

Religious Education in Wokingham

Why do we need to teach religious education in schools in Wokingham?

There are several good reasons, which include:

- Religious Education is a part of the legal requirement to be taught to all pupils aged 5-18 through a stimulating curriculum
- Religious belief has been important in the development of human civilisations
- For many people religious and spiritual beliefs are very important
- Religious education helps pupils of all ages to understand that there may be many answers to important questions that people ask
- It is essential to helping us have a better understanding of our culturally diverse society

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and collective worship



Who says what should be taught?

Unlike other school subjects whose content is decided nationally, what is taught in RE is decided by local people. Many people, including Wokingham teachers, were involved in planning and writing the RE syllabus which is used in all community and Church controlled schools. This new agreed syllabus will be used in schools from September 2018. There is a legal requirement to review it every 5 years and this brings new opportunities in the planning, teaching and learning of RE for every pupil in our authority. Church of England aided schools are strongly recommended by the Diocese of Oxford to use the locally agreed syllabus as the basis for planning their RE teaching.



What does the local syllabus require?

All pupils are taught about religions and asked to think about what can be learnt from them. This will involve the study of Christianity and five other religions, which are Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, by the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9). There are some compulsory study units at each key stage but schools have considerable choice in the topics they choose and how they organise them. In this school we used the Oxford Diocese Scheme of Work to support planning.



Why include so many religions?

Schools aim to prepare pupils for life in a society and a world where people hold a variety of religious beliefs. Through understanding and respecting the commitment of others, pupils reflect on their own values and together learn what responsible citizenship involves.

How might RE be taught?

Schools will organise RE lessons in many different ways but they might involve:

- learning through asking questions and pupils thinking for themselves
- debating and comparing the different faith responses to key issues and challenges that face us in the present day
- pupils finding out how the experiences of others compare with their own
- visiting speakers from different faith communities
- visiting places of worship
- exploring religious artifacts and their significance
- finding out what different faith groups bring to their local communities



Is RE assessed like other subjects?

School reports include comments on how well pupils are doing in RE. The local syllabus provides guidance on the assessment of RE which is similar to that found in other subjects. A focus on RE may be included in inspections of schools.

The local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) monitors the quality of RE in Wokingham schools and explores ways of helping teachers to develop their knowledge and skills, by:

- examining Ofsted reports and SATs and GCSE results
- maintaining a Wokingham website page for Religious Education, which keeps teachers informed of professional development opportunities in RE and developments in the teaching of RE

How can I find out more?

You could:

- look at the locally agreed syllabus for RE which can be found in all Wokingham schools and on our school website.
- talk with teachers and ask about RE in schools with which you are involved
- read the annual report on the work of the Wokingham SACRE which is available on the website <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/reports>
- check the website for regular updates of RE teaching and developments in the authority and at national level



The Wokingham SACRE considers the role of RE teaching in all schools to be critical in both its content and excellence of delivery, in order that all pupils grow in knowledge and understanding of the world of faith that they will encounter.

