

Religious Education Subject Rationale

Our Vision

LOVE, LEARN, SHINE.

SHINE in the light and love of God.

LOVE

We nurture each individual to be happy, healthy and safe, build positive and respectful relationships with others valuing their uniqueness and including everyone.

LEARN

We inspire children to a lifelong love of learning, to develop wisdom, knowledge and skills and be fluent, confident learners who are well prepared for life in a diverse world.

SHINE

We support children to grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually, helping them to shine and share their light enabling themselves and others to flourish.

'People do not light a lamp and cover it with a bowl or put it under the bed. Instead they put it on a lampstand, so that people will see the light as they come in'.

Luke 8 V16.

Vision into Curriculum

Our vision translates directly into our curriculum in that;

Our curriculum promotes a love and appreciation of life and learning enabling children to *SHINE*, realise a passion for what is possible and enjoy life in all its fullness.

National Curriculum Aims and Purpose

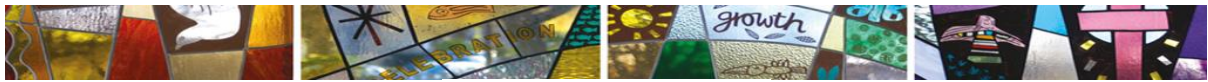
A well planned and effectively implemented curriculum begins with a sound and secure knowledge of the National Curriculum purpose and aims for the subject.

Although RE is not part of the National Curriculum, non-statutory guidance is provided, which outlines what a well design RE curriculum should entail.

It states;

- Pupils should develop understanding of concepts and mastery of skills to make sense of religion and belief, at an appropriate level of challenge for their age.





- RE should provide opportunities for pupils to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect and relate their learning in RE to their own experience.
- Building on the statutory requirements, it is recommended that there should be a wide ranging study of religion and belief across the key stages as a whole.
- Not all religions need to be studied at the same depth or in each key stage, but all that are studied should be studied in a way that is coherent and promotes progression.
- Pupils should have the opportunity to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives, and subject matter should facilitate integration and promotion of shared values.
- The study of religion should be based on the legal requirements and provide an appropriate balance between and within Christianity, other principal religions, and, where appropriate other religious traditions and worldviews, across the key stages as a whole, making appropriate links with other parts of the curriculum and its cross-curricular dimensions.

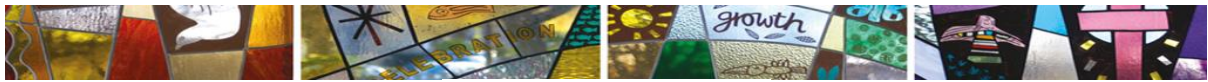
Quality First Curriculum Implementation in Religious Education

Quality first curriculum implementation in RE supports children in becoming secure and fluent in the identified agreed core knowledge and skills. Fluency and security in this core knowledge allows children to explore concepts in greater depth whilst allowing children to find their own place within a diverse, multi-religious society. This then enables children to articulate informed responses about religion and non-religion and provides them with the opportunity to discover their own place in our world.

At St Peter's the journey to becoming RE literate begins in the Early Years. Our youngest children learn about RE following the appropriate EY units from the agreed syllabus which connect with the EYFS areas of learning known as 'Understanding of the World' and 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development'. Through these areas of learning children in EY will specifically learn about what different people believe as well understanding where people come from and how people can be similar and different. These will also be complemented by exploration of children's interest and the 'here and how' gained from the observation, assessment and planning cycle. For instance, children will explore their own identity and listen to ideas of those around them, when taking part in circle time. Positive conversations are modelled and shared, to develop positive attitudes about the differences between people.

By the time children reach the end of Year Six they will have developed a secure religious understanding and will be working in line with age related national expectations. All children will have had the opportunity to visit several religious buildings in their time at St Peter's.





Our RE curriculum allows children to develop a deep knowledge and secure understanding of the Christian faith. Our children will also learn about the Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism faiths to reflect upon our diverse society. Through the teaching of RE, children will develop a wide range of lifelong skills including investigation, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. RE helps children to combat prejudice, appreciate diversity and promotes the essential values of tolerance and respect. During RE lessons, children are encouraged to participate in philosophical discussions, exploring some of life's big questions. They will reflect upon their own ideas and beliefs and listen to those of others, in an environment where everyone is listened to, respected and valued.

We 'look through the window'- learning about other religions and gaining a strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together.

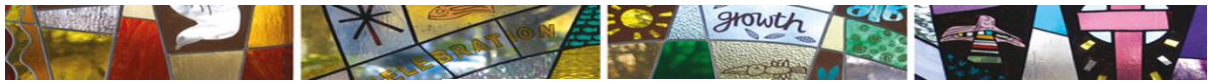
We 'look in the mirror' - learning from religion by linking the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose. We consider why one aspect is important to a believer and help children to relate the aspect to their own life.

Wherever possible or appropriate children with SEND access RE along with their peers as we recognise the importance for all our children to access our curriculum in line with our curriculum design principles.

For some children with SEND, particularly those with high needs, access to RE is considered along with ensuring they have access to their personalised or adjusted curriculum. We aim for all children to progress through the agreed body of knowledge. With adaptations the vast majority do progress to secure the agreed body of knowledge aligned to each year group or phase. For a small number of children with a high level of need or having missed prior learning having not previously attended a school setting or a setting that delivered RE they may progress at slower rate or not be accessing they body of knowledge specific to their phase or year group. In this case the would be accessing the appropriate body of knowledge that would build sequentially towards the aspects the class are studying. For example, enabling access to specialist programmes such as those advised by speech and language therapists, occupational therapy programmes or the SEN Hub. These programmes are timetabled to minimise the impact on the child's access to a broad and rich curriculum and do not impact on access to educational visits relating to this subject. Typically, these programmes are identified in EHCPs and ILPs and curriculum adaptations are agreed with parents.

