



Portreath School Subject Statement revised Autumn 2024

Subject: RE Leader: Lucie Clarke

“RE is like an iceberg. As you unpack ideas, you come to understand deeper meaning.”

Religious Education (RE) is a **compulsory subject** in the state education system in England, despite it not being part of the national curriculum. Schools are required to teach a programme of religious studies according to local and national guidelines. As well as being part of obligation, we believe much can be gained from RE lessons and at Portreath school we have devised a curriculum which embodies the elements of our school moto: Be curious, creative and courageous to grow and make a difference.

Curiosity: Religious education invites students to explore the wide range of religious beliefs, traditions, and practices that exist across different cultures and societies. This naturally fosters curiosity, as students are encouraged to ask questions about life's big issues, such as the nature of existence, the purpose of life, morality, and the concept of worship. Curiosity is further stimulated as they explore how different people and cultures interpret these fundamental questions differently, opening their minds to new perspectives.

Creativity: Religious education promotes creativity by encouraging students to reflect on religious stories, texts, and teachings in new and imaginative ways. As they encounter diverse religious narratives, art, music, and symbolism, students are invited to think critically and creatively about how these elements relate to their own experiences and the wider world. Creative thinking can also be applied when they explore how religious ideas influence literature, art, and culture.

Courage: Religious education encourages students to engage with complex and often challenging topics such as morality, suffering, justice, and faith. It takes courage to confront and question personal beliefs, especially when faced with perspectives that challenge one's own. RE fosters the courage to listen respectfully to others, engage in deep discussions, and stand by one's values while being open to dialogue and change.

In summary, religious education promotes **curiosity** by encouraging enquiry into diverse worldviews, **creativity** through engagement with religious symbols and ideas, and **courage** by inspiring students to confront complex and often sensitive subjects.

We have identified 7 **golden threads** that are the key concepts that weave throughout our history curriculum. They are: **Beliefs influence life; Books and stories; Learning about and Respecting Beliefs ; Self-reflection ; Significant Individuals, Local Area, Festivals, Objects and Places.**

These threads start in the EYFS and link the learning in RE together across the school. They help the children to make connections. By considering these threads when



planning the EYFS team start to 'plant the seed' of these concepts and prepare the children for their journey in KS1 and 2. The children can develop so many of the key skills needed at a very early age. For example, in EYFS, children starting to accept that other people's points of view (beliefs) may be different to theirs is a key strand which is developed. Listening to and discussing stories from a wide range of cultures and faiths promotes curiosity in and empathy with all people – a solid building block for the foundations of RE.

Learning about religion and learning from religion are important for all pupils, as religious education (RE) helps pupils develop an understanding of themselves and others. RE promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of individuals and of groups and communities. Good teaching of RE will inspire in pupils a curiosity, fascination and understanding about the values, beliefs and traditions of people around the world – including themselves.

Key Aims

- Development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions and how these can impact on individual's worldview.
- Encouragement of pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are 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.
- To enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- Teaches pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- To 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.

Key Concepts We Explore

- People believe different things, and this influences their worldview and how they live their lives
- Some people belong to a religion and this religion guides what they believe and how they live their lives
- Certain places, people, objects, journeys and books/stories are significant to people because of their religion or beliefs and should be respectful of this
- Festivals are used to celebrate, remember or explore certain beliefs and events
- Everyone should show respect, tolerance and understanding of other people's beliefs
- Many religions have a god but not all



- Different religions can teach us different things and we can learn from religions even if we are not religious
- Values such as forgiveness, love, hope, peace, compassion and generosity are important

It is clear to us as a school that religious education is not religious instruction. The “material” of religious education stands separately as an object for study and exploration and, as such, the personal beliefs of the pupils and teachers are “irrelevant”. It is every pupil’s entitlement to have access to the key concepts underpinning religions and beliefs whether they are of that tradition or not. Some children have never left Cornwall which is one of the reasons that it is so important for the children to receive high quality R.E , it is one of the ways we can help to invest in the cultural capital of all children , to open their eyes to the wider world and explore traditions and beliefs they may not have come into contact with before.

Curriculum Design

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus 2020 – 2025. RE is taught in half term blocks with RE being timetabled to usually be taught once a week, however sometimes it is taught as a block over a few days if that is more appropriate. Due to mixed year groups in year 3, 4 and 5 we have a two-year rolling programme for Birch Class and Oak Class. The religions studied in KS 2 include Christianity, Hinduism, Islam Judaism, along with world views such as humanism. In KS1 the religions covered include Christianity, Islam and Judaism. We also recognise the uniqueness of Cornwall and there are opportunities in each key stage to include a study called Curriculum Kernwek which specifically focuses on religion and spirituality in Cornwall.

In line with the agreed syllabus, over a year no less than **60%** of the input should be based on **Christianity** and no more than **40%** on the **other religion** studied during that year.

We use “Understanding Christianity” and the Cornwall agreed syllabus “Non – Christian units of work” to guide our teaching.

As well as being taught through discrete lessons and topics, RE is explored through other subjects and in relation to current issues and events happening on a global, national and local scale. As teachers, we make use of opportunities for exploration and discussion wherever we can.

Resources

A key golden thread we have running through RE is the role of books and stories; another is about significant people and a third mentions the importance of objects (artefacts): to ensure these are to the forefront we have a very good selection of artefacts associated with each of the religions studied as well as a good quantity of books about the different religions and the story books pertaining to a wide range of



religious backgrounds. Our timeline of 100 people to meet through the school includes people the children will “meet” in their RE journey.

Training

The RE lead takes part in the Crofty network meetings and cascades relevant training during staff meetings and INSET. Teachers have, and are encouraged to update themselves with, documents explaining key beliefs etc of each of the religions studied and are signposted to relevant training and CPPD. The subject lead has completed training about the Implementation of the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus (2020 – 2025) and also 15 hours of training in relation to the “Understanding Christianity” resources.

Next Steps

- Full implementation of the new curriculum in all year groups.
- RE lead to start to become familiar with the 2025 -2030 Cornwall Agree Syllabus
- Reactivation of knowledge taught this year and in previous years (introduction of knowledge organisers and learning leaves.)
- Monitoring of implementation of new curriculum
- Ensuring a range of visitors and visits are included to enhance the learning in RE. Where this is not able to happen then high-quality videos will be used.