

Applecroft School



Religious Education and Worldviews Policy

Person Responsible:	RE Curriculum Leader(s)
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Religious Education and Worldviews (RE) Policy

1) Introduction:

School Vision:

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

2) Our aims and objectives including breadth of study:

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject but must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents. It is a necessary part of a broad and balanced curriculum (*see Appendix A*).

As RE is not nationally determined, a locally agreed syllabus of RE is prepared by a local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and adopted by a local authority. It is this Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2024-2028, which we have used as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE (*see Appendix B*). The new agreed syllabus was implemented in schools in September 2024.

We believe at this school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum. We aim to encourage our pupils to become 'Global Citizens' understanding and celebrating the diversity around them.

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses. We encourage a safe space for children to share and ask questions, this also allows for any misconceptions to be corrected.

3) RE Curriculum Intent:

At Applecroft we provide the children with a broad and balanced RE curriculum that reflects life in modern Britain, our local community, nationally and globally and is influenced by the Herts Agreed Syllabus. R.E. at Applecroft aims to enlighten and encourage children to see the beauty in differences. We aim for all our pupils to not only be tolerant and accepting of a range of religions and worldviews but also to acknowledge that these differences are what make our world unique. For pupils to be able to understand our constantly changing world, they need to be able to interpret religious issues and evaluate their significance. From the pupils first day at Applecroft, R.E. gives students valuable insights into the diverse beliefs and opinions held by people today. It helps with

their own personal development and supports an understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural questions that surface again and again in their lives. In tackling difficult questions, it provides pupils with insight that can work to challenge stereotypes, promote cohesion, and tackle prejudice. R.E. does important work encouraging young people to value themselves and the communities within which they live.

At Applecroft, we teach that difference is a positive, not a negative, and value individual uniqueness and explicitly teach the British Value of mutual respect and tolerance of all people, their beliefs and practices.

Throughout their time here, children will learn about the key faiths of people in the UK: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Humanism, as well as having the opportunity to explore other faiths, such as Baha'i, that are a part of our Applecroft family. Through our curriculum, the children will develop a strong knowledge, understanding and respect of the key beliefs and practices in each of these religions that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain. The subject is increasingly becoming focused on worldviews and religions, so throughout their time at Applecroft, children will be exposed to the questions of what is religion and what is a worldview?

At Applecroft we promote an enquiry-based approach; encouraging the children to ask 'big questions' about the world around them and seek to find answers to these through personal reflection about their own beliefs, quality first teaching, learning from each other's experiences of different cultures as well as through first hand experiences both in and out of school.

Aims: The curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom (*see Appendix C*) and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses.

Sources of Wisdom and their Impact

All pupils should:

- know, understand and explore the significance and impact of sacred texts, other sources of wisdom and ways of expressing meaning
- express ideas and insights about the nature of beliefs, values and practices and their impact upon the identity of individuals and communities
- recognise and explore the diversity which exists within and between religious and non-religious traditions

Personal and Critical Responses

All pupils should:

- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections, critical responses and connections to faith and belief enquiring into philosophical, moral and ethical issues
- engage with the questions and answers offered by religions and worldviews concerning ultimate questions and human responsibility
- develop the skills required to engage with others in dialogue and to cooperate in society with respect and compassion

4) RE Curriculum Implementation:

From Nursery classes to Year 6 pupils will:

- follow a coherent and systematic study of the principal religion of Christianity across each key stage
- be introduced to the other five principal religions represented in Great Britain by the end of key stage 2, alongside other religions reflected in our families at Applecroft.

EYFS	Children will encounter Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community. The children will have the opportunity to explore these religions by focusing on celebrations and festivals. Religious Education will support a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, their own community and their place within this.
KS1	In Years 1 and 2, children will study Christianity along with 2 other religions in depth as follows: Year 1 - Christianity, Hindu Dharma & Buddhism Year 2 - Christianity, Islam & Judaism
KS2	In Years 3-6 children will study Christianity along with 2 other religions in depth as follows: Year 3 - Christianity, Sikhi & Humanism (& other worldviews in our community) Year 4 - Christianity, Buddhism & Hindu Dharma Year 5 - Christianity, Islam & Sikhism Year 6 - Christianity, Judaism & Humanism (& other worldviews)

