

Our Religious Education Curriculum

“I believe that the only true religion consists of having a good heart.”

Dalai Lama



NEWCOMEN

scientia potentia est

Newcomen Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

All children are provided with equal opportunities and equal access to the Religious Education curriculum. At Newcomen Primary, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunities for all pupils, staff and parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background.

This document is a statement of our Intent for, and the Implementation and Impact of the teaching and learning of Religious Education. At our school, we believe Religious Education provides opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, building an understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting our positive and inclusive school ethos that champions human rights, spirituality and morality.

Religious Education is a compulsory subject of the National Curriculum and develops knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Our Religious Education curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that our pupils are enabled to know about religions as well as learn from religions. At Newcomen Primary, Religious Education also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesions by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. We embrace the British Values and promote these throughout school allowing our pupils to recognise these qualities within each other.

Our Religious Education Curriculum also makes valuable contributions to other parts of the curriculum and underpins our school ethos. Our pupils are offered opportunities to reflect both personally and spiritually whilst deepening their understanding of the significance of religion upon the lives of others.

Religious Education is a subject on its own but it is interwoven within all that we do at Newcomen Primary School. It encourages our pupils to learn from different religions and world views, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. R.E. encourages pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, faith and ethics and communicate their responses. This enables our children to develop into individuals who can participate positively in society with its wonderful diverse religions and beliefs.



Intent

At Newcomen Primary School, we embrace the teaching of Religious Education as a thought provoking medium which promotes awareness, tolerance and understanding of the diversity of the wonderful world in which we live. Our knowledge-rich and ambitious curriculum is taken from Redcar and Cleveland Local Agreed Syllabus which has been devised by members of SACRE and teachers within the local authority.

Religious Education (R.E.) is given the utmost priority as it allows children to ask relevant questions, express their views and opinions as well as evaluating their knowledge and understanding of the world. Thus allowing them to reflectively consider the thoughts, feelings and experiences of others with respect.

R.E. encourages our pupils to develop their basic sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in society and the global community. Religious Education has an important role in preparing our pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables our pupils to develop respect and sensitivity for others, in particular for those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

R.E. provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God and other deities, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

The teaching of Religious Education goes beyond just the retelling of stories and allows children to discuss their own beliefs whilst being respectful of the views of others. The three types of knowledge: substantive, ways of knowing and personal allow all our pupils to access a curriculum that is knowledge-rich and progressive. We embrace all cultures, religions and non-religions and aim to further develop our understanding of the world around us.

Our Aims:

- To ensure a progressive knowledge rich curriculum is taught allowing pupils to learn about and from other religions and non-religions
- To explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living
- To develop positive attitudes towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions
- To enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development
- To gain wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully
- To ensure our pupils are well prepared for life and can make respectful judgements.

Through our study of Religious Education, our Intent is for our children to:

- Develop spiritual awareness and high standards of personal behaviour,
- Show a positive, caring attitude towards other people,
- Demonstrate an understanding of one's social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of all cultures,
- Receive inspirational and excellent teaching learning through effective practices which build on prior R.E. learning and allow for repetition and progression of skills,
- Show increasing understanding of equality and of the British Values; this ensures they are prepared for life in modern day Britain,
- Reflect on one's own beliefs, values and experiences,
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder,
- Explore the difference between right and wrong,
- Share experiences and feelings with others,
- Pose, suggest and explore possible solutions to questions about religion, life and living as a good human being.



Cultural Capital

Our children are self-aware individuals who are proud of their unique heritage; they learn about our wonderful world with its different religions and beliefs and show respect and compassion for all. We endeavour to allow our children to strive to be the best they can be and show an appreciation for humanity. Our children learn about their own heritage and have opportunities to share this with their peers. In Learning Area 2, 38 flags represent our shared family heritage as a school and celebrate our Newcomen Family.



