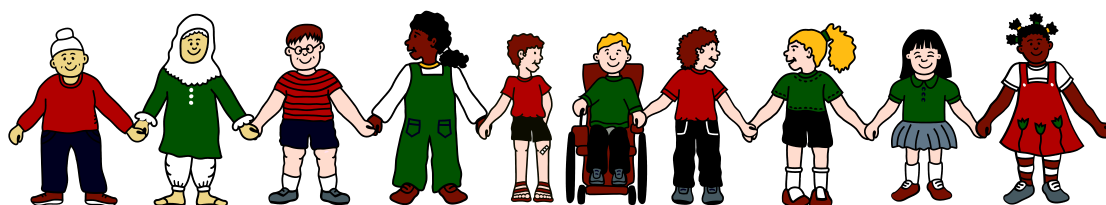


**THE GILES
NURSERY
AND
INFANTS' SCHOOL**



Religious Education Report for Governors

2022/2023

**Religious Education (RE) Report for Governors
2022/2023**

by Curriculum Leader: Lisa Dacombe

Governor: Badrun Khanom

The aim of our RE curriculum is to ensure that:

- it engages, inspires, and encourages pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to explore different religious beliefs, values and traditions and develop a more rigorous understanding of the numerous religious traditions, beliefs and practices that are followed in our multi-cultural society
- pupils know how religious education promotes discernment and enables them to combat prejudice, preparing them for adult life, employment, and life-long learning
- pupils should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to the six main faiths taught in school
- pupils are given opportunities to express their personal experiences

The role of the RE curriculum leader is to ensure the aims of RE are delivered throughout the school, enabling the pupils to develop their knowledge, and understanding and make progress in this subject. At present, teachers use the 'Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2017/2022' and the 'Hertfordshire scheme of work for RE 2012/17', which sets out a programme of progression of knowledge and understanding for RE. This syllabus is to be replaced from September 2023.

The role of the curriculum leader is to monitor the quality of teaching and the curriculum that is being taught across the school, to ensure a creative and spiral curriculum that is accessible to all pupils and supports those pupils who are disadvantaged or have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This is achieved through our school monitoring cycle which includes lesson observations, work scrutiny, display monitoring and photographic evidence. Photographic evidence is displayed in the RE photographic evidence file. All other evidence is kept in the RE curriculum file, which is monitored by the head teacher each academic year. Pupils are also involved in the monitoring of RE through the collection of pupil voice from each year group. Further monitoring takes place through curriculum leader reports, which are shared with curriculum link governors.

Curriculum intent:

Throughout the school, teachers plan a creative cross-curriculum ensuring that learning happens in a sequential and progressive manner. The curriculum hooks pupils' interests and enables them to build on and embed prior knowledge and skills they have acquired. This year the curriculum objectives have been delivered through the following topics and areas of learning.

The 'Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE' sets out eight key areas which aim to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding through eight programmes of study:

- beliefs and practices
- sources of wisdom

- symbols and actions
- prayer, worship, and reflection
- identity and belonging
- human responsibility and values
- ultimate questions
- justice and fairness

For the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the pupils encounter Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school, and community. RE supports a growing sense of the pupils' awareness of self, their own community, and their place within this.

For Years 1 and 2, the pupils focus mainly on two religions but encounter the other main religions during the year. Year 1 focuses on the faiths of Christianity and Judaism and Year 2 focuses on Christianity and Islam.

Year 2 autumn term

- nature and God: focusing on the Creation story, Harvest, the importance of caring for people, animals, and nature

Year 2 spring term

- places of worship: discovering key features of different places of worship and the different ceremonies which take place in these religious buildings. Pupils visit St Nicholas church to discover signs and symbols linked to Christianity

Year 2 summer term

- faith ceremonies: focusing on religious symbols, beliefs, and practices and why they are important to those faiths

Year 1 autumn term

- awe and wonder: focusing on the natural world through music and art
- Harvest: looking at how harvest is celebrated by Christians and the Jewish community linked to the natural world. Pupils write prayers thanking God for nature and linking their prayers to the Creation story
- Hanukkah: linking to festivals of light and why this festival is important to the Jewish community, looking at symbols and prayers
- Christmas: discovering why light is a symbol linked to the birth of Jesus and to God. Pupils in Year 1 visit All Saints church to act out the Nativity story

