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Religious Education Policy

Reviewed on: 15th September 2025

Next Review due: Autumn 2027

Signed by:

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Chair of Committee

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Hopper', written in a cursive style.

Acting Headteacher

Introduction

Religious education is an entitlement for all pupils and its place in the school curriculum is an acknowledgement of the important role which beliefs and values play in people's lives, regardless of particular religious commitments. It is also an acknowledgement that religious beliefs and practices play a key part in the lives of many people worldwide today as they have done throughout history. As a curriculum area, religious education offers pupils a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

Ranelagh is a Community Primary School and religious education is provided in line with the requirements of the relevant Education Acts.

Religious Education is taught according to an Agreed Syllabus produced by SACRE, the Local Authority's Standing Advisory Committee on RE.

- The Agreed Syllabus is a statutory document written on the premise that all pupils leave school with a knowledge of the main religions practised in GB today.
- The syllabus must take into account that Christianity is the UK's heritage religion (i.e. most influences history, politics, society, culture, literature, art, music) and for this reason takes the largest part.
- Suffolk SACRE's latest review to its Agreed Syllabus was 2022. SACRE is made up of teachers and local religious and non-religious groups.

We recognise that our pupils come from a variety of religious and secular backgrounds and we welcome this diversity. The religious education programme seeks to be sensitive to the home background of each child; it is not the function of religious education to promote or disparage particular religious views.

Aims

Within the framework of the Education Acts and Agreed Syllabus, our aims in religious education are:

- To enable each child to explore the human experiences people share and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from these experiences.
- To enable pupils to know about and understand the beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Suffolk and the UK. Among these, Christianity has a particular place and is taught in each year of the primary phase.
- To promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about religions represented in the school, community, county and country.
- To affirm each child in his/her own family tradition, religious or secular.
- To provide opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus gives more details of the importance of religious education in the curriculum and selects two main aims for its programmes of study and attainment targets: learning about religion and learning from religion.

Time allocation

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus recommends the equivalent of 30 minutes per week of religious education for reception children. Many schools incorporate the time allocation to create themed days or extended projects where RE is the main focus. The programmes of study have been developed on the assumption that reasonable time is provided for religious education. The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus recommends a minimum of 5% curriculum time¹ i.e. 36 hours per year at Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year at Key Stages 2 and 3. Where schools aggregate the time allocation for themed days or extended projects, they should ensure that RE has a minimum of 5% of curriculum time. Religious Education curriculum time does not include collective worship, even where an assembly complements or provides a starting point for curricular work.

The Requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus

At Ranelagh our religious education is based on the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus sets out Programmes of study for the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2. These begin with a focus statement summarising what religious education will look like at each stage.

The programmes of study develop continuity and progression in religious education. They detail requirements for learning from religion and learning about religion for each key stage. The breadth of study section explains which religions and areas of study should be covered and outlines a wide range of experiences and opportunities which characterise teaching and learning.

The programmes of study contain:

1. Knowledge, skills and understanding
2. The development of knowledge, skills and understanding focuses on two key aspects of learning in religious education.

Learning about religion and belief

This includes acquiring knowledge and developing an understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Developing an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, and of how religion can influence the lives of people who embrace it. Developing the ability to consider and reflect on religious and moral issues in order to make informed choices in the context of a growing knowledge of the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Learning from religion and belief

This includes developing an awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them. It includes responding to

such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience. Also reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Religion and beliefs

In accordance with national legislation and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus requires that:

- Christianity should be studied in depth at each key stage to 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian' (Education Act 1988)
- Other principal religions represented in Great Britain (usually regarded as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) should be studied across the key stages; although they do not have to be studied at equal depth, nor all of them in each key stage
- Other religious traditions (such as Baha'i faith, Jainism or Zoroastrianism) may be studied if appropriate, particularly where they are represented locally
- Secular philosophies such as Humanism should be studied.

Exact requirements for teaching about which religions, when, and at what depth, are given in the programme of study for each key stage. Schools are required to make every effort to ensure that pupils encounter all the principal religions represented in Great Britain during their school life.

Alongside their consideration of individual religions, pupils also study how religions relate to each other, recognising both similarities and differences. They also consider the significance of interfaith dialogue and the important contribution religion can make to community cohesion and to the combating of religious prejudice and negative discrimination.

Learning Themes

The learning themes identify the concepts appropriate to RE in different key stages. Although often related, they must be taught with increasing depth and sufficient breadth. This requirement is demonstrated in the titles of the themes which change and develop across the key stages but remain related e.g. Symbols and Artefacts (Key Stage 1), Symbols and Religious Expressions (Key Stage 2). The learning themes may be taught separately, in combination or within studies of particular religions. Each learning theme should be seen as requiring the equivalent of one half term's work in RE, i.e. no less than 6 hours work. In contrasting a scheme of work it is strongly recommended that the learning themes are integrated in a unit of work in which pupils might encounter concepts from worship, pilgrimage and sacred spaces, beliefs and questions and symbols and religious expression. The programmes of study develop continuity and progression in RE. They detail requirements for 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion' for each key stage. The breadth of study section explains which religions and areas of study should be covered

and outlines a wide range of experiences and opportunities which should characterise teaching and learning.

