



SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



"Religion is the clearest telescope through which we can behold the beauties of creation." W.M. Downey

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INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of religious education taught and learnt at Shobnall Primary & Nursery School.

The policy has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and its implementation is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the religious education subject leader.

The main purposes of this policy are:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils.
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school.

VISION

“At Shobnall Primary & Nursery School, our vision is for our young people to understand that life is precious and that it is important to cherish themselves and others, to build a strong sense of their own value and identity and be the best people they can be. We would like them to challenge those in authority to make the world a safe and better place, and believe high quality Religious Education can help equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes with which to do this.”

PRINCIPLES

QUALITY	We aim for our pupils to have an outstanding level of religious understanding and knowledge across a range of beliefs. They have exceptional independence; the ability to think for themselves and take the initiative in asking questions, carrying out investigations, evaluating ideas and working constructively with others. Pupils will demonstrate significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity, which are shown in their responses to learning in RE.
QUERY	Our children have a strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together. They have the ability to link the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose.
QUESTION	We ensure our pupils have a thorough engagement with a range of ultimate questions about the meaning and significance of existence. They have the ability to ask significant and highly reflective questions about religion and demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues related to the nature, truth and value of religion.

THEORY UNDERPINNING OUR PRACTICE AND PRINCIPLES

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’. 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).

Although educators make different claims about the purpose of RE, it is nonetheless vital for subject leaders, curriculum designers and teachers to be aware of different types of knowledge in RE. Without this awareness, misconceptions about the nature of religion can be taught. These misconceptions can be based on claims (for example, 'only loving religion is true religion') that are unwarranted by high standards of academic scholarship. A lack of consideration of the nature of knowledge can also result in pupils' misunderstandings about the credibility of religion (for example, 'science is about facts; religion is about opinions'), as well as the difference between types of knowledge in RE and in other subjects.

The importance of recognising different types of knowledge is also clear when thinking about the types of tasks pupils carry out in RE. For instance, when teachers plan for pupils to construct a response to a statement or question, there are at least 2 forms of subject-specific knowledge in operation: a knowledge of the topic that is being discussed and knowledge about the mode of enquiry that is being asked through the question. This is particularly important given different expectations about what constitutes an 'argument' in RE.

So, although the building of subject-specific knowledge may not be sufficient for every possible suggested aim for RE, it is necessary and beneficial for a range of purposes.

3 types of knowledge

These broad types of knowledge are 'pillars of progression' within RE. 'Getting better' at RE both at primary and secondary level comprises knowing more and remembering more of these pillars as they are set out within the RE curriculum:

- first, '**substantive**' knowledge: knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions
- second, '**ways of knowing**': pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion
- third, '**personal knowledge**': pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study

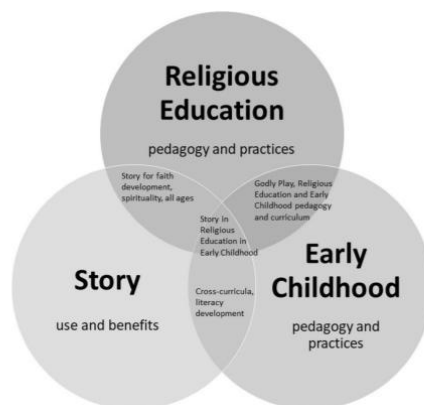
In high-quality RE curriculums, these 3 types of knowledge are not artificially separated from each other.

"RE should begin by helping the student to understand the world-views that religions propagate and to deconstruct these before building world-views of their own. Lying at the heart of this approach is the belief that the job of education is to allow an individual to make meaning about themselves and the world. Much of previous religious pedagogy is seen as oppressive as it aims to construct a world-view for the student, not allowing them to construct their own. In order to develop this world-view, students must be given the tools to deconstruct the narratives with which they are already familiar. This is a strong post-modern approach to equal validity and truth claims which treats religious, spiritual, humanist and secular narratives as equally valid world-views." (Erricker, Clive Reconstructing Religious, Spiritual and Moral Education, 2000).

"RE should be involved in the experiences of religion and religious practice, using the senses and extensive use of role-play, drama, dance and other sensate activities. This approach develops the idea of experiencing the traditions and the phenomena of religion. With a strong focus on multi-sensory approaches, the key aim will be for the students to focus on, and

respond to, the spiritual dimensions of life. Lessons will be very 'hands on' and include guided fantasy, reflection, meditation, drama and role-play." (Hay, David & Hammond, John, New methods in RE teaching, 1990).

