



FENISCOWLES PRIMARY SCHOOL

'STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE'



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2021

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Revisions

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Revision 1:

Context

RE: statutory requirements and curriculum information

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that:

- *'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:*
- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*
- *All state schools ... must teach religious education ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online'.*

(National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)

Although there is not a National Curriculum for RE, all maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. All maintained schools therefore have a statutory duty to teach RE.

The RE curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Agreed Syllabuses used in schools (maintained or academy), which are not designated with a religious character, must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

Schools with a religious designation may prioritise one religion in their RE curriculum, but all schools must recognise diverse religions and systems of belief in the UK both locally and nationally.

In brief, legislation requires that:

In maintained community, foundation or voluntary schools without a religious character, RE is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus;

At Feniscowles Primary School, we follow the Blackburn with Darwen Agreed Syllabus for RE. (2017 – 2022). This area of our curriculum is due for review this academic year.

To work in-line with Equality Act, schools have a duty to demonstrate that they are fostering good relations and promoting good relations between people and groups of all kinds – for example – through aspects of the RE

curriculum which promote tolerance and friendship, or which share understanding of a range of religions or cultures. **(Equality Act: Advice For Schools)**

The most recent Ofsted curriculum review into RE refers to 3 different types of subject-specific knowledge that pupils learn in RE. Each of these is powerful and should not be confused with 'mere facts'. The first is **'substantive' knowledge** about various religious and non-religious traditions. The second type is **'ways of knowing'**, where pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion. The third type is **'personal knowledge'**, where pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about what they study. The review suggests that improvement in RE at both primary and secondary level includes knowing more of these 'pillars of progression'. This prepares pupils to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular world.

Typically, our learners have varying levels of cultural capital, with large gaps in some areas. E.g. spending time with learners from other cultures. Our learners come from a widening Geographical area, with different community pressures. However, typically our learners live within white British communities, and attend a school that is 98% white British, which is not representative of Blackburn with Darwen or the United Kingdom as a whole. Typically, our learners do not come from a faith background. With this in mind, we place great value on providing a high-quality Religious Education that seeks to enable learners to understand the value of living in a diverse community in which faith has a big role to play. Through the Prevent Agenda, schools also have a duty to promote community cohesion. The work within the Religious Education curriculum also seeks to prevent crime and to promote strong, integrated communities.

Statement of Intent

Feniscowles Primary School has created a curriculum intent statement. This intent has been written to provide an overarching context for our school curriculum to allow ***'A Feniscowles Child' to 'Live Life in its fullest'***. ***This document can be found on our website and should be read in conjunction with our subject specific intent statements.***

We want our children to have a morally principled outlook and we believe RE contributes significantly to this aspect of character education. The principal aim of the Blackburn with Darwen agreed syllabus for RE is to engage learners in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldwide views address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

The Blackburn with Darwen Agreed Syllabus for RE expands learners' perspectives through a range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities to promote their sense of moral and social responsibility which at Feniscowles Primary school, we also underpin by our values of: endeavour, respect, integrity, diversity, compassion and forgiveness. Our RE curriculum supports learners to live life in modern Britain and it provides

the opportunity to explore world faiths. We want to teach our learners that RE is vital to aiding our understanding of the world in which we live today and which we will live in, in the future.

The Blackburn with Darwen Agreed Syllabus for RE has a threefold aim for learners:

- 1) Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews
- 2) Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews
- 3) Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews

Specialist vocabulary for topics is taught and built on progressively, and effective questioning to communicate ideas is encouraged. Concepts taught are reinforced through weekly assemblies and our co curriculum.

Our RE curriculum will provide our learners with a strong framework to enable them to **'Live Life in its Fullest'** in a VUCA world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) and to make the most of the wonderful opportunities life can offer. Many challenges that face our societies can be resolved with a deepened appreciation of our school value of **diversity**. In a borough which is rich in cultural diversity, we want to make sure our learners are understanding of, and value different religions and non-religions.

