

Religious Education Policy  
John Henry Newman Academy



Policy update: September 2018  
Coordinator: Grace Challans

### Our ethos

RE at the John Henry Newman Academy is a valued part of the school curriculum among pupils and staff. It is not only academically rigorous, encouraging critical thinking and lively debate, but also offers vital opportunities for children to reflect and consider big questions making it deeply personal.

Our pupils are encouraged to reflect and question beliefs, explore commonality between their faith and those of others and show empathy towards people of all faiths and no faith. Our Christian values of love, courage, celebration and community are reinforced regularly and explored through RE, Collective Worship, the ethos and hidden curriculum of our school.

### Guidance

This policy 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

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus 2015-2020

### Aims of RE

On recommendation from the Diocesan RE Advisor, John Henry Newman Academy uses the Discovery RE scheme of work and Understanding Christianity. Both meet the requirements of the locally agreed Oxfordshire syllabus and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above.

All children learn about the Christian faith, with Christianity being the most-studied religion across a child's time at John Henry Newman Academy. This is supported by Collective Worship, guest speakers and visits to Saint Mary & Saint Nicholas Church throughout the year.

Using the enquiry method helps children to become active learners. They are encouraged to pursue interests and challenge previously held ideas.

The vocabulary of Religious Education is extremely challenging: vocabulary for each lesson is clearly identified and children are encouraged to 'magpie' interesting words and phrases. Regular debate and stimulating discussion develop verbal reasoning skills.

RE is taught in the class every week. Planning is completed by individual staff members, using the Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity medium term planning as a framework. Planning is annotated with alterations and changes identified, all staff adapt planning to meet the needs of the individuals within the class, whilst still adhering to the key enquiry questions, termly outcomes and the whole school RE curriculum map.

### Evidence in books

All work in books is to be marked against the learning objective for the lesson and using the whole school marking code/policy. Three pieces of quality written evidence need to be in books for each topic. Evidence in books additional to this can be a range of things: children's illustrations; photos; copies of flipcharts/IWB pages; scribed comments from children; comment

slips about whole class work. It is also considered how we will record class discussions around key questions for the lesson and this could also take many forms: photos of annotated flip chart pages or individual reflection sheets for children or post it note reflections for working wall.

### Assessment/ Attainment descriptors

Assessment is expected to be an ongoing process and may take different forms, including self-assessment, peer assessment, verbal feedback and evidence in books. Teachers are expected to assess children against a bank of learning outcomes and record on Target Tracker (the assessment recording and analysis system used by the school) which should be kept up to date.

### Monitoring and evaluation

RE books are part of regular school-wide book scrutiny. The RE Coordinator looks at books three times a year and feeds back to teachers.

### The Learning Environment

Each class has a reflection area which is based around a topical theme, which must include examples of childrens' work and learning. The reflection area must include a candle, cross, Bible and the display the Littlemore Prayer.

RE lessons should be as engaging and challenging as other subject studied at the John Henry Newman Academy. We use video, quizzes, word scrambles, visits, speakers, sacred texts, diary entries, group work, drama, I.T. and a number of other stimuli to keep RE interesting and relevant.

### Differentiation/ SEN

Staff differentiate their lessons according to need as in other subjects. RE must be accessible to all pupils.

### Candle time

Candle time, a time for reflection and personal prayer, is timetabled daily and can take on many forms which could include:

- Children can sit in a circle, with a candle in the middle, we all share something we feel we have achieved/learnt/felt proud of/act of kindness they have seen/someone else they have spotted showing our school values.
- Children can have a minute silence to sit and reflect on their day: achievements, challenges, celebrations or learning.
- Children can share something they could have done differently or something they think they can improve on.
- Time to talk to a partner for a set time, on anything that they like about their day.
- Read prayers or make up our own.
- Read from the bible, share a bible story.
- Blow out the candle together, or in pairs and say the Littlemore prayer.

### Prayer Space

Every year, the academy provides a curriculum enrichment week and all children access a 'Prayer Space'. This space provides a multi-sensory experience based around Christianity and encourages children to reflect and enquire through carefully guided sessions delivered by volunteers. This learning is also translated to the classroom to allow the children to extend this experience and develop their understanding of Religion through a practical approach.

### Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues involving parents and carers

RE at The John Henry Newman Academy aims to be challenging and thought-provoking. During RE lessons, there may be controversial and sensitive areas touched upon. Staff have good relationships with parents and an understanding of family background. If a sensitive issue arises, if deemed necessary, parents should be informed of any potential sensitivity beforehand.

### Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents are entitled to withdraw their pupils from Church visits. Parents are encouraged to speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns or questions. If a parent wishes to exercise their legal right to withdraw a child from RE lessons, they should consult the headteacher.

### Training and support for staff.

The RE coordinator has contact and support from Anne Andrews (RE Advisor from Oxford Diocesan Board of Education) who has also delivered training in school.

Policy review Date: September 2018

Date of next review:  
September 2019

Signed Headteacher

Signed Chair of Governors