Scheme of Work

To ensure the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus 2022 is followed, Ranelagh have decided to follow the Emmanuel Project scheme of work 2023.

The Emmanuel Project is an RE scheme of work for EYFS to Y6 which covers the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for RE. It is written by the Diocesan Schools' Adviser in consultation with local teachers and advised by members of different faiths on Suffolk SACRE.

Both the scheme of work and the Agreed Syllabus are available for inspection in school.

Ranelagh Primary School						
 RE Long Term Plan - Cycle 1						
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Overarching question: Is it important to belong?		Overarching question: Why do people celebrate?		Overarching question: Should everyone learn to pray?	
Year 1/2	Christianity Baptism / Church Why is belonging to God and the Church Family important to Christians?	Judaism Belonging Mitzvah / Tzedakah Why is learning to do good deeds so important to Jewish people?	Christianity Resurrection What are the best symbols of Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter?	Hinduism Devotion How does a Hindu celebrate devotion to a deity at the festival of Holi?	Judaism Prayer & Worship Tefillah / Blessing Why do Jewish families say so many prayers & blessings?	Christianity Worship Why do Christians pray to God and worship him?
	Overarching question: Do beliefs make any difference to someone's life?			Overarching question: What beliefs drive people to make a difference in the world?		
Year 3/4	Christianity Religion & the individual reconciliation How do Christians show that reconciliation with God & others is important?	Islam Religion & the individual How does a Muslim show their submission & obedience to Allah?	Hinduism Religion & the individual Why do Hindus want to collect good karma?	Christianity Beliefs in action in the world What do Christians mean when they talk about the Kingdom of God?	Humanism Why do Humanists use the golden rule as a basis for morality?	Sikhism How does the teaching of the Gurus move Sikhs from dark to light?
	Overarching question: Where do people look for answers to life and living?			Overarching question: Are some things more sacred than others?		
Year 5/6	Christianity Teachings & Authority Why is the Gospel such Good News for Christians?	Islam Teachings & Authority What does the <i>Qur'an</i> reveal about Allah & his guidance?	Hinduism Teachings & Authority What spiritual pathways to Moksha are written about in Hindu scriptures?	Judaism Worship Pilgrimages & Sacred Places What is holiness for Jewish people: a place, a time, an object or something else?	Christianity Worship Pilgrimages & Sacred Places What is the great significance of Eucharist for Christians?	Buddhism Symbolism & Religious Expression How did Buddha teach his followers to find enlightenment?

Ranelagh Primary School  RE Long Term Plan – Cycle 2						
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Overarching question: What do people believe are important?		Overarching question: What is it right to follow?		Overarching question: Can beliefs and stories be good teachers?	
Year 1/2	Judaism Teshuvah / G-D Why do Jewish families talk about repentance at new year?	Christianity Saviour / Jesus Why was Jesus given the name 'Saviour'?	Islam Compassion How do some Muslims show Allah is compassionate and merciful?	Christianity Trust Why do Christians trust Jesus and follow him?	Judaism Torah / Rabbi Why is the Torah such a joy for the Jewish Community?	Christianity Parables/ Gospels What did Jesus teach about God in his parables?
	Overarching question: What makes some people an inspiration to others?			Overarching question: What beliefs bind a community together?		
Year 3/4	Christianity How does believing Jesus is their Saviour inspire Christians to save and serve others?	Islam Why do Muslims call Muhammad the seal of the prophet?	Hinduism How does the story of Rama and Sita inspire Hindus to follow their Dharma ?	Judaism What symbols and stories help Jewish people remember their covenant with God?	Christianity Why do Christians believe they are people on a mission?	Sikhism How do Sikhs put their beliefs about equality into practice?
	Overarching question: Why are there so many different ideas about God?			Overarching question: What are the best ways to think about death and dying?		
Year 5/6	Christianity How do Christians show their belief that Jesus is God incarnate?	Islam How does Tawhid create a sense of belonging to Muslim community?	Hinduism How do questions about Brahman and Atman influence the way a Hindu lives?	Buddhism How does the Triple Refuge help Buddhists in their journey through life?	Christianity Should believing in the Resurrection change how Christians view life and death?	Hinduism Why do Hindus say moksha is the goal of life?

This scheme of work follows an enquiry-based approach to learning. Early Years use ideas from this scheme of work to build learning opportunities for the children from the EYFS framework. All year groups may alter the approach to teaching these units dependent on the needs of their class.

