Rooks Nest Academy

Policy for the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education at Rook's Nest Academy

Introduction

At Rooks Nest Academy, we believe Religious Education (RE) is an essential part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Through RE, children develop knowledge and understanding of world faiths and non-religious worldviews, while fostering respect, tolerance, and empathy towards others.

Our teaching of RE follows the Leeds, Calderdale, and Kirklees Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2024-2029), "Believing and Belonging", which has been formally adopted by Rook's Nest Academy. It provides a clear and structured framework for teaching Religious Education from Early Years to the end of Key Stage 2. This syllabus enables pupils to explore questions of belief, belonging, identity, meaning, and purpose in life.

Aims of Religious Education

At Rooks Nest Academy, RE aims to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.
- Encourage children to reflect on their own beliefs, values, and experiences.
- Develop respect for different religions, worldviews, and ways of life.
- Enable children to ask and respond to challenging questions about meaning, purpose, and truth.
- Prepare pupils to live and contribute positively in a diverse society.

Curriculum and Content

Religious Education is taught in accordance with the 'Believing and Belonging' syllabus, which ensures progression and depth of study across all primary year groups.

The syllabus is sequenced along six conceptual pathways that serve as threads for organising learning about different religions and worldviews.

1. **The Nature of Religion and Belief:** Beliefs, practices and values, and the diversity within religion: sacred things including buildings, festivals, rituals and books.

2. **Expressing Belief:** How beliefs are expressed: words and other forms of communication like art, music, drama, dance, texts and poetry.

3. **A Good Life:** How people treat each other fairly and live together without upsetting or hurting each other or the environment.

4. **Personal Journey:** How people find wonder and awe including pilgrimage and life experiences.

5. **Influence and Authority:** How religious and non-religious communities interact with wider society and cultures.

6. **The Big Picture:** Making sense of our world and our place in it. Big questions of the grand narrative, e.g., origin of the world.

These pathways ensure a coherent and sequential learning experience, building a rich and profound knowledge of religions and worldviews. As the children engage in these lessons, they embark on a collaborative and empowering educational journey, building confidence, deepening understanding, and developing a genuine respect for the diversity of beliefs and practices around them.

Organisation and Teaching

Pupils study Christianity and Islam in depth, alongside a range of other world faiths (Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism) and non-religious worldviews (such as Humanism). Learning is enquiry-based, engaging, and interactive, making use of stories, artefacts, visits, and visitors wherever possible.

The learning is split into a two-year cycle labelled 'A' and 'B' for each key stage on the long-term plan for the teaching of Religious Education as follows:

	EYFS	Y1/2 Year A	Y1/2 Year B	Y3/4 Year A	Y3/4 Year B	Y5/6 Year A	Y5/6 Year B
Q1	Who belongs in my family and community? What makes me special? (Pathway 4)	What does it mean to belong a community of belief? (Pathway 1)	How are symbols used to welcome new life? (Pathway 2)	How do Jews use stories to remember God's covenant? (Pathway 6)	What faiths and beliefs can be found in our country and community? (Pathway 1)	Why do some people go on pilgrimage? (Pathway 4)	How do Sikhs symbolise their commitment? (Pathway 2)
Q2	How do people celebrate special times? (Pathway 5)	Why are festivals important in a community? (Pathway 5)	How can we make good choices? (Pathway 3)	How do ancient stories influence modern celebrations? (Pathway 5)	How do the 5 pillars help Muslims to lead a good life? (Pathway 3)	What do Hindu people believe about God? (Pathway 1)	How do Sikhs symbolise their commitment? (Pathway 2)
Q3	Who cares for me and how do I help others? (Pathway 3) (Could be S1 to match History)	Which books and stories are important? (Pathway 6)	How and why do some people pray? (Pathway 4)	How do different people express their spirituality? (Pathway 2)	How do the 5 pillars help Muslims to lead a good life? (Pathway 3)	What values do people live by? (Pathway 3)	How do Buddhists live a meaningful life? (Pathways 1 and 4)
Q4	How do we understand and care for the world? (What can we see in our wonderful world? (Pathway 6)	How and why do we care for others? (Pathway 3)	What do religions/worldviews say about our wonderful world? (Pathways 4 and 6)	How does the Bible help Christians to live a good life? (Pathway 3)	How are the stories of Holy Week important to Christians? (Pathway 6)	What is the significance of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost? (Pathway 6)	How do Buddhists live a meaningful life? (Pathways 1 and 4)
Q5	Why are some objects special? (Pathway 2)	What does it mean to belong to a church or mosque?	How do Hindu Stories help believers live their lives? (Pathways 3 and 6)	How do creation stories help people understand the world? (Pathway 6)	Why do the lives of the Gurus inspire Sikh believers? (Pathway 4)	Should we forgive others? (Pathway 3)	Why are rites of passage important? (Pathways 2 and 4)
Q6	Which places are special to members of our community? (Pathway 1)	What did Jesus teach and how did he live? (Pathways 3 and 6)	How do Bible stories show that God keeps promises? (Pathway 6)	Why do people follow inspirational leaders? (Pathways 3 and 5)	How are important events remembered?	What do Christians believe about the old and new covenants? (Pathway 6)	How and why are Jewish festivals celebrated today? (Pathway 5)

Each year group will have six focus questions per year, one per half term. There are 8 'focus weeks' allotted to Religious Education and Enrichment at Rook's Nest Academy with 5.5 hours (KS2) and 4.5 hours (KS1) to be spent on Religious Education each focus week, providing the children with 44 hours (KS2) and 36 hours (KS1) per year.

- RE is taught as a discrete subject but is also linked to wider curriculum themes where appropriate.
- Lessons are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all pupils, promoting active participation.
- Teachers provide opportunities for discussion, reflection, and questioning, allowing pupils to form and articulate their own views.
- Assessment is carried out in line with the expectations of the "Believing and Belonging" syllabus, focusing on both knowledge and skills development.

Contribution to SMSC and British Values

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development. It supports pupils in developing respect for different beliefs and practices, and in understanding the importance of values such as tolerance, compassion, and fairness.

Religious Education also promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Rooks Nest Academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils in Religious Education. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of all learners, regardless of ability, background, or belief. Our approach encourages respect for diversity and fosters an inclusive learning environment.

Planning identifies areas for support for all pupils with additional needs and differentiation of outcomes, resources and tasks are in place so that all pupils can meet the desired learning outcomes for the lesson and unit of work. This supports our mixed age classes to ensure that challenge and support is present as part of their learning.

Parental Right of Withdrawal

In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and subsequent legislation, parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child wholly or partly from Religious Education.

- Any parent considering withdrawal is encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher, to ensure clarity about the aims and content of the curriculum.
- The Academy will respect and support parents' wishes and make alternative arrangements for withdrawn pupils.
- Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Monitoring and Review

The RE curriculum is monitored by the Subject Leader and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure high-quality provision across the Academy. Governors are kept informed of developments in RE through curriculum reports.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or updates to the agreed syllabus.

Date of policy approval: 04-11-25
Next review date:
Approved by: S. BROOKS/S. MORRELL