Religious Education through stories in the EYFS



Much of the research on story in the field of religious education focuses on the connection of story to children's spirituality rather than on the benefits of story when used as a pedagogical support for teaching religious education (Grajczonek & Truasheim, 2017). The literature also highlights the unique nature of both early childhood and religious education, with age-appropriate pedagogy considered important (Grajczonek, 2013). The use of story can effectively speak into both spaces, addressing their unique needs and characteristics (Grajczonek & Ryan, 2009). Ryan's (2007) research into the theorists who inform early years religious education, reveals an intense interest in stories and how these shape moral imagination. As children encounter their own stories and stories of others, they listen and reflect, developing their sense of wonder about biblical stories (Jacobs-Sife, 2011). Students do not need to know stories by heart, but rather engage with them and ask questions to develop religious literacy (Goldburg, 2004; Hansell, 2015).

The work of Arthur (1988) suggests that stories in religious education have great value with previous recognition of their worth in various journals and in practice, yet he also suggests they are still seen as trivial diversions. To further elaborate, Arthur recognises three significant benefits of story as: empathy, cognitive potential, and an effective way of dealing with abstract or difficult to describe concepts. Stories provide the opportunity to engage in empathy and see things from a unique perspective with which the reader may not be familiar. The cognitive potential of story to unlock a new dimension to knowledge may not engage the reader in new facts, however it opens a depth of understanding to the situation. Finally, Arthur states there is value in the use of story to provide a subtle and effective approach to things which can be difficult to describe. It can be thought provoking and is used extensively in almost every religious tradition in this way. When balancing empathy and reasoned investigation; utilising story's cognitive potential with other ways of knowing; and engaging in thought provoking exploration of religious issues, then "there is no reason why story should not be seen and used as one of the most important vehicles of communication open to the religious educator." (Arthur, 1988, p. 126) This work is further supported by the research which found story was used to help explore life's big and often most difficult questions (Freitas, 2005; Jacobs Sife, 2011). Stories open provocative questions and emotion with which children can investigate possible inquiries, struggle with issues and engage in religious imagination. As the evidence reveals, story can be used effectively in religious education to connect students personally, while building empathy, contributing to faith practice (or expressions of the Christian faith) and developing religious literacy.

Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities:

- Diversity – We believe in developing pupils' understanding of British values and celebrating our unique and diverse community.
- Dreams – We promote ambition, high aspirations and foster pupils' capacity to see the possibilities within the world today.
- Decisions – We encourage our pupils to make the right choices in order to stay safe, healthy and happy.

Cultural capital gives our pupils the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for pupils to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.

Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and threshold concepts. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied. Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over, and gradually build understanding of them.

For each of the threshold concepts, three milestones (each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the threshold concepts) provide a progression model.

Knowledge categories in each subject give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.

Knowledge webs help pupils to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema. Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time.

As part of our progression model we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who argue for direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery-based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem-based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the reversal effect.

IMPLEMENTATION

Religious Education brings together 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.

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Pupils study religious education for between 1 and 2 hours per week. This time can also be organised into 'blocks' where pupils will study religious education for a number of sessions before studying another subject.

Cross curricular outcomes in religious education are specifically planned for, with strong links between the religious education and literacy curriculum enabling further contextual learning. The local area is also fully utilised to achieve the desired outcomes, with extensive opportunities for learning outside the classroom embedded in practice.

Planning is informed by current national guidance:
RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010
RE: realising the potential Ofsted 2013
A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013

We implement Discovery RE which is aligned with the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (SACRE). In addition, staff take into account the accompanying resources, however, teachers lesson design is not limited by this and is informed by their own creativity and judgements.

IMPACT

Because learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term. We do, however, use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practice. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long run.

We use comparative judgement in two ways: in the tasks we set and in comparing a student's work over time. We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

Pupils attainment and progress in religious education is measured against age related expectation descriptors for each enquiry in each year group. These expectations (working AT, TOWARDS and BEYOND) give guidance for assessing each of the 3 aspects of learning involved and made explicit in Discovery RE (appendix a).

The 3 aspects of learning are colour-coded as follows:

- **personal resonance with or reflection on...**
- **knowledge and understanding of...**
- **evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question**

Teachers record outcomes by using the Discovery RE tracker (appendix b).

