



Stanley Crook Primary School

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OUR MISSION: TO TRY OUR BEST, TO TELL THE TRUTH, TO LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY

"Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is OUTSTANDING" (Ofsted, 2019)

Religious Education Policy

Completed by: Mrs D Martin

Date Implemented: Updated December 2025

Review date: December 2026

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to improving outcomes for all pupils



SCHOOL
MEMBER



“Religious Education should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religious and non-religious worldviews. Religious Education enables pupils to have a nuanced and informed understanding of political, social and moral issues that they will need to face as they grow up in an increasingly globalised world. It helps pupils deal positively with controversial issues, to manage strongly held differences of belief and to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. As such Religious Education is central to good local, national and global citizenship. It makes a significant contribution to the active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance of others’ faiths and beliefs, a fundamental British value. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.”

Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, 2020

1. Aims

At Stanley Crook Primary School, we believe that an effective curriculum for Religious Education needs to enable pupils to develop a clearer understanding of their own values and beliefs while respecting those of others. Our curriculum is developed in accordance with the Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020). Our curriculum enables pupils to encounter broad and diverse examples of religions and world views, it focuses on core concepts and encourages pupils' personal development.

We also believe that religious education should make a significant contribution to the school's ethos through the encouragement of positive, caring attitudes towards others in our school, our wider community and the wider world. RE contributes significantly to personal development and community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society.

As set out in the Durham Agreed Syllabus, our R.E curriculum aims to develop knowledge & understanding of the main world religions (including Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism) as well as non-religious viewpoints (including Humanism) so that children can;

- Know and understand how religion can be defined and what is meant by the term “religious and non-religious worldviews” and, with increasing clarity, know that these worldviews are complex & diverse
- Describe and explain beliefs, values and traditions in a range of religions/cultures
- Describe and explain some of the teachings from main world religions
- Describe and explain the ways in which beliefs are expressed, e.g. through rituals such as prayer
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious & moral issues
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a diverse society
- Know and understand the significance & impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, communities and societies
- Deepen understanding of subject specific vocabulary

- Know and understand about religious diversity within our region, as well as nationally & globally
- Develop critical thinking & enquiry skills
- Reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values & beliefs

2. Statutory requirements

The legal requirements for teaching Religious Education were set out in the Education Act 1988 and confirmed by the Education Acts of 1996 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in Reception classes. Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus, which is the statutory order. Each Local Authority (LA) must have a SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) to advise the LA on matters connected with Religious Education. The SACRE may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus at any time.

The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must be nondenominational and must not be designed to convert pupils or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils. Teaching about denominations is not prohibited. The Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The benchmark expectations set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages. The headteacher must ensure the provision of Religious Education in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus. It is school's responsibility to ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education in order to meet statutory requirements.

3. Curriculum

3.1 Intent

Through our Religious Education curriculum we intend to inspire children at Stanley Crook primary to;

- Develop & increase their knowledge & understanding of religions, beliefs & cultures in their own locality, Britain and globally.
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards people who hold views and beliefs different from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions and beliefs.
- Build knowledge & understanding of a range of religious & moral stories.
- Develop the capacity to engage with 'big questions' about the world.
- Develop their own sense of identity & understand what is important to them.
- Know & use religious vocabulary to develop rich knowledge & progression in thinking.

3.2 Implementation

The Durham Agreed Syllabus encourages enquiry-based learning underpinned by the core principles of knowledge & understanding, critical thinking and personal reflection.

Due to having mixed age classes, our curriculum for Religious Education has been designed as a two-year rolling programme ensuring that children cover all areas of learning within each key stage (EYFS/KS1, LKS2, UKS2).

The scheme of work has been designed as a spiral curriculum with the following key principles in mind:

Cyclical curriculum: Pupils revisit key areas throughout KS1 and KS2, building on prior knowledge established in the early years foundation stage.

Increasing depth: Each time a key area is revisited, it is covered with greater depth and increasing maturity.