Implementation

Teachers create a positive attitude to RE learning within their classrooms and reinforce an expectation that all learners can achieve high standards.

Each half term or full term, learners will be taught through a theme/unit based around a key question approach. For example - What do different people believe about God? Within a theme, children will be taught the different beliefs, traditions and ways of life for key religions within our community as well as the wider world.

In accordance with the Blackburn with Darwen Agreed Syllabus, learners in EYFS will encounter Christianity and other faiths as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. In Key Stage 1, learners will gain an understanding about the beliefs of Christians, Muslims or Jewish people. In Key Stage 2, learners will then deepen their knowledge and understanding about the beliefs of Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jewish people.

Curriculum Structure

The following table outlines the unit titles which children will study and when.

Stage	Title
Foundation	Which stories are special and why?
Foundation	Which people are special and why?
Foundation	Which places are special and why?
Foundation	What times are special and why?
Foundation	Being special: where do we belong?
Foundation	What is special about our world?
KS1	Who is a Christian and what do they believe?
KS1	Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?
KS1	Who is Jewish and what do they believe?
KS1	What can we learn from sacred books?
KS1	What makes some places sacred?
KS1	How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?
KS1	What does it mean to belong to a faith community?
KS1	How should we care for others and the world?
LKS2	What do people believe about God?
LKS2	Why is the Bible important to Christians today?
LKS2	Why is Jesus inspiring to some people?
LKS2	Why do people pray?
LKS2	Why are festivals important?
LKS2	Why do some people think life is a journey?
LKS2	What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today?
LKS2	What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?
LKS2	What can we learn from religions about deciding right and wrong?
UKS2	Why do some people believe God exists?
UKS2	What would Jesus do? Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century?
UKS2	What do religions say to us when life gets hard?
UKS2	If God is everywhere why go to a place of worship?
UKS2	Is it better to express beliefs in art of charity?
UKS2	What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?

UKS2	What matters most to Christians and to Humanists?
UKS2	What difference does it make?

Time Allocation

National guidance for the teaching of Religious Education states the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of 5% of curriculum time for R.E.

4-5 year olds (EYFS)	36 hours of R.E. (e.g. 50 mins a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
5-7 year olds (KS1)	36 hours per year (e.g. 1 hour a week or less than 1 hour a week plus a series of R.E. days)
7-11 year olds (KS2)	45 hours per year (e.g. 1 hour a week or a series of RE days or weeks)

Impact

The impact of our RE curriculum is measured through the monitoring cycle in school alongside our assessment procedures. This includes:

- Lesson observations
- Book monitoring
- Learning walks
- Discussions with class teachers
- Discussions with pupils

Monitoring and assessment information is used to measure whether:

- Learners enjoy and are enthusiastic about Religious Education in our school.
- There is a clear progression of learners's work and teachers' expectations in our school.
- Learners's work shows a range of topics and evidence of the curriculum coverage for all RE topics.
- Learners are becoming increasingly curious in their questioning and thinking about religion and non-religions.
- Feedback from teachers has an impact on our pupils, often with next step questions to push learning on.
- All learners are making progress, including EAL and SEND learners.
- Learners are being asked to 'do more' with their knowledge as they move through school.

Monitoring is also used to identify gaps in the curriculum that may need to be addressed across the school, or within individual year groups. Monitoring is an ongoing cycle, which is used productively to provide the best possible Science curriculum for our learners.

Recording of work

Throughout all year groups, we take a balanced approach to how learners demonstrate their understanding. Whilst it is important to record and promote cross-curricular writing skills, we recognise that this demand creates a barrier for some learners when trying to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. As a result, we look to promote oracy throughout the curriculum. This may include learners verbally presenting work or creating class 'big books'. Adult scribing where appropriate can further support this approach.

Assessment, Reporting and Tracking Progress

Assessment in RE is carried out against the writing of specific pupil outcomes within teacher planning documents to provide key assessment opportunities during each lesson. Due to the nature of teaching about religion, formative assessment is the most significant method which teachers use. Teachers make judgements about the learners' progress through target questioning and through discussions about learning. The Agreed Syllabus from Blackburn with Darwen outlines how teachers will assess:

Learning outcomes are specific to the content being taught. This helps teachers know just what it is that you want pupils to be able to understand and do as a result of their learning.