In the EYFS Seesaw is used to inform parents of Independent Learning and group activities. It can also be used for the subject lead to see the varied content being taught and monitor progression.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Effective learning should be coherent, progressive and meaningful, and should be planned for and taught in ways that encourage learners to recognise that the knowledge, skills and attitudes identified are inextricably linked. These aspirations can only be achieved through high quality teaching and learning and the establishment of a supportive climate for learning. All teachers have an important role in modelling and promoting an ethos of inclusion and respect for individuals. Further wider educational research offers a strong basis for a range of effective teaching approaches in religious education. These are often reflected in our lessons and will include:

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- **Enquiry** - 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.
- **Questioning** - 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, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **Develop opinions** - 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.
- **Active Learning** - active learning approaches, including collaborative learning, will encourage children to discuss and share ideas, experiences and moral challenges in a variety of ways, as well as develop skills for life and work such as communication, working with others and problem-solving.
- **Wellbeing** - enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society. In addition, it encourages the development of a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- **Diversity** - teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- **Artefacts** - providing pupils with an opportunity to examine religious artefacts and primary sources, including the opportunity to visit sites of religious significance as planned for.
- **Cultural Capital** - 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.
- **Recall** - recalling previously taught content (retrieval practice) and revisiting content in lessons (spaced practice) have also been shown to be effective in securing pupils' knowledge over time.
- **Clear exposition that considers pupils' prior knowledge** - teachers' exposition is likely to be most effective when it is clear and carefully designed to account for pupils' existing knowledge.
- **Narrative and story** - storytelling is a powerful vehicle for learning. It is likely that religious stories are an effective way of teaching new content in religious education. Stories are likely to be particularly effective when teachers draw pupils' attention to particularly important content within them.
- **The Learning Environment** - 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 respect for 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.

**SUPPORTING PUPILS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, INCLUDING PUPILS WITH
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)**

We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of ability in religious education, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. There is a lack of specific research on pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and religious education. However, findings into what makes an effective religious education curriculum provides some suggestions regarding effective support for pupils with SEND.

All pupils are entitled to a broad religious education curriculum. Any adaptations made to support pupils' learning in religious education usually should not be to the overall curriculum content but rather to how the content is taught. In the case of pupils with the most complex learning needs, there may be occasions when it is appropriate to modify the curriculum. However, this will be the exception.

Our religious education curriculum is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. In addition, to offer further differentiation teachers refer to a range of level exemplars for each age group in KS1 and 2 (appendix c).

It is likely that pupils will benefit most from support that combines extra attention to securing the most generative knowledge, while ensuring that all pupils are able to learn about religious aspects in a rich context and through meaningful examples. This can be achieved by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support children individually or in groups.

PROMOTING KEY SKILLS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Through our teaching of religious education, we provide opportunities for pupils to develop the key skills of:

- **Communication** - through reading and responding to a range of sources of information, when planning and carrying out religious enquiries through key questions, taking part in discussions, and presenting findings in a variety of ways.
- **Co-operation** - through and carrying out religious enquiries that are classroom based or take place on a visit.
- **Enquiry** - 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.
- **Questioning** - 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, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **Investigation** – asking relevant questions; knowing how to use a variety of sources in order to gather information. Identifying what may count as good evidence in understanding religions and in reference to the enquiry question.
- **Interpretation** – the ability to draw meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism and to interpret religious language. As well as, suggest meanings of religious texts.
- **Reflection** – the ability to reflect on feelings, experience, attitudes, beliefs, values, relationships, practices and ultimate questions.
- **Empathy** – developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow. They are encouraged to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others. Developing an awareness to see the world through the eyes of others, and to see issues from their point of view.
- **Evaluation** – the ability to debate issues of religious significance with reference to evidence, argument, opinion and statements of faith; weighing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience.

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- **Analysis** – distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact. Recognising bias, caricature, prejudice and stereotyping and distinguishing between the features of different religions.
- **Expression** – building the confidence to articulate ideas, beliefs and values; respond to religious ideas, beliefs and questions through a variety of media.
- **Synthesis** – linking significant features of religion(s) together in a coherent pattern and connecting different aspects of life into a meaningful whole.
- **Problem-solving** - through investigating a specific question or issue, deciding what information they need to know, identifying relevant sources of information and discussing their conclusions.
- **Thinking skills** - through work on processing and evaluating information, describing and explaining events and actions, and carrying out investigations of past events.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Early years explore religious education themes and content through the following strands of the EYFS curriculum:

Communication and language - Children are encouraged to use their listening, attention, understanding and speaking skills. This is supported further by the use of a plethora of religious stories which forms the basis of exploration.

