

Our Religious Education Provision

Intent

By the end of Year 6 at Plympton St. Maurice, we aim for children to understand what it means to be a knowledgeable and reflective individual in matters of faith and belief. Our curriculum presents a comprehensive exploration of religious concepts, traditions, and values, fostering a deep appreciation for the diverse spiritual landscapes that shape our world.

It inspires critical thinking and curiosity while equipping children with the understanding and skills to engage meaningfully with various religious perspectives and moral questions, igniting their understanding of the significance of faith in human experience.

We examine key concepts such as belief, values, ethics, community, and spirituality through diverse narratives from major world religions, significant ethical dilemmas, and influential figures in local and global contexts. This foundation helps children make connections, analyse diverse perspectives, ask meaningful questions, and construct thoughtful narratives about life's big questions and the role of religion in society. We emphasise religious enquiry, teaching children to use evidence critically to assess beliefs and practices, understand differing perspectives on moral issues, and develop informed viewpoints.

Key aspects of our curriculum include:

- **Understanding Beliefs:** Children learn about major world religions and their belief systems, exploring their teachings, practices, and the impact they have on individuals and communities.
- **Critical Reflection:** We encourage children to engage in thoughtful discussions, analyse religious texts, paintings and beliefs, to distinguish between core beliefs and cultural practices, and appreciate the diversity of faith perspectives, fostering skills essential for informed citizenship.
- **Cultural and Ethical Appreciation:** We promote the exploration of various cultures and their religious interactions with society, helping children understand the complexities of belief systems and ethical frameworks in shaping human experience.
- **Engaging Teaching Methods:** Through storytelling, discussions, debates, and multimedia resources, we actively engage children in learning and foster a lifelong interest in the study of religion and ethics.
- **Personal Connections:** We help children relate religious concepts and ethical issues to their own lives, encouraging exploration and reflection on their values and the significance of diverse beliefs in their communities.
- **Essential Skills Development:** We equip children with research, interpretation, and presentation skills to prepare them for further study and active participation in discussions about faith and morality in society.

At Plympton St. Maurice Primary School, we view Religious Education as a dynamic exploration of human experience and belief, not just a collection of facts and texts. Our inclusive curriculum reflects the rich narratives that shape our world. By fostering curiosity, mutual respect and tolerance for all faiths, we aim to empower our children to become empathetic, knowledgeable, and responsible members of society, nurturing their curiosity while being aspirational in their understanding of religious and moral issues.

Implementation

Our curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced to foster a comprehensive understanding of religious education from Early Years through Key Stage 2 (KS2). In Early Years, we lay a solid foundation by introducing engaging, age-appropriate concepts focused on personal beliefs and local faith communities. Children explore their immediate environment, share family experiences related to their own beliefs, and learn about basic religious concepts through play and exploration. Activities help them distinguish between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Storytelling and simple narratives about local places of worship and cultural traditions spark curiosity, while play-based activities, role-playing, and artistic expressions foster empathy and understanding of different faiths, while basic religious vocabulary aids children in articulating their grasp of belief and practice.

As children transition to Key Stage 1, the curriculum shifts to a deeper exploration of religious traditions, enhancing their understanding of beliefs, practices, and their roles in shaping communities while fostering a personal connection to their own faiths and those of others. In Key Stage 2, we implement the knowledge-rich Opening Worlds program, which provides coherent links between lessons to enhance retention and empower children to tackle complex religious topics. This approach emphasises structured enquiry, encouraging children to ask meaningful questions about beliefs and critically analyse religious practices. By connecting religious concepts to their cultural and historical contexts, we deepen their insights and promote the recognition of patterns across different faiths and practices.

To enhance engagement, we employ various teaching strategies, including inquiry-based learning framed around key questions that encourage independent thinking. Understanding of religious concepts is reinforced through discussions, visual aids, and multimedia resources, while active learning techniques foster empathy and understanding of diverse religious perspectives. Cross-curricular links integrate religious education with history and geography reinforcing learning across subjects. Children also engage with primary religious texts and teachings to develop critical thinking and enquiry skills. Pre-teaching key vocabulary is essential; we utilise fast-paced questioning, clear pronunciation, and choral responses to reinforce understanding. Engaging storytelling about different faith traditions captures children's attention and fosters connections to the material. Retrieval practices promote active participation and ensure fluency in vocabulary and concepts without overwhelming working memory. Differentiating core religious knowledge from supporting details helps children grasp essential beliefs within a broader context.