These 'I can' statements will help teachers to integrate AfL within their teaching, so that there is no need to do a separate end of unit assessment.

Staff make summative judgments on an annual basis, once the complete programme of study has been completed. This data is analysed and reported on by the subject leader, who utilises the information to make strategic choices about development with the subject.

Performance is reported to parents on an annual bases as part of their school report. Work is showcased on displays and in books via parents' evenings.

SEND and Greater Depth

The Blackburn with Darwen agreed syllabus is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all learners. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Each lesson has three levels of differentiation titled 'emerging', 'expected' and 'exceeding' which are designed to both support and challenge learners within lessons. This allows for SEND learners to be supported in their access to the lesson through activity type. It is important to note that these differing approaches still enable all learners to achieve the learning intention. SEND does not mean that a child is not capable of achieving in line or above their peers.

Teachers will need, as always, to tailor each lesson to meet the needs of the learners in their classes. Additional resourcing may be made available for learners with SEND to enable them to fully access the curriculum alongside their peers. This will be on a case by case basis.

Safeguarding

Throughout our RE curriculum, content provides the learners with the awareness and knowledge to keep themselves safe in many aspects of life. Religious Education also plays a key role in the Prevent Agenda. Early years providers serve arguably the most vulnerable and impressionable members of society. Early years providers already focus on children's personal, social and emotional development and The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework supports early years providers to do this in an age appropriate way, through ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant guidance. In England, this includes Working Together to Safeguard Children, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Information Sharing: Her Majesty's Government advice for professionals providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

The Learning Environment

Throughout our school, RE is promoted via displays. This includes the importance of our school value of 'diversity'.

In each classroom, where space allows, RE learning is shared through a celebration of work approach. This supports the acquisition of new knowledge, understanding of world religions and non-religions and vocabulary.

Involving Parents and Carers (Co-Curriculum)

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE curriculum. RE content is routinely included in our enrichment homework activities. The school website also provides links for parents to support their child through a 'co-curriculum'.

Promoting the love of reading

Appropriate learners' literature and sacred texts are planned carefully into our RE curriculum to support promoting a love of reading. This allows us to enrich and promote our curriculum through highly engaging stories from different religions. We also use our English curriculum to provide connected themes in learning. For example Learners in the EYFS, study the book Binny's Diwali by Umrigar and Chanani (fiction) and Diwali by Acorn publishers (non-fiction) and in Year 2 - linked to the Geography topic of exploring how other places in the world compare to where they live - learners read 'The Proudest Blue' by Muhammad and Ali. This helps to provide an understanding of different cultures and the Muslim tradition of wearing a hijab.

Training, support for staff and connected experts

CPD for the teaching of RE is provided in-line with the school's overall curriculum development cycle.

Where further support is required, the subject leader provides bespoke 1:1 support.

We also utilise materials from retoday.ORG , which provides teachers with planning documents for each stage of the curriculum. This supports teachers in maintaining high expectations.

The Right to Withdraw

RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, unless withdrawn by their parents. The right to withdrawn from RE was first granted in 1944 when curricular RE was called 'Religious Instruction' and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different now – open, broad and exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. In the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. Should you wish to withdraw your child/children from RE lessons at Feniscowles Primary School, please contact the headteacher. Contact details for doing so can be found on the 'About Us' tab on our school website.

References and further reading:

- Full RE Review from Ofsted: [Research review series: religious education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/research-review-series-religious-education)
- Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Blackburn with Darwen [SACRE - Terms of reference \(blackburn.gov.uk\)](https://blackburn.gov.uk/sacre-terms-of-reference)
- Prevent Duty Statutory Guidance: [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/Revised_Prevent_duty_guidance_for_England_and_Wales.pdf)
- Equality Act: Advice for Schools: [Equality Act Advice Final.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2021.pdf)