We are a Rights-Respecting School with the support of UNICEF. These key concepts of showing respect, teamwork and a 'can do' attitude is part of being a good human being aware of the world around us. This permeates through everything we teach, explore and value. Religious Education is a subject that is taught in its own right but these key concepts allow our pupils to fully embrace the teaching and learning of Religious Education to be a good human being.

Early Years

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Religious Education allows our pupils to develop an understanding of the world. Our pupils are offered a wide range of experiences and learning activities that are carefully planned to match their developmental stage. At Newcomen Primary, opportunities are provided for pupils to engage with religious materials and celebrate and value cultural, religious and community events and experiences. This allows our pupils in Early Years to strengthen their positive impressions of their own cultures and faiths whilst learning about and from others within our local community. The use of appropriate language is used to support the development and learning of our pupils allowing them to further understand the world around them.



Through well-planned lessons, our pupils develop communication and language skills in which they listen to stories, songs and poems providing opportunities to sequence and clarify thinking skills, feelings and events. It allows them to ask those questions and talk about feelings and emotions.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is crucial for our pupils to have an understanding of the world around them. It allows our pupils to understand how they treat others with respect, to talk and think about behaviour and to develop awareness of the needs, views and feelings of others whilst being sensitive to individuals whose views, beliefs or cultures may be different to those of their own. This will help our pupils form positive relationships and be sensitive to the needs and feelings of their peers and people they interact with.

At Newcomen, we provide opportunities to talk about similarities and differences and how these may be different or the same within families, communities and traditions. It ensures that our pupils explore, observe and find out about places and objects that matter to a particular culture or belief.

Through carefully planned role play, children have quality interactions with their peers and use their imagination to be involved in art, music, dance, imaginative play and role play in which they can act out stories and represent their own thoughts and feelings. Adult modelling and guidance further develops this understanding of **awe** and **wonder** and encourages pupils to explore all their senses to explain their ideas and views.



Implementation

Religious Education is statutory for all pupils and is therefore compulsory unless withdrawn by their parents or carers.

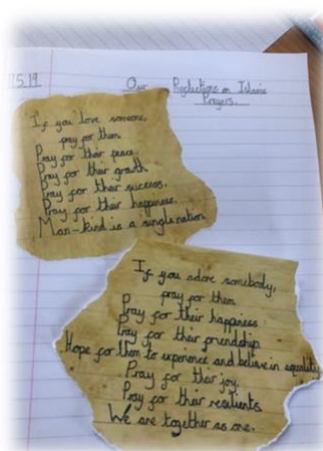
'Religious Education provides opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.'

(Redcar and Cleveland Local Agreed Syllabus)

At Newcomen Primary School, we follow the Redcar and Cleveland Agreed Syllabus which is progressive, appropriate and knowledge rich. Our pupils are immersed in a wide range of studies of the main world religions as well as understanding worldviews and non-religious views. This allows our pupils to be informed individuals who are able to express their views and opinions in a respectful and empathic manner in a safe and secure environment.



The scheme of work for R.E. shows a whole school approach. The R.E. curriculum allows our pupils to move through school, building upon the three different types of knowledge which are not taught in isolation; these sit within interconnected webs in the long-term memory. Getting better at R.E. comprises knowing more and remembering more. The children firstly use substantive knowledge which is the knowing about religions and non-religious traditions. Secondly, 'ways of knowing' in which our pupils learn how to know about religion and non-religion and finally 'personal knowledge' where our pupils build an awareness of their own beliefs and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they have studied.



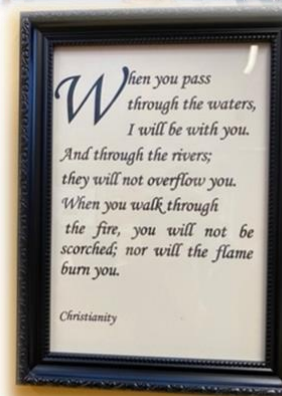
At Newcomen Primary, our pupils are immersed in a rich knowledge based curriculum. In Early Years, our pupils work through themes which provide our children with knowledge and understanding of the world religions and non-religions. These themes highlight Special Times, Special Stories, Special People, Special Books and Special People in the Community. Our language rich approach allows our pupils to learn new vocabulary and subject specific words whilst using all their senses to explore these different beliefs, practices and express their own feelings. We place a great emphasis on opportunities to reflect upon learning and how this makes us feel whilst being able to ask questions.



