

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) incorporated around the principles and values of the international co-operative movement. These are Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility and Solidarity, along with the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. These values and principles underpin all our actions.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

“A major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world”. (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

Thameside Primary is an academy school. We deliver RE in line with the locally agreed syllabus (Thurrock), created by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education).

**Aims of the RE curriculum**

The principal aim of RE 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. Our vision is for every child to become a successful, independent and resilient lifelong learner and a responsible member of the community, prepared for an ever changing world.

We intend that Religious Education will:

* Adopt an enquiry-based approach as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children’s own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion, developing a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
* Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and the Islamic faith, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
* Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
* Enable pupils to build their sense of identify and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
* Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
* Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

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| **How is RE organised in this school?** | | | | | | | |
| RE SYLLABUS  OVERVIEW | Foundation Stage (discovering) | Year 1 (exploring) | Year 2 (exploring) | Year 3 (connecting) | Year 4 (connecting) | Year 5 (connecting) | Year 6 (connecting) |
| Autumn Term  Believing  (religious beliefs, teachings, sources: questions about meaning, purpose and truth) | F1 Which stories are special and why? | 1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? | Who is a Jewish and what do they believe? | L2.1 What do different people believe about God? | L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? | U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? | U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? |
| F2 Which people are special and why? | How and why do we celebrate special and sacred time? | 1.2 Who is Muslim and what do they believe? |  | Why do some people think that life is a journey? What significant experiences mark this? | U2.2 What would Jesus do? Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century? |  |
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| Spring Term  Expressing  (religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity) | F3 What places are special and why? | 1.5 What makes some places sacred? | 1.4 What can we learn from sacred books? | L2.4 Why do people pray? | Why do some people think that life is a journey? What significant experiences mark this? | U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? | U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? |
| F4 What times are special and why? |  | 1.6 how and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? |  |  |  |  |
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| Summer Term  Living  (religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments) | F5 Being special: where do we belong? | 1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? | 1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter? | L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? | What can we learn from religious about deciding what is right and wrong? | U2.6What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? | U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists? |
| F6 What is special about our world? |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**RE in the nursery**

Activities children engage in during their nursery years are experiences which provide the building blocks for later development. Starting with things which are familiar to the children, and providing lots of hands-on activities and learning are an important part of pupil’ learning at this stage. Good teaching in the EYFS will always build on children’s interests and enthusiasms as well as their learning and development needs. Themes which lend themselves to opportunities for RE work include:

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| Myself | People Who Help Us | Special Times |
| My Life | Friendship | Our Community |
| My Senses | Welcome | Special Books |
| My Special Things | Belonging | Stories |
| People Special to Me | Special Places | The Natural World |

**School Context**

Religious representation at Thameside Primary Primary is currently:

Christian: 349

No religion: 173

Other Religion: 19

Catholic: 0

Jewish: 0

Hindu: 22

Muslim: 159

Sikh: 11

Buddhist: 4

Jehova Witness 0

RE is taught, as in other curriculum areas, by starting from the pupils’ own life experiences and relating these to similar or different experiences of other people in the local community and in the wider national and international community. The background of many children therefore appears to be Christian, however the vast majority of pupils appear to have little experience of any strong faith or belief.

**The Learning Environment**

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that they respect each other’s views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care. Children are encouraged to openly discuss their understanding, opinions and attitudes about religion. They are given time to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them and promote their own spiritual growth and development.

A variety of teaching methods are used to teach RE, such as stories, poems, images, artefacts, music and drama. Visitors to our school are encouraged to give children the opportunity to listen to and ask questions about another person’s experiences of living/celebrating through different faiths.

Visits to places of worship and other RE related venues are encouraged as an important part of developing a child’s understanding of the role religion plays in communities. Prior to all visits, staff will carry out a formal risk assessment and visit the venue beforehand. Staff will ensure that the context of the learning that will take place during the visit, will not undermine a child’s own faith or challenge their belief and will only be presenting a knowledge base about a faith. Permission will be sought from parents/carers for each child to attend the visit. Both key stages make yearly visits to St Peter and St Paul’s Church to celebrate Harvest and Christmas festivals.

**Resources**

Resources are stored in the central resource area. Each religion has a labelled storage box containing a collection of relevant teaching and children’s books, images and artefacts. Further books are available to pupils in the school library. We borrow further materials from the School Library Service when appropriate. All materials should be handled very sensitively and with respect. The Thurrock RE syllabus is electronically available to all staff through the shared drive for weekly lessons to be planned to ensure the statutory requirements of teaching RE are met.

**Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas**

**English**

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We use texts with religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, which promotes speaking and listening.

**Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship**

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

**Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Through RE and assemblies in school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

**Equal Opportunities**

Every child is entitled to be taught RE regardless of their age, culture, gender, background or special need or disability. RE develops a balanced view of the multi-cultural society which we live in without compromising the faith, non-faith or cultural background of any pupil. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. 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.

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE syllabus. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

* Response to RE comments on reports
* Weekly newsletters
* Half termly curriculum overviews on the school website
* Displays

**Assessment**

As RE involves a process of personal development and emerging/changing views, it is difficult to formally assess. Often the effectiveness or importance of an experience cannot be measured. Teachers should therefore, assess what pupils know about religions, what their attitudes are to religions and how well they are able to express their own views and feelings towards other religions. This is formally reported to parents as part of the child’s end of year report.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

The RE leader is responsible for co-ordinating the teaching of RE throughout the school, providing support and resources to members of staff, monitoring the teaching of RE and outcomes for all children. They monitor the delivery of this subject through planning, discussions with teaching staff, as well as pupil interviews and scrutiny of their work to ensure consistency, continuity and progression of the areas taught throughout the school. The results of any monitoring is discussed with the Head teacher and any actions resulting from this will be acted upon within a given time frame. Evaluation of the syllabus’ effectiveness is reviewed in staff meetings through sharing experiences.

**Training and support for staff**

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.