

## **Developing an approach to teaching and learning in Religious Education**

*Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Religious education 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 can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these. RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. RE can also make important contributions to other parts of the school curriculum such as citizenship, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE education), the humanities, education for sustainable development and others. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others - individually, communally and cross-culturally.* DCSF 2010

Teaching and learning at Wormley Primary School aims to encourage children to question and reflect upon their beliefs and those of others, sparked through activities, experiences and authentic and replica artefacts, within an ethos of respect

We are committed to ensuring that Religious Education at Wormley School is inclusive. This means that in all RE learning, all children, including those with SEND, are given the opportunity to learn, contribute and participate alongside their peers. In RE, all children are supported in achieving the best to their potential. RE planning is sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and ensures that teaching is appropriate to meet those needs. Planning reflects adaptations that enable children with SEND to fully develop their abilities.

In RE, we:

Effectively use assessment to inform planning

Create opportunities for all children to express their thoughts and ideas and to listen to all children

Use a multisensory approach

Use resources effectively to allow children to reach learning outcomes

Use resources that reflect the diversity of our school

Let children choose how to show what they have learned

Pre-teach of vocabulary and concepts to support understanding

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

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' (Education Act 2002). 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.

## Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices. Through RE, we aim to enhance the children's 'cultural capital' by broadening their knowledge of the world's faiths.

## Community cohesion

RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

- The school 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 subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

## Teaching resources:

At Wormley, we teach from both the Emmanuel Project and Understanding Christianity. We also have created our own SoL for Incarnation and Salvation which supports 'Understanding Christianity'.

**Emmanuel Project:** Autumn 1, Spring 1, Summer 1, Summer 2

**Understanding Christianity:** Autumn 2, Spring 2

Year 1			
	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
RE	Judaism: Belonging Why is learning to do good deeds so important to Jewish people? Christianity: Incarnation (UC) Core Concepts	Christianity: <u>Stories and Books - What did Jesus teach about God in his parables?</u> Christianity: Salvation (UC) Core Concepts	Christianity: Celebrations <u>How does celebrating Pentecost remind Christians that God is with them always?</u> Judaism: Why do Jewish families say so many prayers and blessings?

Using both resources ensures a deep understanding of the Christian faith and the 'Big Story of the Bible' as well as fully exploring other world faiths and drawing comparisons.

We encourage children to notice carefully and deeply, ask questions, wonder and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways: reports, models, drawings, presentations, displays etc.

Learning can be recorded in the children's Creative Logs, Reflective Logs and RE books.

## Teaching Christianity

The teaching staff have all completed training for the new 'Understanding Christianity' programme of learning.

There are 10 core theological concepts and key questions:

GOD - What do Christians believe God is like? (Y1/2) What does it mean if God is holy and loving? (Y5/6)
CREATION - Why is the word God so important to Christians? (EY) Who made the world? (Y1/2) What do Christians learn from the creation story? (Y3/4) Creation and Science: conflicting or complementary? (Y5/6)
THE FALL - How can following God bring freedom and justice?
PEOPLE OF GOD - What is it like to follow God? (Y3/4)
PROPHECY
WISDOM - Was Jesus the Messiah? (Y5/6)
INCARNATION - Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas? (EY) Why does Christmas matter to Christians? (Y1/2) What is the Trinity? (Y3/4) What would Jesus do? (Y5/6)
GOSPEL - What is the good news Jesus brings? (Y1/2) What kind of world did Jesus want? (Y3/4) What did Jesus do to save Human Beings? (Y5/6)
SALVATION - Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? (EY) Why does Easter matter to Christians? (Y1/2) Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (Y3/4) What difference does the resurrection make for Christians? (Y5)
KINGDOM OF GOD - When Jesus left what was the impact of Pentecost? (Y3/4) What kind of king is Jesus? (Y5/6)

Questions are explored in relation to the Bible, the Christian community and wider Christian living. Units of work comprise a 'core learning' section, 6-8 hours of teaching and learning, and an optional 'digging deeper' section with ideas and resources for another 4-6 hours (see SoL).

