

MERTON COURT SCHOOL



Religious Education Policy

To be reviewed October 2027 by: RE Co-ordinator, Headmaster, LT	
Signed by the Headmaster/Proprietor:	
Shared with staff:	6/10/26
Put on the Website:	6/10/26

Applies to:

- Whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Related documents:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- PSE Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy
- RHE Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Learning Skills for Life Model
- SEND
- EYFS Statutory Framework (Sept 2026)

Availability

This policy is made available to parents and staff in the following ways: via the staff shared drive or on request a copy from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster/Proprietors who will undertake an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown, or earlier if

changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Context

Merton Court was founded on Christian principles in 1899 and officially became a school of 'Specific Christian Character' in 2004. By upholding these values, we can offer sincere respect to members of all faiths. The school provides a caring, structured environment that encourages excellence and seeks to enable children to take responsibility for their own lives as well as respecting and valuing others.

Religious Education falls within the 'Learning Skills for Life' model of 'Head Hand Heart'. The children will learn about World Religions and Spirituality (Heart), this will allow them to develop an understanding of and respect for others who share our multi-cultural society but have different views from them (Head) and should, in turn, influence how they reach out to our wider community (Hand).

Aims

We aim to introduce children to the core teachings and practices of six main world religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism) and provide the opportunity to compare and discuss these teachings in a supportive and respectful environment and in an age-appropriate manner.

Objectives

By the end of KS1, children should be able to:

- recall facts about the religions they have studied
- use some religious vocabulary to begin to explain the significance of religious practices/beliefs.
- retell religious stories, including key Bible stories
- talk about what concepts like belonging, commitment, kindness and forgiveness mean, in their experience.
- express their own thoughts and respond sensitively when others hold different points of view.
- start thinking through the enquiry questions and begin to understand that there may be more than one answer.

By the end of KS2, children should be able to:

- describe the key teachings of the religions studied: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Santana Dharma (Hinduism), Sikhism and Buddhism
- apply their knowledge to an enquiry and give an answer supported by facts

- explain how religious beliefs, ideas and feelings can be expressed in a variety of forms, giving meanings for symbols, stories and language, using appropriate terminology
- talk about a concept/belief e.g. 'belonging' and start to relate this to the religion being studied
- express their own opinions and start to support them with rationale
- show an understanding of why certain things are held to be right and wrong.

Delivery

Merton Court delivers an ambitious curriculum which allows children to self-reflect, ask themselves questions and empathise with others. Formal RE classes are timetabled for one lesson per week, using the 'Jigsaw RE' programme. This is an enquiry-based model which *"takes very seriously the philosophy that children are free to make their own choices and decisions regarding religion and belief. RE does not try to persuade but rather to inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place"* Jan Lever 2017.

As a school of 'Specific Christian Character', Merton Court includes acts of worship on a regular basis, they are as follows:

- Whole-school assemblies on Mondays, led by a range of staff, reflect the Christian foundation of the school, together with the awareness of the multi-cultural society in which we live;
- Whole-school assemblies on Thursdays, led by class forms (one assembly per year-group each term), based on the subject focus for that term and ending with a prayer;
- Daily prayer of thanks is led by the member of staff on duty at lunch times;
- Worship is celebrated with singing at various times throughout the year including Prizegivings, Harvest, Remembrance, Junior Production and the Carol Service.

Community Links

Merton Court fosters the children's development to become citizens of the world. This begins with development of links beyond the school gates, to our local community. Merton Court has strong links with St John the Evangelist, Church of England Church, Sidcup. The school has at least two celebrations each year at the church including Harvest and Christmas. The Vicar is invited to lead a whole-school assembly and each year-group is encouraged to visit St John's once a year to support their curriculum work.

The school fosters contacts with other community groups such as the British Legion, Frognaal House, the emergency services, CRiBS, Sidcup Business

Partnership and local charities. Merton Court is also exploring links with other faiths and welcomes opportunities to raise awareness and the understanding of these, often through families within our school community.

Assessment and Reporting

There is no formal assessment in RE, children do not have exercise books in this subject as the predominant focus is on discussion. Opportunities to assess the progress and achievements of the children exist through observation of role-play, presentations and involvement in class discussions. Children also have many opportunities to reinforce work through written or pictorial responses such as letters, information leaflets, drawings and posters, which are recorded in the Yeargroup RE Journal.

Coffee Mornings and Parent Evenings give parents an opportunity to discuss their child's progress in RE. Autumn and Summer termly reports include a formal written comment on RE, in the main school.

Monitoring/Evaluation

The RE Journal is updated weekly by the class teacher. This could include examples of children's work, photographs and written comments.

This journal is monitored once a year by the subject co-ordinator.

An End of Unit Assessment form should be completed by the form teacher to identify children who are exceeding expectations and those who have not yet achieved them, for each unit. This form should be kept in the Ac/Pas file and a copy given to the RE Coordinator.

We highly value pupil voice and the co-ordinator holds discussions with children from each year-group to monitor their progress and understanding within the context of RE, as they move up the school.