



Religious Education

First and foremost, RE is about gaining deeper knowledge and understanding of the main religions and beliefs of the world so that children and young people are able to engage in an increasingly sophisticated and critical way with the influence of religion and belief on individuals and communities. At Holmer Green Junior School, we aim to grow and nurture tolerant, reflective children who have an understanding of the different cultures and religions in the world around them.

Religious education gives children at our school the opportunity to explore the perennial questions about life, reflecting on its meaning, purpose, identity and value. In doing this, it draws on the rich history of the major religious traditions in Britain, giving due prominence to Christianity to reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the principal world faiths, local communities and non-religious beliefs that form the family background of many children in our school, including but not restricted to Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam.

There are two main educational purposes to RE:

1. So pupils can learn about religions and beliefs which have influenced the lives of millions of people and heavily influenced the development of different human cultures. This is developing their religious literacy, which is essential to understanding the modern world;
2. So that pupils can reflect more deeply on their own and others' sense of identity, meaning and purpose in life from their study of religion and belief. This develops their understanding of human values and mutual understanding. RE is therefore both rigorously academic and deeply personal.

Within RE lessons, we aim to:

- Reach pupils of any religious faith or none and of all academic abilities and social backgrounds;
- Challenge pupils to question and explore their own and others' understanding of the world;
- Never seek to urge beliefs upon pupils, nor compromise their own beliefs but rather to deepen their self-understanding and understanding of others;
- Raise questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value and encourages people to reflect on experience, life-styles and opinions;
- Contribute positively and powerfully to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop communication skills and thinking skills;
- Teach pupils about Christianity and other religions and world-views so that they can understand the world better and develop their own sense of place within it.

At Holmer Green Junior School, we use The Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education as the basis for our RE curriculum (<https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/media/5418/agreed-syllabus-online-version-2016.pdf>).

Within RE lessons, pupils will explore a wide range of religious and non-religious beliefs including:

- Worship and prayer
- Places of worship
- Community
- Symbolism
- Sacred texts
- Festivals
- Rites of passage
- Pilgrimage
- Diversity
- Founds and prophets
- The natural world
- Ethics and moral issues

Our model of learning gives the pupils an opportunity to discuss and explore their own experiences and beliefs, the religious beliefs and experiences of others and the universal human experience. While exploring these beliefs, pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Identify people, concepts, beliefs and attitudes that have an influence on how they live their lives.
- Ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's attitudes and ways of life.
- See their own way of life in relation to the influences identified and recognise that other people will have an effect on how they live.
- Evaluate and weigh up their own ideas, beliefs and way of life in relation to those of other people.
- Research into religious beliefs, practices and concepts in a way that is thoughtful, searching and sensitive to difference.
- Relate religious beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions studied, identifying similarities and differences between the religions.
- Relate the religious beliefs, concepts and practices to their own experiences and values and consider these in the light of religious values.
- Consider what is of value to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs, concepts and practices and how this makes a difference to people's lives.
- Respond sensitively and with reasoned arguments to religious beliefs and concept in relation to the difference they make to believers' attitudes and ways of life.
- Reflect on their learning and how this relates to human values, responsibilities and rights.
- Apply values and beliefs to their own and others' experiences and lives.

To support pupils with their learning and understand what has been discussed in RE lessons, they will be encouraged to discuss how the topics covered relate to their own lives and beliefs. Pupils may be provided with writing scaffolds and key words mats to help them to apply the knowledge that they have learnt about different religions. They will be challenged within lessons by being encouraged to make comparisons between different religions, exploring similarities and differences as well as applying their learning by discussing their thoughts and opinions in small groups and as a class.