

B11 Religious Education Policy

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

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Trustee Reviewer: Standards Board



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1. General Data Protection Regulations

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which replaces the Data Protection Act 1998 from 25th May 2018. The introduction of GDPR has resulted in changes to many existing data protection rules and regulations that educational establishments adhere to. The Evolve Trust has undertaken a full data protection audit and have ensured that appropriate changes that have been made to data protection rules and regulations have been adhered to in full. The Evolve Trust has carried out all additional compliance requirements and fully accepts their duty of care to ensure individuals' data is kept safe and secure, resulting in increased compliance in our systems, processes and policies.



2. Aims of Religious Education

Religious education enables students to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At the Brunts Academy we develop the students' knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths through our curriculum in the following ways:

- Cross-curricular coverage
- Timetabled PSHE programme
- Assemblies/Tutor Time and Enrichment Activities
- RE lessons including GCSE Religion and Life

Students reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

The aims of religious education are to help students:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

2. The legal position of Religious Education

- The Brunts Academy delivers RE in accordance with The Funding Agreement for an Academy without a religious designation. This states that an academy must arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses that are set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Consequently this means that the delivery of RE at The Brunts Academy reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- Parents are allowed to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the Principal.
- No teacher will be expected to teach RE if they do not wish to, however, they must give notice of their objections to the Academy's Trustees.

3. Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning in Religious Education on the key principle that good teaching allows students to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables students' to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied. We recognise the fact that students attending the Academy come from a variety of backgrounds and have widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety



of ways, for example by:

- setting common activities which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting activities of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all students to complete all activities);
- grouping the students by ability and setting different activities for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the student;

4. Curriculum planning in Religious Education

Religious Education is incorporated into our PHSE programme and RE lessons delivered weekly, during which time we teach the students about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour while considering consequences. The teaching of Religious Education is closely linked to the delivery of SMSC education across The Brunts Academy and the promotion of British Values. We actively promote values and attitudes which enable students to develop tolerance and understanding of other people and their religious beliefs. As a consequence the curriculum helps to support the “Prevent Duty” and address issues relating to extremism and terrorism in the world around us. In addition we develop the students’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Students reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. To summarise we help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

Examples from the RS programme:

Year 7 (Summer Term) – Introduction to World Religions: Students will investigate a variety of religions including the beliefs, festivals, founders, practices & impact on daily life. As we work through the world’s ‘Big Six’ religion we will begin to contrast and compare the different religions to help deepen understanding & Empathy of others in our community.

Year 8 (Summer Term) – Where is God? Students will explore a topic around belief with an aim for students to challenge and reflect on their own beliefs. Students will be introduced to key knowledge around the arguments for existence of God from Christians, the challenge that science poses for Christianity and why people have different views even within their own life.

Year 9 (Summer Term) – Good & Evil: Students will look at the philosophical problems around the existence of evil in the world. Students will reflect on what evil is and how Christians believe it came in to the world. They will then reflect on the Christian Theodicies and its defence of Religion. We will consider the differences between moral & natural evil and role of mankind with Freewill.

Examples from the PSHE programme:

Year 7 (Summer Term) – Global Religions: Students will appreciate and understand the fundamental beliefs and guiding principles that lie within several major global religions.

Year 8 (Spring Term) – Islam and Islamophobia: Students will investigate aspects of the Muslim faith and consider how British Values such as tolerance and respect for others can help to create a multicultural society.

Year 9 (Spring Term) – Holocaust Denial and Genocide: Students will explore The Holocaust during World War 2 which will provide a key focus for students in understanding how hate and prejudice is often directed towards religious beliefs.

Year 10 (Summer Term) – Sanctity of Life: Students examine a range of ethical issues connected to the



sanctity of life, for example, abortion, euthanasia and capital punishment.