Personal, social and emotional development - This includes developing self-regulation skills, managing themselves and building relationships.

Understanding of the World – People, Culture & Communities. This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and time.

Following Discovery RE children are introduced to a variety of religions which lay the foundations for further study throughout the key stages.

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What makes people special?	Christianity
What is Christmas?	Islam/Judaism
How do people celebrate?	Christianity
What is Easter?	Christianity
What can we learn from stories?	Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism
What makes people special?	Christianity, Islam, Judaism

KEY STAGE 1

Following Discovery RE children study Christianity throughout the year groups alongside one other religion. **Year 1**

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Christianity
What gift would I have given Jesus if he had been born in my town, not in Bethlehem?	Christianity
Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship?	Christianity
Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday?	Christianity
Is Shabbat important to Jewish children?	Judaism
Does celebrating Chanukah make Jewish children feel close to God?	Judaism

Year 2

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?	Christianity
Why did God give Jesus to the world?	Christianity
Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life?	Islam
Is it true Jesus came back to life again?	Christianity
OR Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging?	Islam
Does completing a Hajj make a person a better Muslim?	Islam

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KEY STAGE 2

Following Discovery RE children study Christianity throughout the year groups alongside one other religion.

Year 3

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Does joining the Khalsa make a person a better Sikh?	Sikhism
Has Christmas lost its true meaning?	Christianity
Could Jesus really heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?	Christianity
What is good about Good Friday?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Sikhism
What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?	Sikhism

Year 4

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
Is it possible for everyone to be happy?	Buddhism
What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?	Christianity
Can the Buddha's teachings make the world a better place?	Buddhism
Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Buddhist to lead a good life?	Buddhism
Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?	Christianity

Year 5

Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God?	Hinduism
Is the Christmas story true?	Christianity
How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?	Hinduism
Did God intend Jesus to be crucified?	Christianity
Do beliefs in karma, samsara and moksha help Hindus lead better lives?	Hinduism
What is the best way for Christian to show commitment to God?	Christianity

Year 6

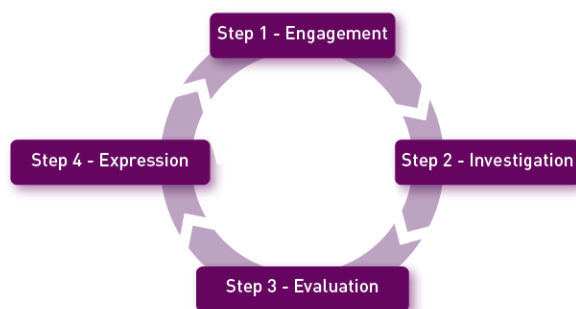
Discovery Enquiry	Religions studied
What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Islam
How significant is it that Mary is Jesus' mother?	Christianity
Is anything ever eternal?	Christianity
Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?	Christianity
What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?	Judaism
Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit)	Islam

PLANNING AND RESOURCES

We implement Discovery RE to teach our religious education curriculum. Discovery RE is a set of detailed medium-term plans for RE from Years Nursery to Year 6. It adopts an enquiry based approach to teaching and learning. Christianity is taught in every year group, with Christmas and Easter given new treatment each year, developing the learning in a progressive way (appendix d) Buddhism, Hinduism, Humanism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are also covered. Humanist perspectives are added when appropriate in some enquiries in addition to the Introduction to a Baha'i and Humanism enquiry.

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Discovery RE advocates an enquiry-based approach with a 4-step process



The key question for the enquiry is such that it demands an answer that weighs up 'evidence' and reaches a conclusion based on this. This necessitates children using their subject knowledge and applying it to the enquiry question, rather than this knowledge being an end in itself. Discovery RE focuses on critical thinking skills, on personal reflection into the child's own thoughts and feelings, on growing subject knowledge and nurturing spiritual development.

Step 1 (usually 1 lesson)

Engagement: The human experience underpinning the key question is explored here within the children's own experience, whether that includes religion or not e.g. a human experience underpinning the question, 'What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?' is 'commitment', so lesson 1 aims to help all children resonate with the experience of 'commitment' in their own lives. If they can relate to this human experience they will be better able to understand the world of religion into which the enquiry takes them. Their personal resonance with this underpinning human experience acts as the BRIDGE into the world of religion (which may be very much outside of their experience). The BRIDGE concept/experience is shown clearly under the Step 1 box on the planning. This guides the teacher as to the focus of Lesson 1, which does not have to include anything explicitly 'religious'.