The breadth of the curriculum in Key Stage 1 ensures our pupils are taught Christianity, Judaism and secular world views. Our pupils, encounter special events, places and people linked to these religions and express their own views and ask relevant questions. The curriculum provides opportunities for the pupils to reflect and talk about thought provoking questions which may arise and relating their own personal beliefs and experiences to these key elements. Our pupils show respect in a safe environment where it is

encouraged to talk about attitudes to diversity in a positive and considerate manner. This ensures that our pupils develop the power to recognise and talk openly about feelings, such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow.

Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils will learn about and from Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism whilst the further understanding of Christianity is explored recognising the impact of religion and non-religions as well as beliefs locally, nationally and globally. Our pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of religious and world views using subject specific vocabulary. At Newcomen, our pupils are immersed in a wide variety of visits with multi-cultural themes and our shared heritage which is celebrated in Learning Area 2. Throughout school, displays promote and celebrate our knowledge and understanding of world religions, cultural diversity and religious practices.



Our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development lies at the heart of our shared family ethos and culture which permeates every aspect of school life. Our annual 'One World Our World' event allows our pupils to take part in, promote and celebrate all that it means to 'belong.' This togetherness is highlighted throughout the school and is shown in the school hall where our family wall reinforces this sense of belonging.



In Learning Area 4, our displays promote individual heroes past and present who have made a valuable contribution to our wider society, community and world. These individuals have shown the importance of having a strong belief and commitment and what it means to be a good human being with a moral sense of purpose to make a positive difference. As a whole school, we democratically decide on these heroes after discussion and whole school study.



Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessments for Religious Education set out the knowledge, skills and understanding of our pupils. Pupils are expected to know, apply and understand matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study. At Newcomen Primary School, assessments are carried out regularly and allow staff, leadership and Curriculum Leaders to track progress of individual pupils. This informs our pupils of what they know and have achieved as well as next steps. It ensures that staff know who has achieved the intention which allows for further progression.

Assessment is planned for and is in two areas:

1. 'Learning About Religions and Worldviews. Learning about religions assesses how our pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of beliefs, teachings and ways of life and how to express meaning.
2. 'Learning From Religions and Worldviews'. Learning from religions assesses how pupils express their responses and insights which discuss identity, diversity and belonging as well as values and commitments.

These two attainment targets are closely related and are not taught in isolation and therefore, when assessing, we ensure that assessments take place in relation to both attainment targets.

Resources

At Newcomen Primary School, our pupils are offered a wide range of stimulating opportunities to learn enhancing their engagement through a rich knowledge based curriculum. Our pupils are given opportunities to visit places of worship such as the local church, the Hindu temple and the mosque. This provides our pupils with real life experiences. We also engage in on-online learning and take part in workshops linked to the Hindu festival of Diwali and the Islamic Diversity Centre which allows our pupils to participate in a range of activities. At Newcomen, visitors are warmly welcomed and through discussion, activities and workshops, our pupils gain experiences in understanding the beliefs of others.



Religious Education is taught through art, design, music, dance and drama to support creative talents. Our annual Family Day reflects our shared sense of belonging and is celebrated with our families and the local community. Our Christmas performances are wonderful shared spiritual moments and throughout school children are immersed into the story of the birth of Jesus. These special performances allow our pupils to sing exquisitely, act and speak in an articulate manner, whilst being reflective and showing an understanding of the significance of this important festival for Christians. They truly are a sight to behold.

Artefacts are used to create a sense of awe and wonder allowing our pupils to use their senses to explore religious beliefs and practices whilst showing respect for the beliefs and values of others.

