

"Let all that you do be done in love" 1 Corinthians 16:14

Hanging Heaton CE (VC) Junior and Infant School

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

Hanging Heaton School is committed to recognising the uniqueness of an individual and to acknowledge and develop the positive qualities that all have regardless of race, religion, gender or special educational need to achieve their full potential. We are a school committed to the inclusion of all in everything we do and strive to ensure equal opportunities for all to achieve their best.

Our school vision statement shared with stakeholders reflects this belief and what we aim to achieve:

'Let all that you do be done in love' - (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Our vision underpins all that we do in school. This vision, supported by our Christian values which are an essential part of our school lives, allows us to serve our community by providing a high-quality education within the context of Christian belief and practice.

Love for learning

We are all on a fun learning journey in order to achieve our full potential
We celebrate and share our successes and achievements

Love for ourselves

We promote a positive, healthy lifestyle and aim to make ourselves the best we can be
We all have our own thoughts, gifts, talents, skills and abilities

Love for one another

We look after one another and show care for everybody
We respect the beliefs and cultures of all communities

Love for our world

We work together to create a warm, safe and stimulating environment
We act to take care of our wonderful world

We aim to develop our children socially, morally, culturally, spiritually and academically to help them to be more valued and responsible citizens. This policy is written to reflect our vision of love and the chosen aims and Christian values of our school for the year.

Believing and Belonging (see appendix 1)

Our vision for RE is based on the national guidance and the local agreed syllabus, 2024-29. This is a comprehensive syllabus for Religious Education at all key stages. It is supported by optional detailed planning for use in schools. The title, *Believing and Belonging*, reflects the twin aims that RE must stimulate interest and nurture understanding of religion/worldviews, while also contributing to pupils' awareness of and sensitivity to diversity in our communities and world.

This edition, approved for teaching from 2024-29, has evolved over years of experience and builds on many previous features. However, it also strengthens sequencing of knowledge and offers a structure for ensuring learning is both broad and deep.

Key features

The syllabus is designed around six learning pathways. These have been developed from 'Big Ideas'1 and act as the framework for sequencing learning in religion and worldviews at all key stages from age 5 to 18.

While organising the curriculum along these pathways, learners concurrently develop substantive knowledge of specific religions/worldviews.

The syllabus requires a school curriculum to both:

- achieve a broad, but rigorous, understanding of religions/worldviews in the context of our local communities and our country;
- provide for deeper focused study of specific topics and questions.

To support teachers, an optional compendium of detailed planning is available, made-to-measure by expert writers to match the syllabus content. This includes:

- core units which develop the broad overview and context;
- focus units which entail deeper, concentrated exploration of specific areas.

The syllabus draws on, and is indebted to, the Big Ideas project (<https://bigideasforre.org>). It also reflects the National Content Standard (REC July 2023) <https://bigideasforre.org/big-ideas-and-there-councils-national-statement-of-entitlement/>. (From *Believing and Belonging*, 2024)

In RE pupils discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions, in local, national and global contexts, through learning about and from religions and other world views. They learn to appraise the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in society with its diverse understanding of life from religious and other world views.

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Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

RE curriculum

In school, the curriculum is based on the Local Agreed Syllabus for Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds produced by SACRE for teaching from September 2024.

The knowledge entitlement for pupils has been based on the detailed subject content tables in the syllabus. To support delivery of informed and interesting RE, teaching is based around a number of units of work which are non-statutory but do cover the statutory requirements of RE. Due to the nature of mixed-age classes, the RE curriculum has been split into a two-year rolling programme to ensure coverage in Key Stage 2 with pupils in Key Stage 1 taught in year groups (Appendix 2 - RE Teaching Sequence) The syllabus is called Believing and Belonging because it weaves two key threads:

First, it is about beliefs and values. It aims to develop learners' understanding of religions/worldviews, exploring their commonality and diversity.

Specifically, RE:

a. **Enables learners to develop a broad and balanced understanding of religions/worldviews.** RE's primary purpose is to give learners a broad understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and non-religious beliefs, and understand how these are woven into human experience and applied to life and decisions.

b. **Empowers learners to develop and use critical thinking skills.** Well taught, RE is a rigorous academic subject, supporting problem solving and critical thinking skills. It will inspire and motivate learners to enquire into religious and purposeful questions. Engaging and stimulating RE helps to nurture informed and resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division. It offers a place in the curriculum where difficult or 'risky' questions can be tackled within a safe but challenging context.

Secondly, the syllabus is about 'belonging'. It aims to nurture pupils' awareness of the treasury of diverse beliefs and cultures, as well as sensitivity to the questions and challenges that these can present. Ultimately, we all share a common humanity and our own patch of the Earth. In this way RE plays a part in helping pupils to discover their own place, identity and journey through life.

Achievement and Progress

We assess progress of pupils against the end of key stage statements in the syllabus. The units of work specify end of year expectations. Each unit of work provides an assessment activity suggestion and assessment statements. These are matched in the RE trackers, to be completed half-termly. Ongoing assessment is also completed through, discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, asking and answering questions.

Schools are required to report on progress in RE in line with the core principles of assessment outlined by the DfE. We will report to parents on individual pupils' achievement relative to the year group expectations at the end of each academic year.

Monitoring is also undertaken by the RE co-ordinator in the form of work scrutiny, pupil voice and observation.

RE lessons

RE is timetabled so that pupils are provided with 1.5 hours of RE each week with additional occasional cross-curricular theme days. Lessons are normally taught by the class teacher or a qualified teacher covering PPA. The school has a subject leader who supports and monitors the subject.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. It will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities.

We encourage and promote teaching and learning through enquiry and investigation. The units of work that form our curriculum are based on enquiry questions and promote exploration, discussion, debate and reasoning.

A range of teaching and learning styles will be used including role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT, works of art and music, artefacts, visits and visitors. Children will learn through:

- Investigation - the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories.
- Questioning - developing curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world
- Empathy - developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, joy and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
- Reflection - the ability to consider thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs of oneself and others.
- Relating - linking significant features of religions, making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar
- Expression - the ability to identify and explain feelings and aspects of religions

The place of RE in our school

SMSC Development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

It is our aim that RE will enable pupils to enhance their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them.
- Responding to the fundamental questions line of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices.
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.
- Expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way.

Equality

Hanging Heaton School is committed to recognising the uniqueness of an individual and to acknowledge and develop the positive qualities that all have regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, special educational need or socio-economic background to achieve their full potential. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

We are a school committed to the inclusion of all in everything we do and strive to ensure equal opportunities for all to achieve their best.

Community

We value the support given to RE through links with the local and wider community, such as visits, visitors and charities.

RE provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels:

- The school community - RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- The community within which the school is located - RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.
- The UK community - a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life
- The global community - RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE is also closely linked to our PSHCE curriculum. RE also provides opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in Literacy and ICT.

Withdrawal from RE

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw a child from religious education. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. If a parent is considering withdrawal from RE we will listen to their concerns, inviting them to do so with the head teacher or other representative of the school. We work hard to ensure that any reservations or doubts may be accommodated to avoid withdrawal but recognise that a parent has this right if reservations cannot be resolved. Any formal decision to withdraw should be made in writing to the head teacher. The school will arrange for appropriate arrangements to be made to supervise the pupil in school during RE lessons.

Managing the right of withdrawal

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- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Enquiries and questions

The school welcomes enquiries or questions about RE. In the first instance parents should contact their child's class teacher.

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Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs J Potter

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