Step 2 (usually the equivalent of 3 lessons)

Investigation: The teacher guides the children through the enquiry, children gaining subject knowledge carefully selected to assist their thinking about the key question. Some of the enquiries have a lot of relevant content so teachers do need to be selective and not try to cover too much. Depth is more important. The acquisition of the factual information about the religion /belief system being studied is important, but not as an end in itself.

Step 3 (usually 1 lesson)

Evaluation: This lesson draws together the children's learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry. This is an assessment task (the activity sheet and resources are included) which the teacher can assess by using the age-related expectation descriptors at the end of each enquiry. These are exemplified, and tracking and record sheets are included, as are pupil self-assessment sheets.

The expectations may well lend themselves to meaningful and less onerous report writing, the activity sheets providing evidence in children's books for their learning in each enquiry.

We are not suggesting that paper-based evidence is the sole form of assessment in RE. The expectation is that the assessment activity sheets provided will be seen in conjunction with teacher observations of the children's work and responses throughout the enquiry. The strands of learning are colour-coded in the planning, the assessment activity, attainment descriptors and exemplification to make this process easier for busy teachers.

Step 4 (usually 1 lesson)

Expression: Children are taken back to Step 1, their own experience, to reflect on how this enquiry might have influenced their own starting points and beliefs. There is often further evidence for their books produced in this lesson.

Activity Sheets are also referred to which highlight various aspects of learning and follow the expectation descriptors (Working TOWARDS, Working AT and Working BEYOND) and in the exemplification.

Each class has its own owl character (appendix e) and these are used to support the exploration of each enquiry. These are used a variety of ways:

- Children can ask them questions during the enquiry. They can write their questions on the envelope template and place them in the box provided within the classroom. This also supports ongoing assessment, giving insight into the children's thinking.
- The Owls can ask the children questions i.e. the big enquiry question, and any other questions that may support their learning through the enquiry.
- The Owls can give the children information e.g. Gudrun Owl would like you to watch this video clip/to explore these artefacts.
- The Owls can act as the 'talking object' when you are using circle time to discuss opinions and thoughts on issues being studied.

CROSS-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Staff are encouraged to develop cross-curricular links with religious education and other subjects to provide a relevant and meaningful curriculum for pupils.

British Values

Religious Education is a key player in engendering knowledge and understanding which can lead to tolerance and respect for others and their beliefs. It does not, however, teach children to passively accept, but rather encourages evaluation and critical thinking, equipping them to consider belief positions they encounter.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means cultivating a sense of awareness on purpose, in a non-judgemental way in the present moment. It is hoped that teachers will use mindfulness practices to build children's self-awareness and skills of reflection, thus supporting their religious education learning as well as their personal spiritual development.

PSHE

In our teaching of religious education, we also contribute to the development of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding by looking exploring a variety of enquiry based questions. Children are therefore provided with many opportunities to discuss moral questions.

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children develop oracy as they acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary; communicate their ideas with depth and precision; listen to the views and ideas of others, including people from religious traditions. Develop their speaking and listening skills when considering religious beliefs and ideas and articulating their responses; read, and interpret at an appropriate level, sacred texts. Write in different styles such as poetry, diaries, extended writing and the synthesis of differing views, beliefs and ideas; evaluate clearly and rationally, using a range of reasoned, balanced arguments.

Computing

Religious education learning makes appropriate use of the internet to investigate, analyse and evaluate aspects of religious beliefs and practices, ultimate questions and ethical issues.

The use of multimedia and presentation software is used to communicate a personal response, the essence of an argument or a stimulus for discussion. In addition, ICT can be used to organise ideas and communicate knowledge and understanding of the diversity of belief and practice within and between religious traditions. Equipment such as digital cameras and videos, to bring authentic images into the classroom to support discussion and reflection are used to enhance understanding of the impact of religious beliefs and practices on the lives of local individuals and faith communities.

Art and Design

Religious paintings idealise, glorify, suggest and tell the story of a religion. They keep religious traditions alive and make it easier for individuals to visualize a concept or event that is otherwise difficult to imagine. Children explore and reflect on a variety of religious art through paintings, artefacts and buildings which often inspire their own pieces of art.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout religious education in a variety of ways. Each enquiry has built-in assessment, this task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in reaching a best-fit level. Each enquiry has assessment levels and exemplars based on the current nationally agreed levels (appendix 5).