Year 1 spring term

- belonging and community: focusing on the importance of belonging to groups such as a class, school, or a club in the community. Mrs. Edwards shows the pupils her

Beaver leader uniform and her sash from when she was a girl guide as a child. Pupils are encouraged to bring in a uniform of a group they belong to

- giving up something for love: pupils respond to stories and real life examples of how and why people show care and concern for humanity and the world. Pupils reflect on ideas about what is right and wrong and consider how spiritual and moral values influence the behaviour and choices of themselves and of others
- Easter: focusing on why this festival is important to Christians and looking at how symbols convey meaning

Year 1 summer term

- special religious books: focusing on sacred books of different religions. Pupils listen to stories from different faiths and can bring in a book which is special to them

Reception autumn term

- Harvest: focusing on the importance of why people celebrate harvest in the community, helping others less fortunate than ourselves. Pupils find out why animals gather food such as berries and seeds at this time of year
- Diwali: focusing on why a candle is an important symbol for Sikhs and Hindus and looking at symbols of Hinduism on a Hindu shrine. Reception pupils listen to the Diwali story of 'Rama and Sita' and participate in a day of activities linked to this festival
- Christmas: focusing on what Christians do in the lead up to celebrating Christmas and understanding why Christians celebrate Christmas. Pupils create a story map of the Nativity story and use the story map to retell the story in their own words

Reception spring term

- weddings: focusing on weddings and the importance of the ceremony and the promises a couple make. Pupils take part in acting out a wedding ceremony and create their own promises based on caring for one another. Pupils are encouraged to bring in photographs of their parents', relatives', or friends' wedding to be displayed in the classroom and to discuss their own experiences
- Lunar New Year: pupils listen to the Lunar New Year story and participate in a day of activities linked to this festival
- Creation story: pupils look at the Creation story through art, poetry, and music.
- Palm Sunday and Easter: pupils listen to a bible reading of Jesus riding into Jerusalem. They reflect on the story by looking at the painting by Christopher Gosey. Pupils listen to the Easter story and discuss aspects of the story and the characters and look at the different symbols which represent Easter

Reception summer term

- treating the world fairly: pupils look at how to treat others fairly through religious stories and discuss the pupils' thoughts on how to deal with moral issues

- prayer and reflection: pupils consider the importance of prayer and why people pray in special places. Pupils look at special places in the home, school, and community
- God and other big questions: pupils discuss their thoughts and ideas of how the world was created and why God is important to Christians

Nursery autumn term

- celebrations: pupils look at aspects of a celebration. The pupils focus on the celebrations of Rosh Hashanah, Harvest, Diwali, Teddy's birthday, and Christmas

Nursery spring term

- belonging: pupils look at belonging to a family, group, class, and school. They identify belonging by discussing their family, the group they are in, Ladybird class and look at the school logo on a jumper and book bag to identify the school they belong to
- Lunar New Year: pupils listen to the Lunar New Year story and participate in a week of activities linked to this festival
- Easter: pupils look for signs of spring in the school grounds, linking it to new life and the Easter story

Nursery summer term

- friends: pupils discuss the importance of friendship and what makes a good friend linked to the Hindu ceremony, Raksha Bandhan. The pupils look at ways to help a friend and of working together with a friend

Implementation:

Overview of this year so far: progress towards the implementation of the RE curriculum 2022-23

The school continues to use the 'Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of RE 2017/22' and the 'Hertfordshire scheme of work 2012/17' for teaching RE. This past year the staff at The Giles Nursery and Infants' School reviewed the RE curriculum and slimmed down the key vocabulary used across each age group. Pupils have continued to enjoy the learning taking place in RE lessons by developing their knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses. Teachers deliver an RE curriculum which is taught in a rich and varied way with strong cross-curricular links to other subjects. The starting point of each unit aims to hook the pupils' interests and provides opportunities for pupils to express their personal experiences linked to their faith. From time to time key stage 1 staff use Purple Mash to set homework including RE which links to the learning that is taking place in the classroom.

