



**Moulsham**

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Junior School

# **Religious Education & Collective Worship Policy**

*Sharing, Supporting, Striving, Succeeding*

Date of Policy: February 2021  
Next review: Spring 2025

## **Religious Education**

### **1. Our intent:**

*At Moulsham Junior School, our aim is simple. The principle aim of RE is to learn from and about religion to help them understand the world around them. It promotes respect and open-mindedness towards others by recognising and celebrating cultural diversity. This is achieved using engaging, cross curricular activities that will help to make stronger connections and help to see how religions assimilate within the world. During these activities, children are encouraged to ask questions and to reflect on their own values and beliefs, which will hopefully result in developing well-rounded individuals.*

### **2. Introduction**

Moulsham Junior School is made up of staff and pupils who originate from different nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a school, we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment including new arrivals.

We believe that Religious Education provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school and the wider world. It is a subject that celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes.

### **3. Provision of RE**

RE is taught in accordance with the Religious Education in Essex Scheme (REExplore). Typically, this will be a weekly 1-hour session each week if the block is being delivered discretely. However, as the school is taking a topic-based approach this allows for RE to be the main subject across a whole half-term block. Therefore, allowing for a much wider, richer and diverse learning experience within this subject alongside the discrete sessions. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions.

RE studying includes 'learning about' and 'from religion', questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

It is important to stress that learning about and from religion does not mean learning to be religious and our aim is not to convert pupils or urge a particular religious viewpoint on them. In accordance with the law, we provide RE for all pupils of the school. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE lessons through discussion and agreement with the Headteacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from teaching RE.

#### **4. Teaching and Learning**

In accordance with the RExplore Essex Syllabus for RE, we will teach 7 major religions: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islamic, Buddhism, Sikhism and Humanism. We focus on Christianity as the main religion:

Planning for Religious Education is based on the two Attainment Targets in the agreed syllabus:

- 1) Learning **about** Religions
- 2) Learning **from** Religions

Learning **about** religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impact on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning **from** religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

The second of these Attainment Targets is achieved through realising the first. It is important therefore to acknowledge the independence of learning **about** and learning **from** religion in order to ensure effective RE teaching. For example, exploring places special to religious believers could lead to consideration of pupils' special places or vice versa.

#### **5. Equal Opportunities**

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN, EAL or G & T are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of RE we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our staff, pupils and parents in order to make RE relevant and interesting to all our pupils. When appropriate, important festivals are celebrated from different religions within the school and wider community.

#### **6. Skills**

Through RE, children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Wherever possible links are made between RE and other curriculum subjects when taught discretely or embedded as the lead subject across a topic:

*A further breakdown regarding the specifics of what each Year group covers is in the RE Curriculum Proforma document.*

RE is a key opportunity for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. In RE, as well as CPSHE, children are invited to reflect on their responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important. We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

RE also supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider context, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

## **7. Outcomes in Children's Learning**

These are the outcomes we aspire to:

- That children will take a positive view of RE and increase their interest in the subject.
- That they will develop a knowledge and understanding about Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Humanism.
- That their study of other people and their beliefs will enable them to respect others as well as develop their own beliefs and values
- Opportunities to develop other key skills such as listening, reading, writing, working with others, communication, computing skills, application of number and problem solving.

## **8. Assessing Pupils**

Assessment will take place at the end of every term when teachers will assess pupils knowledge and understanding of the unit that they have studied. This will be through observation, discussion and marking of work. Pupils are guided about what they have done well, what they need to improve and ways in which they might make that improvement.

## **9. Monitoring of the Policy**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the RE subject leader in the following ways:

- Undertaking planning and learning scrutinies
- Undertaking pupil perception interviews
- Evaluating and auditing the use of resources

The results of all these monitoring activities are shared with the Senior Curriculum Leader and Governors.

## **Collective Worship**

### **1. Rationale**

School worship is an affirmation and celebration of the values and ethos of the school.

### **2. Aims & Objectives**

Through our collective worship we aim to:

- Introduce children to language and symbolism within religion.
- Collective worship is mainly of a broad Christian character, whilst reflecting the religious background reflected in our community.
- To help create a warm community spirit, within the school and beyond.
- Strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the British values of the school.
- To help generate a culturally and spiritually nurturing atmosphere.
- Encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them.
- Foster a concern for others within the school and wider world.
- Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

We aim to be an inclusive school and offer equality of opportunity and diversity when needed to all groups of pupils within school.

We value, seek to understand, and identify the potential in everyone. Through collective worship we promote values, which include British values, our school rights and our school (sharing, supporting, striving, succeeding)

### **3. Legal Framework and Right of Withdrawal**

The law says that there must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude. (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements will be made to accommodate these children.

#### **4. Organisation**

We hold a daily act of collective worship in school. This may either form part of an assembly, which could be whole school or class based, or an act of reflection within a classroom.

Worship is led by a member of staff but other church leaders or representatives of religious groups may also be invited to lead worship from time to time, and also invited guests.

In our Collective Worship and RE lessons, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's views, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We hold special times to share our learning with each other, in school once a year a class takes assembly and at Christmas and Easter, parents are invited to join us for these excellent times of worship and praise. We recognise and rejoice in the number of other faiths that are represented in the school community and we seek ways to experience and learn from them.

#### **5. How Worship is planned**

We use a range of approaches in worship. We tell stories, both from the Bible and from other sources; we sing a variety of hymns and songs; we use music, signs and symbols. We seek to create an atmosphere of holiness in a variety of ways, sometimes in quietness and stillness, sometimes in noise and movement.

School assemblies will incorporate singing and time for prayer/reflection.

Once a week, we use assembly time to celebrate the achievements and learning of the children. We also use this assembly to reward children for achievements both in and out of school. These celebration assemblies, play an important part in recognising the unique worth of every member of the school community.