



Chawson First School Religious Education Policy

June 2024

Vision

At Chawson 1st School, our vision is to nurture independent, articulate, and aspirational children through a curriculum that fosters exploration of religions in local, national, and global contexts. In Religious Education (R.E.), we aim to inspire thought, respect, and understanding while addressing profound questions about life, beliefs, morality, and human existence.

1. Our rationale for teaching R.E

Religious Education makes a vital contribution to the education of our children at Chawson 1st School. It enables teachers to foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and engages children in learning about and from religion. Through the study of beliefs and practices children are given the opportunity to think about ultimate questions that concern all of humanity. Children are able to develop skills such as empathy, interpretation, expression and evaluation. RE lessons play a vital role in enhancing the school ethos by fostering attitudes such as self- understanding, enquiry and respect for others.

2. Legal position of R.E

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is Chawson First School Policy on Religious Education based on the Worcestershire LA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document

3. Aims and objectives:

The principal aim of RE at Chawson is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Objectives

1. To enable children to know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, including non-religious views.
2. To allow children to express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, including non-religious views.

3. To gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, including non-religious views.

This is achieved using various teaching methods including drama, role-play, discussions, and visits, catering to different learning styles and abilities. Cross-curricular connections encouraged, promoting meaningful links to other areas of learning.

4. Planning/Teaching

Plans are based around Key Questions to explore religious and non-religious views in terms of:

- **Believing**
(Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth.)
- **Expressing**
(Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.)
- **Living**
(Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments.)

The long-term plan for religious education shows the topics and Key Questions studied each year. This is based on a 'Spiral Curriculum', where children re-visit differing religions and worldviews, including non-religious views, in different year groups, with older children working at a greater depth than younger children. Plans give details of each topic and the relevant Key Questions. Where appropriate, the RE subject leader supports teaching colleagues in each year group.

Teaching

Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Ramadan etc. to develop their religious thinking. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.

Children will learn through a variety of means, such as: acting, creating, enquiring, reflecting, talking, thinking and writing. These include active learning strategies such as drama, role-play, freeze-framing; interpretation of posters, pictures, artefacts; use of ICT, video, display and participation in visits and talking with visitors. Cross curricular work is encouraged in order that children can make meaningful links to other areas of learning.

5. The Curriculum

The curriculum follows the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for all years including Early Years – reception and we make connections for Early Years - preschool.

6. Differentiation

At Chawson we recognise the needs of our children and adapt our lessons accordingly. We provide experiences that often move away from the written towards the aural giving all children an opportunity to express themselves without the need for writing. Through the use of class books these ideas are recorded and valued. When writing takes place, we provide support through the use of word mats and writing frames.

7. Equal opportunities

All pupils' opinions, beliefs and practices are valued and those of minority groups handled with sensitivity. We believe that every pupil should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change and is receptive and respectful towards others. Children are encouraged to recognise that not all members of a particular religion will believe and practice the same things by using the phrase 'some Jewish people/some Christian people' and so on. The new use of the word '**people**' is in line with the new focus on the lives of people with particular beliefs.

The whole school policy on special educational needs and differentiation applies to RE.

8. Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in religious education through formative judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and will comment as necessary

9. Monitoring and evaluation

Each class teacher is responsible for the implementation of R.E. for their class. The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

10. Resources

R.E. is well resourced with a range of artefacts (including booklets giving details of how these are used), books, posters and pictures which enrich the teaching. Computer software and the internet are used to support teaching and learning and the school library has sets of Bibles for both key stages and a good supply of RE books to enhance children's individual research.

11. Other considerations

It is not necessary for a teacher to have a personal religious commitment to successfully teach RE. It is hoped that all teachers will want to teach Religious Education, recognising the distinctive and beneficial aspects of this educational pursuit.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of R.E. Parents must discuss this with the head teacher before making a final decision.

Time Allocation

Teaching of R.E. is statutory. The time allocation in the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus is the minimum set aside at Chawson and is in addition to the time given to collective worship.

The timings are:

Foundation Stage	36 hours/year (about 1 hour per week)
Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)	36 hours/year (about 1 hour per week)
Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)	45 hours/year (about 1 ¼ hours per week)

The timing of RE sessions across the School matches the need to provide a motivating and differentiated RE curriculum with meaningful cross curricular links and this may involve weekly lessons and/or blocks of time being allocated.