Teaching and learning styles

At Ranelagh we are using increasingly varied and active ways of working which include art and drama, debating, visits, posters, visitors, DVDs and interactive displays. In particular, we recognise the importance of teaching the two attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus (learning about and learning from religion) in a balanced way and the scheme of work we follow reflects this. We also encourage cross - curricular work.

Use of ICT

Pupils are being given increasing opportunities to develop their ICT capability where appropriate in religious education. The use of websites for virtual visits and research, digital cameras, I pads, interactive whiteboards and online programs such as Skype have all helped pupils develop their learning and enjoyment of religious education.

Resources

Good resources are essential to fulfil the teaching requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and for Ranelagh this has been a rapidly improving area. Resources are stored in topic boxes according to Religions and topics to be studied. The subject leader encourages staff to suggest gaps in resources.

Professional development for staff

Ranelagh acknowledges that no teacher can be an instant expert in six religions. Several strategies are developed for supporting staff who need to increase their subject knowledge, skills and personal confidence in teaching religious education. These include a bank of resources, staff meetings and LA run courses. The Emmanuel Project scheme of work also provides a wealth of background information to guide teachers through this enquiry-based approach. The school acknowledges that professional development of this kind is not easy to organise or finance but is committed to ensuring all staff are well equipped to teach religious education.

Visits and visitors

Visits and visitors can provide powerful learning experiences for both teacher and pupils. All visits and visitors at Ranelagh are organised through the subject leader in accordance to the advice given in *Suffolk Educational Visits...Procedures and guidance*. We visit our local church and attend church services to signify specific occasions throughout the year. Clergy and other members of the community meet with the children and monthly Open the Book assemblies are provided by our local church. We try to enable Key Stage 2 pupils to visit a place of worship from another religious tradition. We hope to invite visitors from all the world religions to come and talk to the children when they are studying that particular faith. These visitors are mainly organised through school contacts (parents, governors etc) or through the Suffolk Inter-faith resource community.

Matching work to Pupils' needs

The whole school policy with regards to special needs and differentiation applies to religious education and the SENCO will give advice on adapting work. Teachers should however be aware that some children have additional experience of a religion through family practice and may show greater ability and understanding.

Vulnerable Children

Within RE, vulnerable children will be highlighted by the class teacher (or other adult), during sensitive discussions within the classroom. Therefore it is essential that within planned sessions adequate time is provided for children to raise concerns, ask questions and to express their thoughts and views.

Assessment, recording and reporting

It is important to note that pupils' work in religious education can be assessed. We are not assessing degrees of spirituality but their knowledge, skills and understanding. It is important that their progress is acknowledged, just as in any other subject. Class teachers should assess the understanding of their pupils and ensure that this is done in a variety of ways (e.g. through questioning, mini-quizzes and end of unit question). Pupils should use

self-assessment to develop their own sense of progress and to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding.

We are also required by law to report on pupils' progress and attainment in religious education to parents. The Agreed Syllabus provides descriptions of levels of attainment to use and these are used as a basis for reporting to parents on an annual basis. The Emmanuel Project scheme of work also provides 'I can... statements' to aid teacher assessment. Each class keeps a class book as a record of lessons, conversations and a sample of pupils' work.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

Headteachers are responsible for the school's curriculum and must secure provision of RE for all pupils. They must make the RE Agreed Syllabus available on request, ensure information on RE is contained in the school prospectus and report to parents on children's progress. The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice and in particular, monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. Support with planning is given to teachers via email and staff meetings, pupil perceptions are carried out and scrapbooks of work are monitored/ collected. The religious education governor also has a role to play in this area. Progress is being made in the subject regarding children's learning, teacher's confidence and engagement in the subject area.

Contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute. At Ranelagh religious education should play a part in:

- Developing an awareness of a spiritual dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way (spiritual)
- Providing a forum for pupils to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by (moral) .
- Encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs and a sense of community (social)
- Evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, arts, music, drama and literature and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers (cultural).

Provision for withdrawal from religious education

Two provisions of law need to be noted.

- Parents at Ranelagh may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from religious education in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25 (41 and 30), which was re-enacted in 1988. Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given and the school must enable parents to exercise this legal entitlement. Parents are asked to contact the head teacher if they wish to withdraw their child. It is hoped

that, in discussing their requirements, an understanding can be reached and arrangements for alternative religious education or supervision made.

- Teachers at Ranelagh may withdraw from religious education. Their classes, however, are legally entitled to religious education. The head teacher is responsible for alternative provision for pupils. Staff are not required to give reasons for withdrawal. Currently no member of staff exercises this right. Were this to happen, the subject leader would probably cover the affected class. The other teacher would teach an appropriate area of the national curriculum for the subject leader.

Religious education and its relationship to collective worship

In law, religious education and collective worship are distinct. Religious education is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during collective worship. However, during collective worship at Ranelagh, stories from the Bible and other religions, traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned and we enjoy assemblies led by members of religious communities. These compliment and bring depth to our religious education programme.