In addition, assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.
- Using differentiated, open-ended questions that require children to explain and unpick their understanding.
- Providing effective feedback, including interactive marking through purple pen questions where appropriate, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment, consolidation, depth and target setting.
- Book moderation and monitoring of outcomes of work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and to ensure that tasks meet the needs of different learners, with the acquisition of the pre-identified key knowledge of each topic being evidenced through the outcomes.
- Allow children to reflect on their learning by using the self- assessment pro-forma at the end of each unit (appendix f).
- Specific and measureable learning objectives for each lesson.
- Build an understanding of children's thinking linked to enquires through the use of the envelopes given to the class owl.

Pupils attainment and progress in religious education is recorded on the Discovery RE Tracker (appendix b). This supports teacher overview; facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation and can also be used to inform parents.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, teachers should be aware of health and safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to activities, to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for all pupils. Before undertaking a field

trip, teachers are encouraged to visit the proposed area of study and fill in a risk assessment form. Further information can be found in the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Procedures and Educational Visits Procedures.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

We seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them;
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about concerns, with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

See JTMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Shobnall Primary & Nursery School Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection for further information.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader 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. Parents will be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents. The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The religious education leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes.
- Staff meetings to review and share experience.
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.
- Development, implementation and review an action plan.

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Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in religious education is the responsibility of the religious education subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

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Appendix A

- **End of key stage age-related expectations** for KS1, lower KS2 and upper KS2.

[Abridged NCFRE (National Curriculum Framework for RE) showing the 3 strands A, B and C.]

Attainment related to end of KS statements	Reference to 'old' level descriptors	A. Investigate the beliefs and practices of religions and other world views	B. Investigate how religions and other world views address questions of meaning, purpose and value	C. Investigate how religions and other world views influence morality, identity and diversity
End of KS1 (Year 2 Age 7)	2	Retell, recognise and find meanings	Explore and respond sensitively	Begin to express ideas and opinions
End of Lower KS2 (Year 4 Age 9)	3	Describe, discover more and respond thoughtfully	Observe and suggest reasons	Suggest reasons and respond thoughtfully
End of KS2 (Year 6 Age 11)	4	Reflect and make connections between different ideas	Consider, compare and contrast	Offer ideas and clear responses

End of Key Stage colour-coded descriptors in Discovery RE

"WORKING AT" expectation. <u>Most</u> children are expected to reach these expectations.	GREEN DESCRIPTORS Personal resonance with or reflection on • The concept / belief underlying the subject matter of the enquiry • Child's own thoughts, opinions, belief, empathy.	BLUE DESCRIPTORS Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of that enquiry (subject knowledge)	RED DESCRIPTORS Skills of evaluation and critical thinking in relation to the big enquiry question
End of Key Stage 1 (Year 2, Age 7, 'old' Level 2)	• I can tell you / talk about what concepts like belonging, commitment, kindness, forgiveness mean to me in my world • I can verbalise and / or express my own thoughts	I can recall facts about the religions / beliefs I have studied, begin to use the religious vocabulary and start to explain the significance and meaning of the facts, practices etc.	I can start to think through the enquiry question using some facts and am beginning to see there could be more than one answer.
End of LOWER key Stage 2 (Year 4, Age 9, 'old' Level 3)	• I can tell you / talk about the concept / belief e.g. belonging and start to relate this to the people I am studying e.g. Jews. • I can express my own opinions and start to support them with rationale.	I can recall facts about religions I have studied, select the facts that are most significant to the enquiry and start to explain their relevance / importance.	I can apply my knowledge to the enquiry question and give an answer supported by one or more facts.
End of Key Stage 2 (Year 6, Age 11, 'old' Level 4)	• I can explain how the concept / belief e.g. forgiveness resonates in my own life and can also see this might be different for other people because of their religion/ beliefs • I can express my own thoughts etc having reflected on them in relation to other people's.	I can recall facts about religions and explain differences in practice and interpretation within and between religions / belief systems.	I can weigh up evidence and different arguments / aspects relevant to the enquiry question and express my answer, supported with evidence / rationale.

