reviewed and updated, and artefact boxes are ordered from the County Council to support the teaching of specific units.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons. Pupils who are withdrawn are given suitable alternative activities.

Staff professional development

Professional development in Religious Education is a key priority to ensure high-quality teaching that nurtures pupils' spiritual growth and understanding of diverse faiths. The RE Lead offers ongoing support and guidance to staff for each unit taught, promoting consistent and confident delivery of the curriculum. Regular in-house training sessions, delivered by the RE Lead, focus on developing subject knowledge and sharing best practice to enhance teaching and learning. Additionally, staff benefit from training delivered by the Diocese to stay informed of current developments and national frameworks in RE. These sessions are also attended by the RE Governor, the Rector, and the Youth Leader, reinforcing strong church-school partnerships and contributing to a shared vision for RE that supports pupils' personal development and wellbeing.