## Godly Play

We use 'Godly Play' predominantly in Key Stage 1 as an alternative, imaginative approach to RE. It has its roots in Montessori education and uses religious artefacts and models so that children can enter religious stories and imagery using their innate spirituality. A teacher must be open to the unexpected and prepared to learn with the children as well as teach them. The Godly Play approach allows for reflection and slows down the pace of delivery but it doesn't mean the rate of learning is slow. Time is set aside in a Godly Play session for reflection and response. It creates a safe space where children can explore their ideas more deeply and make meanings for themselves. It allows them to 'think big'. Godly Play enables teachers to build a community where children are free to wonder, explore possibilities and learn more about themselves in relation to others. It evokes qualities of reflection, calm and order, approachability and focus. 'Reading' the story through the material presented, promotes sensitivity and respect for the stories and objects of religion.

## Format of the lesson

The lesson follows a regular format, familiar to those who may be involved in worship.

A <b>GATHERING</b> - The children gather in a circle round the material that will tell the story. Entering into the story. The story teller unfolds the story using the objects in the circle. He/she takes plenty of time and focuses on the material.
A <b>TIME OF REFLECTION</b> - The story teller asks wondering questions about the story. For example I wonder which is your favourite part of the story? I wonder which is the most important part of the story? I wonder if we could leave anything out and still have the story we need? I wonder where you are in the story? Which part of the story is about you?
<b>CREATIVE WORK BASED ON THE STORY</b> - Children then have a time to explore their ideas through creative work.
<b>THINKING TIME</b> - Pupils may leave the circle and create a personal response. Pupils choose using for example, paint, clay, papier mache, construction materials, (Lego), collage, junk modelling, poetry, music etc.
<b>PLENARY</b> - A sharing of children's ideas Sending out The children are sent out (to play/lunch/home)





Teachers may teach RE weekly or in blocks. In addition there are whole school RE weeks. They should aim to make learning 'real' through visits, visitors, authentic resources and activities. We use elements of Philosophy for Children (P4C) as a strategy to prompt thinking, questioning and discussion.

**Assessment:**

Teachers assess knowledge and understanding of Incarnation and Salvation by referring to the outcomes detailed in Understanding Christianity as well as knowledge 'building blocks'.

 **OUTCOMES**

**BY THE END OF THIS UNIT, PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO:**

-  Give a clear, simple account of the story of Jesus' birth and why Jesus is important for Christians.
-  Recognise that stories of Jesus' life come from the Gospels.
-  Give examples of ways in which Christians use the story of the nativity to guide their beliefs and actions at Christmas.
-  Decide what they personally have to be thankful for at Christmas time.

 **KNOWLEDGE BUILDING BLOCKS**

**PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT:**

- Christians believe that Jesus is God and that he was born as a baby in Bethlehem.
- The Bible points out that his birth showed that he was extraordinary (for example, he is worshipped as a king, in Matthew) and that he came to bring good news (for example, to the poor, in Luke).
- Christians celebrate Jesus' birth; Advent for Christians is a time of getting ready for Jesus' coming.

Knowledge and understanding of the units learned in the Emanuel Project are also assessed against end of year expectations:

	<b>Attainment Target 1 - Learning about religion and belief</b>			<b>Attainment Target 2 - Learning from religion and belief</b>		
	Strand a) beliefs, teachings and sources	Strand b) practices and ways of life	Strand c) forms of expression	Strand d) identity and belonging	Strand e) meaning, purpose and truth	Strand f) values and commitments

Teachers assess pupil progress against the school's assessment criteria at the end of a unit or the end of an RE week. Assessment can be a whole class or small group activity. It can be gathered from a range of activities: quizzes, writing, art, models, conversations, reflective experiences, role play, mind maps, circle times etc. We also use solo taxonomy as an assessment tool to allow the children to represent the connections they have made in their learning and share their understanding.