Teachers present subject matter clearly through structured lessons with specific learning objectives, breaking down complex concepts into manageable steps. Interactive presentations using multimedia tools enhance accessibility, while targeted questioning stimulates discussion and encourages exploration of different viewpoints. Discussion-based learning through small group work and debates allows children to articulate their ideas collaboratively. Throughout these interactions, teachers guide religious thinking with probing questions that promote effective learning, retention, and critical engagement.

To check understanding, teachers use formative assessment techniques, gauging comprehension through questioning, quizzes, and discussions. Low-stakes assessments provide real-time insights, while targeted feedback refines children's religious understanding and analytical skills. Regular recap activities, such as quizzes on previous topics, ensure knowledge retention, and summative assessments at the end of units allow children to demonstrate their understanding of religious concepts and inquiry skills. Our curriculum inspires not only the memorisation of facts but also deep thinking, question-asking, and critical engagement with religious content, fostering a lifelong interest in understanding diverse beliefs and building analytical skills that children carry into other areas of learning.

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 (2024/25)	Year 6 (2024/25)
<p><u>Term 1</u> Being Special: Where do we belong?</p> <p><u>Term 2</u> Why is Christmas special for Christians?</p> <p><u>Term 3</u> Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?</p> <p><u>Term 4</u> Why is Easter special to Christians?</p> <p><u>Term 5</u> Which places are special and why?</p> <p><u>Term 6</u> Which stories are special and why?</p>	<p><u>Term 1</u> What does it mean to belong to a faith community?</p> <p><u>Term 2</u> What do Christians believe God is like?</p> <p><u>Term 3 & 4</u> Who is Jewish and how do they live?</p> <p><u>Term 5</u> Who do Christians say made the world?</p> <p><u>Term 6</u> How should we care for the world and for others, and why does it matter?</p>	<p><u>Term 1</u> Who is a Muslim and how do they live?</p> <p><u>Term 2</u> Why does Christmas matter to Christians?</p> <p><u>Term 3</u> Who is a Muslim and how do they live?</p> <p><u>Term 4</u> Why does Easter matter to Christians?</p> <p><u>Term 5</u> What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings?</p> <p><u>Term 6</u> What makes some places sacred to believers?</p>	<p>Hinduism 1 What does the story of Rama and Sita mean to Hindu peoples?</p> <p>Hinduism 2 What do Hindus learn from Vishnu's stories and symbols?</p> <p>Hinduism 3 How do Hindus show their devotion?</p> <p>Judaism 1 Why is the Promised Land so important in Judaism?</p> <p>Judaism 2 Why do Jews celebrate the festival of Passover?</p> <p>Judaism 3: How do Jews today show the importance of the Jewish Temple and the kingdom of Israel?</p>			<p>Christianity 1: <u>The family of Jesus</u> Why is the idea of 'Messiah' so important to Christians?</p> <p>Christianity 2: <u>The birth of Jesus</u> How do Christians express their beliefs about Jesus at Christmas time?</p> <p>Christianity 3: <u>Life and teachings of Jesus</u> How does the life and teaching of Jesus affect the way in which Christians live?</p> <p>Christianity 4: <u>The death and resurrection of Jesus</u> What do the death and resurrection of Jesus mean in Christian traditions?</p> <p>Christianity 5: <u>The message of Jesus spreads</u> How did Christianity develop in the early Church and how do we know?</p> <p>Islam 1: <u>Ramadan</u> What does Ramadan mean to Muslims today?</p>

Impact

At Plympton St. Maurice Primary School, our Religious Education curriculum equips children with a comprehensive understanding of both local and global faith traditions, fostering critical thinking and enquiry skills from Early Years through Key Stage 2. By engaging in age-appropriate activities, children develop essential religious vocabulary and concepts that enable them to articulate their understanding and make connections between their beliefs, their community, and the wider world. Children leave our school adept at applying their knowledge to analyse religious texts and paintings, recognise patterns in beliefs and practices, and formulate informed perspectives on ethical and moral issues. They engage critically with diverse sources, learning to differentiate between fact and interpretation, which prepares them for thoughtful discussions and debates about pressing religious and ethical challenges. Through enquiry-based learning and interactive experiences, children not only retain information but also develop a genuine curiosity about religion that extends beyond the classroom. As a result, children leave our school well-prepared for the next stage of their education. They possess the skills necessary for further academic study, including research, interpretation, and presentation abilities. Additionally, their solid foundation in religious enquiry ensures they are ready to engage thoughtfully with complex subjects in secondary education, fostering responsible and informed citizenship in their future endeavours.