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Appendix B



Discovery RE Tracking Sheet

Teacher: _____ Class: _____ Year Group: _____

Children's names		Autumn 1			Autumn 2			Spring 1			Spring 2			Summer 1			Summer 2		
		Enquiry:			Enquiry:			Enquiry:			Enquiry:			Enquiry:			Enquiry:		
	Year 1 expectation	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
		B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Year 1 expectation	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
		B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Year 1 expectation	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
		B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Year 1 expectation	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
		B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Year 1 expectation	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
		B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B

Table

Green = Personal resonance with or reflection on (AT2 Personal)	T = Working Towards
Blue = Knowledge and understanding of (AT1)	A = Working At
Red = Evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question (AT2 Impersonal)	B = Working Beyond

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Appendix C

Year 1 and 6 examples

Year 1 Autumn 1	Does God want Christians to look after the world?	Comments
WORKING TOWARDS (Level 1)	I can tell you what I made. I can say something about the Christian Creation story. I can show some awareness that Christians believe there is a God.	
Year 1 expectation WORKING AT (Level 2)	I can say how it felt to make something. I can remember the Christian Creation story and talk about it. I can express an opinion about the Christian belief about creation.	
WORKING BEYOND (Level 3)	I can say how it felt to make something and how I think my creation should be treated. I can re-tell the Christian Creation story and say some things that they believe God created on different days. I can start to talk about how I think the world got here.	

Year 6 Autumn 1	What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?	Comments
WORKING TOWARDS (Level 3)	I can express why showing commitment to something may be a good thing. I can describe some of the ways that Muslims choose to show commitment to God. I can explain why there might be different ways of showing commitment.	
Year 6 expectation WORKING AT (Levels 4/5)	I can show an understanding of why people show commitment in different ways. I can describe how different practices enable Muslims to show their commitment to God and understand that some of these will be more significant to some Muslims than others. I can think of some ways of showing commitment to God that would be better than others for Muslims.	
WORKING BEYOND (Level 5)	I can explain why one way of showing commitment may not be better than another. I can explore why Muslims choose to show commitment to God in the ways that they do and how this might impact on their lives. I can explain that individuals choose to show different degrees of commitment to their religion and can relate this to commitments I make in my life, (partly assessed in Lessons 1&8).	