Prior knowledge: Upon returning to each key area, prior knowledge is utilised so pupils can build on previous foundations, rather than starting again.

Lessons follow a 'Cycle A and Cycle B' format to ensure progression of skills across the age range.

3.3 Breadth of Study

- Our Religious Education curriculum aims to develop knowledge & understanding of the main world religions (including Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism) as well as non-religious viewpoints (including Humanism). When exploring a non-religious viewpoint, children learn about the impact of scientific discoveries on religious belief.

This is done through a range of enquiry-based topics, covered as follows:

Key Stage 1

Why is Jesus special to Christians?

What does it mean to belong in Christianity?

What can we find out about Buddha? How do Buddhists show their beliefs?

What can we learn about Christianity by visiting a church?

Why is the Bible special to Christians (including story of St Cuthbert)?

How do Humanists express their beliefs?

Lower Key Stage 2

What can we learn about Christian worship and beliefs?

What do Christians believe about Jesus?

What do Hindus believe?

How and why do people show care for others?

What do Christians believe about God?

What is the Bible and why is it important to Christian people?

Why do people visit Durham Cathedral?

How do Hindus worship?

What does it mean to be a Humanist?

Upper Key Stage 2

Why should people with a religious faith care about the environment? (*Christianity & Islam*)

Why do people use rituals today? (*Christianity, Judaism & Islam*)

What do we now know about Christianity?

What does it mean to be a Humanist?

3.4 Curriculum Delivery

Religious Education enquiries are explored for a whole term, giving children the opportunity to explore & learn in depth about the topic. Religious Education lessons are delivered weekly throughout the school.

Educational visits/visitors to school are sometimes used to bring the curriculum to life for children. We may visit religious buildings such as churches or temples or participate in workshops delivered by specialists.

3.5 Impact

Children at Stanley Crook Primary school have respect & tolerance for others, with a broad understanding of views and beliefs. Children have improved knowledge of a diverse range of religions & cultures and can ask and answer challenging questions about religious, spiritual & moral issues. R.E supports our children to become culturally aware and develops their understanding of their own and others' cultural heritage. Children have a strong sense of belonging and are inspired to make a positive contribution to our local community and the wider world.

4. Assessment

In Religious Education it is important that pupils:

- make progress in knowing about and evaluating the beliefs and practices of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews
- know and understand the progress they are making in Religious Education
- know and understand what they need to do to make further progress
- are challenged by the enquiries, activities and tasks in which they are engaged
- achieve standards which match their expected capabilities (attainment and achievement).

Benchmark Expectations set out in the Durham Agreed Syllabus are used as the basis of planning and assessment.

Assessment should be meaningful and manageable and should not create unnecessary burden for either pupils or teachers. Assessment must be based on what has been taught at each stage not on what teachers assume pupils should know.

A range of methods can be used to assess pupils progress e.g. vocabulary matching activities, prepared speeches and presentations, extended writing, recording of discussions, teacher observations, practical activities such as object/picture sort and sequencing, pupil evaluations of class discussions etc.

Whilst Religious Education gives opportunities for Personal Reflection this **cannot** be assessed. Personal Reflection is private and subjective. Pupils may choose to share these thoughts and ideas within the Religious Education classroom but these reflections will not be assessed by teachers to show progress in Religious Education.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 The governing body

The governing body approve & oversee the implementation of this policy through regular governor monitoring.

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that R.E is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from R.E.

The headteacher also:

- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy.

5.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering R.E in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to other cultures & religions, even if they are different than our own.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of R.E
- Monitoring progress.

Class teachers, supported by teaching assistants, are responsible for teaching R.E.

Teachers will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the views of different faiths & cultures and avoid any negative connotations.

5.4 Role of the subject leader

Our subject leader for Religious Education is Mrs Martin.