Teaching the programmes of study contributes to developing religious and theological literacy through religions and worldviews. We explore eight key areas of learning throughout the child's time at Applecroft. We have sequenced these, so that the child has the knowledge and emotional maturity to appropriately access all areas highlighted in the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2023-2028):

- **Beliefs and practices**
- **Sources of wisdom**
- **Symbols and actions**
- **Prayer, worship and reflection**
- **Identity and belonging**
- **Ultimate questions**
- **Human responsibility and values**
- **Justice and fairness.**

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. Through a range of strategies, such as: inquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and visitors of faith and belief, pupils are actively engaged in learning.

Each lesson the children will explore the skills they are using through the idea of lenses. The lenses we use are:

- Philosophy
- Theology
- Social Science

- History
- Geography.

Opportunities to revisit learning, share celebrations and where relevant acknowledge national and global events take place in our Assembly programme.

5) RE Curriculum Impact:

At Applecroft School we aim to achieve high quality RE for all pupils. RE teaching provides pupils with a systematic knowledge and understanding about Christianity, principal religions and worldviews (see Appendix D) which give life value. RE aims to enable pupils to become religiously and theologically literate (see Appendix E) so they can engage in life in an increasingly diverse society. It is not about telling pupils what religious views they should have but rather assists them in gaining shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints.

6) Learning and Teaching Styles (include approaches for disadvantaged children including SEND):

Children are given the opportunity to access lessons in a variety of different ways, there are opportunities for discussion-based learning as well as written based tasks. Where appropriate children have access to artefacts to help them learn about the religion they are studying. Work set will be differentiated to allow all children to access the curriculum in a way appropriate to their needs.

7) How do we plan and organise our lessons?

In order to ensure that our aims are met, and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school follows the enquiry-based approach set out in 'Religion for Today and Tomorrow' non-statutory guidance supporting the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2023-2028. Our long-term planning builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the eight key areas of learning. Our schemes of work ensure that pupils have encountered and explored the religions through the EYFS, Key Stage One and Two.

Short term planning of RE lessons will be delivered across the year in 3 half-termly units of work that correlate with the 3 religions in the year group. These units will be planned through 7-8 individual lessons and one immersion day per year on a pre-decided religion to ensure that throughout their time at Applecroft they experience an immersion day in each of the key religions.

8) How do we make RE inclusive?

Families who send their children to Applecroft School are from a range of faith backgrounds but are predominantly from non-faith or Christian backgrounds. Our school is committed to valuing the opinions, beliefs and practices of all and to showing sensitivity to minority groups. It is our priority to teach the children at Applecroft to be respectful and accepting of all beliefs and faiths in their community. Each year, we survey our parents to ensure we are aware of any new faiths joining our community so that we can incorporate these into our lessons and planning.

At Applecroft School it is our practice to talk to parents/carers to ensure that they understand the aims and value of the RE curriculum before honouring the right of withdrawal from RE. Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from RE. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent/carer who wishes to withdraw their child is expected to consult the Headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE.

9) Contribution of RE to teaching in other curriculum areas:

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. Children's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

RE presents many opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised, and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality. Each religion, when first looked at, will explore the Geography and History of said religion.

Through our Reading curriculum, the children are exposed to a rich range of books, fiction and non-fiction, that explore the diversity in the world around them.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development knowledge and awareness of Prevent, British Values, keeping children safe and the diversity, equality and cohesion agendas, these are all essential contributing factors in providing outstanding RE teaching and learning for all children.

10) What is our approach to equal opportunities (considering disadvantaged)? How do we ensure equal opportunities in RE?

RE at Applecroft is taught in a way which allows all children to share their opinions and faiths. These may not always be religious, but it is important for all children to experience and understand their peer's beliefs. All faiths and beliefs are recognised, and we aim to celebrate a diverse range of important religious and cultural festivals. We aim to include other faiths outside of the principal religions in the curriculum, to reflect our school community, so that every child feels and sees themselves represented in their learning.

11) How do children record their work?