The RE curriculum is cross-curricular and the teachers at the school bring this subject to life with rich and exciting lessons. Teachers feel it is important to draw upon the pupils' own personal experiences, encouraging them to recall and reflect on their experiences and linking this to family life and life within the community. During the beginning of each RE

topic, the teachers will use a variety of ways to hook the pupils. This may be through a story, showing artifacts or photographs. These hooks have been shown to be effective when engaging the pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

In February of this year, as the curriculum leader for RE, staff in primary schools in Stevenage met in subject's curriculum groups. These meetings provide opportunities for curriculum leaders to share ideas, inform each other of useful resources to support the teaching of RE and provide up to date news on the RE curriculum. In May of last year each curriculum leader from the Infants' School met with the curriculum leader from the Giles Junior School and discussed the subject's journey from EYFS to the end of key stage 2. The curriculum leader for RE from the junior school was invited to come and observe staff from the infants but unfortunately was unable to attend.

During the school year at twilight sessions, the curriculum maps and curriculum journeys were updated to reflect any changes to the curriculum. Key vocabulary was slimmed down in each year group to ensure that it is age-related and progressive as the pupils move through the school. Vocabulary from the previous year was updated on the curriculum journeys to ensure that each year group can recap and continue to model the previously taught vocabulary. Year groups will continue to discuss the key vocabulary with all staff in the classrooms before starting a new topic so that all staff can model the correct subject vocabulary. Key vocabulary from the previous year's group has also been added to planning across the school so that staff can see which vocabulary to recap and which to model when teaching. This ensures that our enriching spiral curriculum can be maintained, along with the strong thread of continuity that runs throughout the school.

Whole school moderation of all subjects are planned to take place across this school year. Subject deep dive is a marvellous opportunity to share evidence of the learning in RE, observe how staff deliver RE and gain an insight to the pupil's knowledge of RE from Nursery through to year 2.

A deep dive for RE took place in May of last year with staff in each year group being observed. All the lessons observed showed the staff were keen to draw on the pupils' personal experiences and prior learning. After the lesson observations, a selection of pupils were asked to share their work and talked about what they had learnt. It was clear from the discussions which took place with the pupils, they were keen to share what they had learnt, and showed an understanding of their learning, recalling prior work with enthusiasm. During each discussion the use of key vocabulary was noted. Staff in each age group spoke about how the children were interested in listening to their peers speak about a personal religious experience and how interested they were if a pupil brought in an item of interest linked to their faith.

The 'Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2017/22' has recently been reviewed by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) in 2022. The launch of the primary RE syllabus is to take place towards the end of April and will be statutory from September 2023. RE curriculum leaders will be updated on the national changes and developments, both in RE and in education since the previous syllabus published back in 2017. In particular,

the new RE syllabus is to reflect on the emphasis being placed on what is called the 'worldviews approach' to RE.

The RE policy was reviewed and updated in February 2023 and will be reviewed February 2028.

In early years, RE focuses on promoting a language-rich learning environment, encouraging pupils to talk about occasions which have been special to them such as the birth of a sibling or a family wedding. They enjoy participating in practical activities linked to a festival. Role-play areas are set up to allow the pupils the opportunity to recreate occasions which are special to them. Pupils discover through listening to their peers how a festival is celebrated at home with members of their family. They learn how their peers may do things differently to them, such as eating food, dressing up in special clothes or visiting a place of worship. Pupils find out some of their peers may celebrate an occasion at a time they do not, such as Hindu and Sikh pupils celebrating Diwali. They are able to respond to celebrations through music and dance, such as dancing to celebrate Lunar New year or playing musical instruments to celebrate Christmas.

Throughout the year staff note pupil voice linked to special occasions. Here are examples of pupil voice from Nursery and Reception from the past year.

Nursery

When making her Easter bonnet, Rose-Marie mentioned during the Easter bonnet activity, "I make pink, green, pink, green."

The pupils in Nursery celebrated the Jewish new year 'Rosh Hashanah' They listened to the story of 'Apples and Honey' by Jonny Zucker. The pupils loved trying apple slices dipped in honey for a special snack, Ivy commented, 'It's yummy, the honey is sweet!'