The subject leader is responsible for maintaining/improving the standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education by:

- Monitoring and evaluating R.E; pupil progress, planning, marking & feedback, curriculum coverage, teaching, role of teaching assistants, provision in the EYFS
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD
- Purchasing/organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in Religious Education

5.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in R.E and, when discussing issues related to R.E, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

5.6 Parents

We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we:

- Inform parents about the school's R.E policy and practice.
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the R.E curriculum in school; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons, if they request to do so.
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for R.E in the school.
- Acknowledge parents have the right to withdraw their children from R.E. However, this rarely happens as, by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education.
- Keep a register of any pupils who are to be withdrawn from R.E lessons and ensure it is distributed to all teachers involved.

6. Right to Withdraw

6.1 Parents/carers right to withdraw

This information is derived from 'Guidance to support the provision of high-quality religious education (RE) in local-authority maintained schools' – Department for Education, 2010

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. The Headteacher is responsible for granting such requests from parents/carers to withdraw their child, either wholly or partly, from:

- Receiving religious education (RE) given in the school in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- Attendance at religious worship in the school

Parents/carers don't have to give a reason. However, it is our responsibility to ensure that parents/carers are aware of the R.E syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils while respecting their own personal beliefs.

In the event of a request to withdraw, we will give parents/carers the opportunity to discuss our R.E curriculum with us, so that they are able to make an informed decision.

Parents/carers also have a right to withdraw from school trips with a focus on Religious Education, or to a place of worship etc.

We would meet with any concerned parents/carers to:

- Explain what will happen on the trip, and how it links to the pupil's learning
- Invite the parent/carer to attend the trip
- Explain any adverse effects on the pupil of not attending the trip, e.g. not getting the opportunity to visit a new place they might not experience otherwise

We would also explain our responsibility to foster good relations between individuals from different cultures and backgrounds, and show how this fits into the curriculum scheme of work (in keeping with the [Equality Act 2010](#)).

We may be required to contact our local authority's local standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE) if further advice is needed.

6.2 Statutory duties of staff if the right to withdraw is exercised

We have a duty **to supervise** any pupils who have been withdrawn from RE, but **not** to:

- Provide additional teaching that is not RE
- Incur any extra costs
- Keep the child within their own year group/class during this time

7. Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

The needs of all children are considered carefully when planning and teaching Religious Education at Stanley Crook Primary School. We want children to reach their full potential. Where necessary, teachers identify which children are not making progress or are finding aspects of R.E difficult and will take steps to improve their learning in R.E, usually in liaison with the SENCO.

Teaching and learning activities may be differentiated to allow children to achieve the same learning objective through a different activity. Children's learning may be scaffolded in a range of ways to support them to achieve in R.E, including but not limited to; pictorial reminders, word mats, C-pens, vocabulary walls, knowledge organisers & adult support.

More able and talented children are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided.

For more information, please see SEND Policy.

8. Equality & Diversity

At Stanley Crook Primary School, we have high expectations for every child, whatever their background, ability or circumstances. We know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity is celebrated. We meaningfully embed cultural connections throughout our R.E curriculum in order to provide a curriculum that is inclusive of all and gives priority to none.

Through a varied, balanced curriculum for R.E, children are well equipped with the (age appropriate) knowledge & understanding needed to be able to challenge stereotyping of different faith communities/cultures.

Concepts such as prejudice, discrimination & racism are further explored through 'Values Assembly' each week, where children are introduced to these concepts, what they mean and how we can avoid being prejudice through stories, role-plays and peer discussion.

The curriculum provides children with the tools needed to challenge those who are biased against protected characteristics – knowledge is power, and our curriculum ensures our children know better!

Accurate & fair images/resources are used in contrast to stereotypes children may see online/in the media. A range of representation is shown in school to avoid promoting stereotypes. Children are encouraged to think critically about what they see/hear in books, movies and on TV. They are taught to be alert to 'red flags' that often signal stereotyping, such as using words like 'all', 'none', 'every' that are used to exaggerate or generalise or words that may be used to stir emotions when applied to a group of people. Children are provided lots of opportunities to develop empathy.

Our broader curriculum offer includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent a variety of cultures, religions and backgrounds. We value what each individual child brings to our school.