Impact

At Newcomen Primary, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils embrace our wonderful world and its differing world religions and non-religions; this contributes to the knowledge that our pupils need to be well-informed individuals.

Our children master the skills required to know about religions and from religions whilst being able to communicate their own beliefs and views. They are able to make informed decisions based upon what they have learnt both spiritually and morally.



Our Religious Education curriculum promotes inquisitive minds, respect, tolerance and understanding of all those around them. Our pupils leave our school with a sense of belonging where they have the confidence to make the right decisions, self-evaluate and become life-long learners.

Quotes from our children from our Family Questionnaire 2021:

'The best thing about our school is our Family Day because it is a celebration where we spend time with family members and friends and singing harmoniously; it is the pinnacle of the year.'

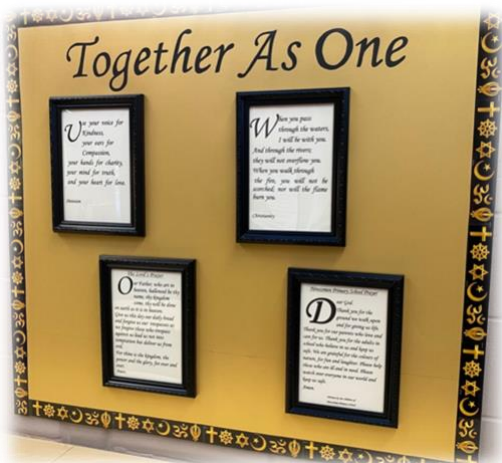
'Our heroes wall, which represents amazing people we have democratically decided to celebrate, inspire us to follow their examples.'

'Our school has inspirational quotes and displays right across the whole building. Adults encourage and support me and my peers to do the best we can.'

'The best thing in Newcomen is being part of a family and staying together and feeling a sense of belonging (simul ut unum).'

'I am proud that I got my head teacher award for empathy.'

'We are a family.'



Quotes from our parents and carers from our Family Day Questionnaire 2021:

'It is clear that the pandemic has not impacted on the quality of the children's education. I am sure that the compassionate and empathetic responses that my child has observed from staff at Newcomen, has gone a long way to building my child's personal resilience and emotional intelligence.

Thank you for providing support and reassurance to us and our children throughout this past year. It was good to know that school was there even when we were home learning; the steps taken to keep our children safe have all been implemented and communicated effectively. Our children are genuinely loved and cared for by all of the staff and you have been great help at getting our children through all this, remaining a constant in their lives whether in school or from home. The help given to key workers was amazing and proves how fantastic our school really is. Thank you for everything. Newcomen staff are truly amazing'. Please visit our website to view the full summary of our Family Questionnaires.

Ofsted: July 7th 2016:

'The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development lies at the heart of all that school staff do. They are determined that all pupils grow into respectful and tolerant members of society.



The school's work to promote personal development and welfare is outstanding. The whole school commitment to enabling every pupil to succeed is evident in every aspect of its work.



Visits and visitors to the school are all enhancing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of a variety of traditions and cultures that exist here in Great Britain and beyond in the wider world. A special topic called 'One World Our World' wove together all the cultural diversity, religious practices and traditions within the school and celebrated both the uniqueness and sameness of the families attending the school.

Pupils benefit from positive, warm and trusting relationships from both staff and peers alike. Pupils talk with confidence and display extremely mature attitudes both towards their learning and to their responsibilities around them and in the wider world. As one Y3 pupil stated: 'We have a culture of respect and we respect everyone.'

Parental/Carer right to withdraw children from Religious Education (RE)

Parents and carers have the right to choose whether to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school.

A school should ensure parents and carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them but not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost.

Withdrawal Procedure

If a parent or carer chooses to withdraw their child from RE, they need to:

- Inform the school of their request for their child(ren) to be withdrawn from RE and/or 'religious assembly' and whether they intend partial or total withdrawal for their child(ren)
- This should be either in person or in writing to the Headteacher.