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Appendix D

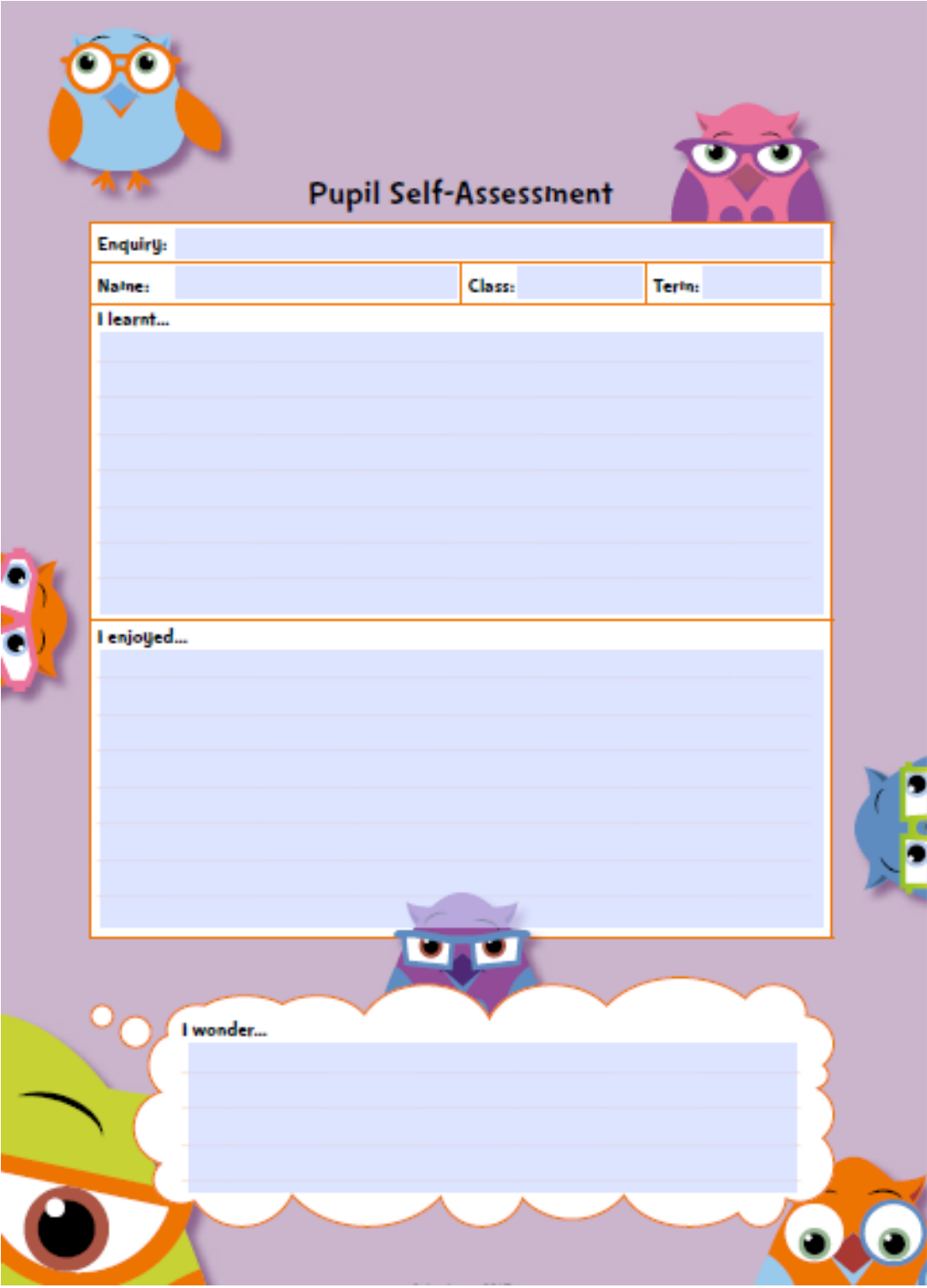
Easter Overview

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Spring 2	Easter	Easter - Palm Sunday	Easter - Resurrection	Easter - Forgiveness	Easter	Easter	Easter
Enquiry Question	What is Easter?	Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity by the crowds on Palm Sunday?	How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after his crucifixion?	What is 'good' about Good Friday?	Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?	How significant is it for Christians to believe God intended Jesus to die?	Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?
Expectation (Working at)	Nursery: Development Matters 3 and 4 years Reception: Development Matters Reception Areas of Learning: Communication and Language Personal Social and Emotional Development Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning: Understand the World Playing and exploring Active learning Creating and thinking critically	To talk about a person, I admire. To recall parts of the Easter story and recognise some symbols in the story. To begin to show understanding that Jesus is special to Christians and say why.	To talk about what I believe happens to you when you die and tell you how I remember people close to me. To recall what Christians believe happened on Easter Sunday. To begin to suggest a different explanation as to what happened to Jesus after the empty tomb and offer my opinion.	To suggest how a person may rescue/ help others who are in difficult situations. To begin to tell you why Christians believe Jesus' death is important. To begin to reflect on whether I agree with Christian beliefs about Jesus' death.	To talk about what sort of help I might need to show forgiveness. To describe what a Christian might learn about forgiveness from a Biblical text. To show an understanding of how Christians believe God can help them show forgiveness.	To give an example of someone with a strong sense of purpose for their life and give my opinions on this. To begin to explain whether God intended Jesus to be crucified or whether Jesus' crucifixion was the consequence of events during Holy Week. To begin to express my opinion about Jesus' crucifixion being his destiny/purpose.	To explain how the influence people have had on me has affected what I see as important. To explain how one of the reasons people use to suggest that Christianity is a strong religion today can be counteracted. To give my opinion as to whether Christianity is a strong religion now and say why I think this.

Appendix E



Appendix F



The form is titled "Pupil Self-Assessment" and is decorated with several cartoon owl illustrations. At the top left is a blue owl with orange glasses. At the top right is a pink owl with purple glasses. On the left side, a pink owl with blue glasses is partially visible. On the right side, a blue owl with green glasses is partially visible. At the bottom left, a large green owl with orange glasses is partially visible. At the bottom right, an orange owl with blue glasses is partially visible. In the center, a purple owl with blue glasses is partially visible. The form contains three main sections for writing: "Enquiry:", "I learnt...", and "I enjoyed...". Each section has a light blue background with horizontal lines. The "Enquiry:" section is at the top, followed by "I learnt..." and "I enjoyed...". Below these is a section titled "I wonder..." which is enclosed in a white cloud shape with a light blue background and horizontal lines.

Pupil Self-Assessment

Enquiry: _____

Name: _____ Class: _____ Term: _____

I learnt...

I enjoyed...

I wonder...