Children at Applecroft record their work in an RE exercise book where they can reflect on their previous learning and compare beliefs and practises with other religions they have previously learnt. Each unit begins with a knowledge organiser stuck in their books that children can refer to when searching for key answers and vocabulary, encouraging more independent thinking. Each lesson has a key question that the children must answer at the end and an accompanying knowledge note (that is dual coded) is stuck in, to aid retrieval of information and aid understanding.

12) How do we use feedback to support children's progress?

Children are given written and verbal feedback on their work. When appropriate children may be asked extension and quiz questions to get them to think on a deeper level or use their knowledge to give reasons for their point of view.

13) How do we assess and report children's progress and attainment in RE?

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023-2024 sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as a requirement outlined in the syllabus. At Applecroft, assessment in RE is carried out termly and these assessments then feed into annual data aligned with the key stage outcomes of the syllabus. These assessments are used to inform parents of their child's progress, attainment and effort in RE at KS1 and KS2 and 'Personal, Social and Emotional development' and 'Knowledge and understanding of the world' strands in the EYFS.

14) How do we set home learning (if any)?

At Applecroft, we do not set specific RE home learning tasks, however we encourage children to share any festivities and events they celebrate at home with their peers and teachers. If a parent wishes, they can email pictures of celebrations and festivals to appear on the R.E. page of our school website. Pre-teaching and revisits are shared via Google Classroom when it is appropriate to do so. When visitors are presenting in school, a question sheet is put on Google Classroom as an additional homework to gather any questions the children may have ahead of the visit. This ensures the visit is pupil led and has a purpose.

15) How do we monitor RE across the school?

The RE curriculum leaders (Vikki Wake and Lisa Withe) carry out termly monitoring including pupil voice, book looks, lesson observations and planning overviews. The curriculum is monitored and reviewed each year to ensure it reflects the prior knowledge the children have.

16) How is RE resourced?

We have some links with Religious communities within our Applecroft community who talk with us and the children. We have new artefacts to support our teaching and the children's learning and made connections with HFL to borrow artefact boxes when appropriate. We also prompt the visiting of religious places and our local places of worship.

17) How do we develop the CPD of staff?

The RE leads have the opportunity to attend courses to support them in developing their subject knowledge. When appropriate these courses are offered to other members of staff who teach RE or who wish to develop their subject knowledge. The RE leads are also members of NATRE (National Association of Teacher of Religious Education) and SARETT (St. Albans RE Teachers Together), ensuring RE leads are also updated on Government and local news and information.

18) How do we involve parents/carers in RE learning?

Throughout the year parents/carers are invited in to speak with the children about their faith and to share their beliefs. This may be in the classroom setting or as part of our immersion days.

19) How are the school trustees involved (include curriculum committee, faculty and lead trustees?)

We have link trustees who we meet with as part of our SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural) faculty. The link trustees understand how RE is taught at Applecroft. The SMSC faculty meet throughout the year to ensure leaders feel supported and ask challenging and thought-provoking questions about the depth and broadness of our curriculum and the topics we are covering. Trustees are also involved in immersion days and offsite visits where possible.

Appendices

Appendix A: Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19: Education Act 2002, Section 80. See also section 78 of the 2002 Education Act, which applies to all maintained schools. Academies are also required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with Section 1 of the 2010 Academies Act.

Appendix B: The locally agreed syllabus is statutory for maintained schools without a religious character and Voluntary Controlled schools. Voluntary Aided schools are not obliged to use the locally agreed syllabus. They must, however, teach RE in accordance with their trust deed. Faith and non-faith academies and free schools may use their locally agreed syllabus, or a different locally agreed syllabus (with permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum.

Appendix C: Sources of wisdom include sacred texts, psalms, hymns, prayers, poems, letters, paintings, icons, artefacts and people.

Appendix D: The principal religious traditions taught are, in accordance with guidance from the DfE, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Humanism and Atheism are worldviews which are appropriate to include as part of the RE curriculum. Where we have pupils who are members of other world faiths (e.g. Baha'i or Jain) then in line with our inclusion policy and valuing of the individual, we include aspects of that religion in RE.

Appendix E: 'Religious literacy' focuses on the human experience of religion and belief and the development of skills for expressing these experiences. 'Theological literacy' focuses on the big concepts upon which religions are founded, such as God, creation and the afterlife and the development of skills for expressing these concepts. These big concepts are explored through the non-statutory additional guidance document.