When the pupils celebrated Teddy's 4th birthday, they had an exciting week preparing for and celebrating Teddy's 4th birthday. Darcie found one of her favourite stories and said, "I'm going to read it to Teddy, it's my favourite." Joey cut the cake and asked Teddy "Would you like a slice?", Ella said, "I like being at Teddy's party, there are special biscuits," and Irina enjoyed dancing and exclaimed, "This is so much fun!"

The pupils loved Santa's workshop in the nursery role play area. They enjoyed writing a special Christmas card, practised wrapping presents and wrote out gift tags. Ivy commented, "Santa's elves are great, they help Santa to wrap the presents, we can be elves!" and Muna commented, "I'm making a card for everyone, it's kind to give presents."

When celebrating Lunar New Year in nursery, the pupils enjoyed the story 'Cleversticks' by Bernard Ashley. They were eager to have a try at using chopsticks to eat noodles. Mya Jae commented, "These noodles are fantastic!" The pupils had a wonderful time in the Chinese takeaway role-play area, taking on a role as a shop keeper or customer. Isla enjoyed serving her friends and said, "your food will be ready soon, I'm cooking it."

Reception

After the pupils listened to children's prayers from the six main faiths linked to peace, each class worked together to compose their own class prayer.

Barn Owls:

Please keep the plants alive with our precious hearts,
Let us have kind hands for our friends,
Be kind to animals and pets,
Be safe in our home and at school,
Let us love our friends, family as pets as we love our world.

Tawny Owls:

Be kind to our friends,
Be kind and look after all the animals,
Let us look after our friends who are poorly,
Love our family,
Keep the plants happy and keep them watered,
And keep the flowers watered.

Snowy Owls:

Be kind to our friends,
Look after the plants,
Love our family,
Look after the animals and our pets,
Be happy at school.

When reflecting on Diwali, the pupils recalled the story of Rama and Sita. In RE, the children reflected on Diwali and recalled the story Rama and Sita. The pupils sat around the edge of the carpet whilst a candle was placed in the centre and reflected on how a candle made them feel. Bella said, "The candle reminds me of Rama and Sita, when they were going home."

During the period leading up to Christmas when discussing why Christians around the world celebrate Christmas, Ava in Barn Owl class said, "So you can get presents and see the elves!" and Nadia in Tawny Owl class said, "We have to take care of family." The pupils created Nativity story maps and it generated some lovely quotes from the pupils. Sabah said, "The Wise Men brought perfume," Zenny class said, "After baby Jesus had been born, an angel appeared to the sheep-men and said, "There's a new King been born,"" and Fred said, "The Wise Men brought baby Jesus gold, frankin-smell and myrrh."

At the start of the spring term the pupils focused on weddings and were asked why people get married. Mila in said, "They just want a baby and they like the look of each other!" The pupils discussed aspects of the wedding ceremony and thought of promises the bride and groom could make. Zenny in said the groom could promise to "keep her safe." The pupils acted out a simple wedding ceremony. The bride was escorted to the altar by the father of the bride and supported by bridesmaids and page boys. The vicar welcomed the children

and asked the bride and groom to make promises to each other. When Bella was pretending to be the vicar and she said to the groom, "Will you stay and love her all the time?"

Towards the end of January, the pupils celebrated Lunar New Year and the pupils in Reception participated in a range of activities to include dancing, writing in Chinese, and experiencing using chopsticks. Kalanne said, "Look the noodles are dangling from the chopsticks. It was so hard to pick them up!"

In Years 1 and 2, lessons have a cross-curricular approach for RE. Teachers value the importance of providing a kinesthetic approach to learning, thus enabling many pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged opportunities to access the RE curriculum. The staff include music and art to be linked to the teaching of RE. In addition, the Year 1 pupils use the woodland area as part of the topic of 'Awe and Wonder' by collecting sticks and leaves and created a natural art picture.

In Year 2 the pupils watch a presentation about Remembrance Day. They found out why the poppy is a symbol of remembrance and how Remembrance Day is commemorated.

