

Aims of Religious Education

RE aims to give children the knowledge, critical thinking skills, open minded and respectful attitude with which to investigate the world of religion and beliefs, and make their own decisions about what this means to them, whilst empathising with what it means to those who hold those beliefs. It also aims to enable children to grow spiritually by developing their awareness and skills of reflection, their experience of awe and wonder and their appreciation of stillness and silence.

Attending RE lessons

RE is a statutory subject in all schools in England, except for those children withdrawn at the request of their parents. (Education Act 2002, section 80). It is parents' legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child.

Jigsaw RE

Jigsaw RE is a comprehensive enquiry-based, teaching programme for Religious Education for 3-11 year olds. Our belief is that, using this model well, children's critical thinking skills can be developed, their motivation to learn increased, and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise, will be enhanced. This approach takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief.

The enquiry approach to RE in Jigsaw RE

"using the approach of a philosophical enquiry can deepen and extend pupils' investigation into religion".

"In the most effective RE teaching, enquiry is based at the heart of the learning".

Ofsted report on RE, "Religious Education: realising the potential", 2013

Jigsaw RE promotes this enquiry approach because it had become evident from teachers and children's work across hundreds of schools in England, that this motivates in-depth exploration of RE content/subject knowledge in order to answer the big enquiry question. Knowledge is no longer an end in itself, it is now important as the means with which to explore potential answers to the big questions posed in each Jigsaw RE enquiry.

Jigsaw RE four-step learning model: -

- Step 1: Engagement - the children's own human experience is explored to act as bridge from their world (which may or may not include religion) into the world of the religion being studied;

- Step 2: Investigation - over approximately the next 3 lessons, the teacher will guide the children to explore and investigate appropriate subject knowledge relevant to that question of enquiry;
- Step 3: Evaluation: - an assessment activity enables each child to show their thinking and the depth of critical evaluation;
- Step 4: Expression - this refers the children back to the starting point of their own experience and allows them to reflect on whether their findings have influenced their own thinking.

Finding out more information about Jigsaw RE

If you would like any further information about how Jigsaw RE is taught in school and which religions/worldviews are studied, please do not hesitate to get in touch with school and we will answer any questions you may have. If there are some very specific questions that would be answered best by the Jigsaw RE team, school can contact the team directly. Parents and carers are very welcome to visit the Jigsaw RE website where there is further information.