Higher attainers in this subject are challenged to ensure they become fluent with the core key concepts through additional questioning and prompts (and tasks where appropriate) which helps extend their verbal reasoning skills as well as supporting them to engage in creating, evaluating, and analysing, delving deeper into the subject content.





For children with SEND, access to the learning in this subject in lessons may need to be differentiated and scaffolded, whilst the planned, progressive curriculum content is retained. Children are supported to succeed through:

- Breaking down tasks into smaller chunks to achieve and prioritising understanding over task completion.
- Giving sufficient time to process instructions, or adapted verbal or written instructions.
- Wherever appropriate or possible, information is supported by pictorial or concrete cues. For example; images are provided to support understanding of religious stories and artefacts are used to bring unfamiliar ideas or concepts to life.
- Scaffolded questions from adults and orally rehearsing thoughts with an adult.
- Where appropriate or necessary, pre-teaching core vocabulary or concepts.
- Resources that support reduced cognitive load. For example, key words with images or symbols provided.

For children with very high needs, they may require additional resources such as time to discuss own ideas with a trusted adult before listening to those of others. A social story may be used to support the idea of different people having different ideas.

They are supported with additional teaching assistant time that is proportioned to enable children to succeed in RE whilst promoting independence.

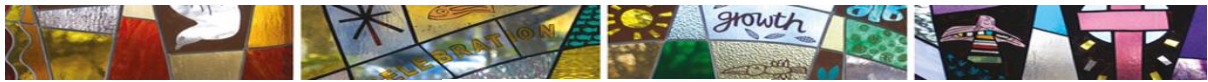
Essential Characteristics of Religious Education

A feature of our curriculum design is the use of Essential Characteristics. These are the learning characteristics developed through the subject overtime. They act as a common thread between all the units studied in a subject and are developed from Early Years to Year 6.

In RE they are;

- An outstanding level of religious understanding and knowledge.
- A thorough engagement with a range of ultimate questions about the meaning and significance of existence.
- The ability to ask significant and highly reflective questions about religion and demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues related to the nature, truth and value of religion.
- A strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together.





- Exceptional independence; the ability to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out investigations, evaluating ideas and working constructively with others.
- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity, which are shown in their responses to their learning in RE.
- The ability to link the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose.
- A wide knowledge and deep understanding across a wide range of religions and beliefs.

Religious Education Threshold Concepts

A further feature of our curriculum design are Threshold Concepts.

Threshold Concepts are the 'big ideas' that shape children's thinking within each subject. The same Threshold Concepts will be explored in every year group and children will systematically build their understanding of them. An important principle, is that exploring concepts will never be complete; children will continue to explore them for as long as they continue to study the subject.

In Religious Education they are;

1. To understand beliefs and teachings.

This concept involves understanding the key teachings of some of the world's major religions.

2. To understand practises and lifestyles.

This concept explores how religion impacts on day to day lives and practices of various religions.

3. To understand how beliefs are conveyed.

This concept involves understanding how books, scriptures, readings and other important means of communication are used to convey beliefs.

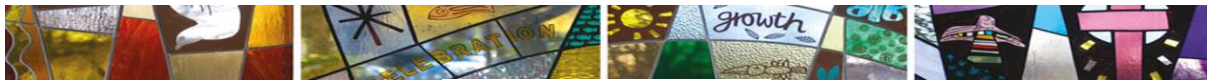
4. To reflect

This concept involves an appreciation of how religion plays an important role in the lives of some people.

5. To understand values

This concept involves an appreciation of how many people place values as an important aspect of their lives.





Knowledge in Religious Education

Knowledge in RE typically falls into two categories. Substantive knowledge such as identifying the ten commandments or recognising the importance of Seder plate, allows children to develop thinking underpinned with purpose and meaning. Disciplinary knowledge provides children with an opportunity to apply their substantive knowledge to philosophical questions and ideas. For example, children will develop a balanced understanding as to how a Christian might react to seeing plastic in our oceans once they have a secure knowledge that Christians believe that God created the world and they have duty to show care and respect towards it.

Monitoring & Assessing Progress in Religious Education

By progress, we mean children knowing and remembering more. The key question we ask is; *'has a child really gained the knowledge to understand the key knowledge and concepts?'.*

Assessing children's progress is vital in order to establish their acquisition of knowledge and skills in order to build confidence and fluency in all subjects. At St Peter's learning always starts with the children's prior knowledge and any misconceptions they may have. Class teachers decide upon the most appropriate age-related way of obtaining the children's prior knowledge. Misconceptions that arise throughout the unit are identified and addressed appropriately by the teacher.

We track progress through teacher judgement, supplemented by frequent low stakes knowledge recalls (often in quiz format) and occasional formal tests to ensure knowledge is recalled and children are genuinely building upon secure prior knowledge.

In RE we have knowledge organisers and key word lists to summarise key vocabulary (with agreed definitions), facts, and concepts. These clarify what has to be taught and are used as the basis of quizzes so that teachers can check the knowledge has been embedded.

In addition to assessing if children have secured the agreed key knowledge, 'Milestones' related to the Threshold Concepts are used to assess children's understanding and progress. Systematic planning of opportunities to learn and practise the knowledge and skills of each Milestone is built into each subject planning overview.

At the end of each unit or sequence taught the class teacher will summarise the security of children's knowledge using our narrative assessment form. This will also identify any gaps in knowledge as well as the steps that will be taken and when to address these gaps. These narrative summaries are also then used before starting future units to provide clarity on the security of the related prior knowledge.