Year 2 pupils celebrated Diwali by making diva lamps and rangoli patterns. They also took part in a Diwali dance workshop and showed off their wonderful dance moves. Finley said, "The workshop was fun, and I got to learn different dance moves!"

Music is used as a form of expression in RE. Pupils in Year 1 listen to Louis Armstrong's 'What a Wonderful World' when focusing on aspects of the natural world and use musical instruments to create the sequence of a day after listening to the story of 'The First Musician'. In early years the pupils respond to music when celebrating festivals. In Reception, the pupils listen to 'The Creation of the World' by Hector Perez when focusing on the Creation Story.

RE has a cross-curricular link to English. In Reception, the pupils act out the Creation poem by James Wheldon Johnson. In Year 1 the pupils write prayers thanking God for the natural world and in Year 2, the staff encourage discussion amongst pupils, leading them to reflect and challenge aspects of RE and ask deep and meaningful questions about spiritual and moral issues.

The school maintains good links with the community. Bridge Builders continue to lead assemblies for pupils in key stage 1 and throughout the year as curriculum leader for RE, I lead assemblies linked to the six main faiths.

In order to implement our RE curriculum successfully, progress towards targets 2022/23 were as follows:

Subject moderations and subject deep dives take place over a period of time. Moderations/deep dives are a fantastic opportunity to share evidence of the learning in RE that has taken place across the school throughout the year. During a deep dive evidence of learning is collected along with photographs, pupil voice and pupil work.

Photographic evidence continues to be collected and updated from all year groups. It is presented by year group, displaying the RE learning opportunities that pupils had across the school.

Year 1 were able to celebrate the 'Christmas at Church' with the pupils dressing up as characters from the Nativity. Year 2 had a virtual learning experience linked to the 'Christmas Journey'. The pupils watched a series of videos and learnt about the different people involved in the Nativity. After each video, the pupils completed a craft activity to help them remember the story.

When necessary, each year group updates resources linked to the topics they teach for RE. At present, none of the staff have indicated they need any RE resources to be replaced.

Impact

The quality of RE teaching is monitored through observations in each year group. Observations show pupils are seen to be consistently building on previously learnt skills and knowledge, which have clearly been embedded. This is evident from observation and the quality of work in books and folders.

Monitoring is tracked through a whole-school template to schedule regular observations, the scrutiny and moderating of work to ensure consistency and to collect photographic evidence. Photographic evidence is collated and added to the RE photographic evidence file. Photographs are also collected from subject folders on the school server. Pupil voice is collected by the curriculum lead regularly across year groups.

The governor with responsibility for RE meets annually with the curriculum leader and a report is shared. Governors also take part in learning walks throughout the year.

On the school website for parents can view the RE curriculum map and journey. The action plan for RE can be found on the school website. Parents are kept informed of what RE is being taught across year groups when reading the weekly newsletter.

All staff analyse and track pupils' learning in RE. The school is in the process of familiarizing themselves with new online assessment procedures (Arbor). The acting assistant head has created a spreadsheet for key stage 1 staff to complete twice a year (spring and summer). This format will be used until Arbor has created marksheets for all subjects. Pupils working at expected level are levelled as EXS, if they are working slightly below expected they are considered working towards and are levelled as WTS. Pupils working significantly below expected levelled as PRE. Pupils who demonstrate a very good understanding through their work are levelled as GDS. RE in early years is part of the area of learning called 'understanding the world (people, culture and communities)'. Staff in early years use this method of levelling when nursery and reception pupils. During the year, reception teachers upload RE data onto Arbor under this heading and subsection. Data for the end of a pupils' time in the EYFS is submitted to County towards the end of June. Pupils are leveled as follows: if a pupil has achieved an ELG in people and communities, they achieve a '2'; if they are working below ELG, a pupil is given a '1'.

Moving forward: Actions for 2022/23

- carry out planned observations in RE across the school
- carry out planned review activities in RE through pupil voice
- continue to collate photographic evidence of displays and pupils' work
- oversee workshops if support is required
- review resources and update as and when required
- implement new assessment procedures when marksheets are available on Arbor
- continue to attend RE cluster meetings with other primary schools in Stevenage

Completed: March 2023