5. Examples of contributions to Religious Education from the whole-school SMSC programme embedded across the curriculum.

Where relevant subject areas will refer to specific religions as part of the taught curriculum. Broader themes contained within Religious Education such as spirituality and morality also feature prominently across subject areas and form part of the whole-school SMSC programme. Some examples from across different subject areas can be found below.

English:

Spirituality and morality are key themes discussed throughout the key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 English curriculum. Texts such as “Of Mice and Men” and “Animal Farm” encourage students to consider issues such as discrimination and inequality within society.

The Arts:

Students in Year 7 study the role of religion in the creation of medieval and Islamic art. In addition, enrichment activities such as the Christmas trip to Chatsworth enable students to appreciate how spiritual traditions can be combined with Art. Moral issues feature prominently with the teaching of drama, for example, in Year 9 students complete a unit focusing on “prejudice”. Across all of the arts subjects (Art, Drama, Music) students study different forms of culture from across the globe from African drumming to medieval European art, exploring how these art forms often have strong links to religion and spirituality.

History:

In Year 7 students study the Tudors and examine how the split between the Protestant and Catholic faiths impacted on the country as a whole. The Year 9 syllabus allows students to develop a sense of empathy through studying The Holocaust and the implications of religious intolerance and persecution. Morality is another theme prominent within the history curriculum with students considering aspects of it through topics such as slavery and imperialism.

Geography:

Topics such as climate change provide students with opportunities to debate and discuss the morality behind lifestyle choices that people make and the impact that it has on the rest of the world. Concepts such as “development” encourage students to consider whether significant inequalities at a variety of different scales is morally right whereas “globalisation” enables discussion and appreciation of how different cultures mix and evolve over time.

Technology:

In Key Stage 3 Product Design lessons students are taught to appreciate the importance of ensuring that all logos, slogans and symbols are respectful towards religious beliefs. Within Food and Nutrition lessons moral issues connected to animal welfare are considered exploring initiatives such as sustainable fishing and free-range products. Students also gain an appreciation and understanding of the role of religious beliefs in the production of food through exploring Halal and Kosher diets.

Science:

The science syllabus covers a variety of ethical debates which also link closely to religious beliefs. Topics include abortion, cloning, evolution and fertility treatments. Concepts such as ecosystems and energy enable students to discuss the morality behind the over-exploitation of the Earth’s resources and the long-term damage that human’s lifestyle choices are having on the environment.

6. Teaching Religious Education to children with special needs



In our Academy we teach Religious Education to all students, whatever their ability. The teaching of Religious Education is an integral part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our students. When teaching Religious Education we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of students with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual students in their Educational Plans (EPs).

7. Assessment and recording

Students' work as part of the PSHE programme and RE schemes of learning are assessed through self and peer assessment, with extended written tasks to be included in the RE specific topics. Where appropriate, samples of students' work are celebrated by displaying them around the Academy and on the Academy website.

8. Resources

We keep resources for religious education in a central store on the Staff Common Drive. This allows for good practice to be shared with staff.

9. Monitoring and review

The Senior Leadership Team as well as the PSHE Coordinator, Scholastic Excellence Leaders are responsible for monitoring the standards of the students' work and the quality of the teaching. Delivery of the PSHE programme and RE is regularly reviewed and areas for development included within school improvement planning.

10. Assemblies, Tutor Time and Enrichment

Each year team at the Academy has a daily 15 minute tutor period and receives a weekly assembly that is linked to the Trust's core values or an element of SMSC. There are also specific assemblies and tutor time activities that focus on religious themes and events such as:

- Remembrance Day (November)
- Christmas (December)
- Holocaust Memorial (January)

Outside providers occasionally visit and deliver assemblies on a religious theme. For example, the local Christian group ICIS have visited to deliver a religious themed assembly. In addition, there is a voluntary Christian fellowship group as part of the enrich and equip programme that is run by members of the staff and student community.

11. Other related policies:

This policy is linked to a range of other policies approved by the governing body in relation to:

- Assessment and Marking Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- PSHE with Citizenship Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy review: April 2020

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