



Religion and Worldviews Curriculum Intent Statement



At Westacre Middle School, we aim to foster a life-long love of learning, through adopting a practical and cross-curricular approach. Our Creative Curriculum aims to deliver a world class education that will equip our children with the skills required to be independent and responsible citizens. The curriculum matches our whole school vision, which fosters an atmosphere of inspiration, challenge and achievement. “Inspire. Challenge. Achieve”

At Westacre Middle School we aim to provide pupils with a well-rounded understanding of the World around them. Pupils learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

Why do we teach Religion and Worldviews?

Religious Education contributes dynamically to children’s education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In R&W, they learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully. This also links to our 6Rs approach which helps pupils to be responsible, resilient, ready, reflective, reasoned and resourceful learners.

Key Concepts in Religion and Worldviews

Key concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema within our skills progression maps. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics across all year groups. Through this ‘forwards-and-backwards engineering’ of the curriculum, students return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them. In Religion and Worldviews, the key concepts are Believing, Living and Expressing and Philosophical Questioning.

Believing incorporates: religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth

Expressing incorporates: religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.

Philosophical reasoning incorporates: religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitment as well as inspirational people.

Knowledge Categories in Religion and Worldviews

Knowledge categories in each subject give students a way of expressing their understanding of the key concepts and linking their learning across the year groups. In Believing, the knowledge categories are places of worship, founders/leaders, texts, rituals and beliefs. In Living and Expressing, the knowledge categories are expression and practice of religious beliefs, individual daily life and the wider world. In Philosophical Reasoning, the knowledge categories are questioning, ethical decisions and inspirational people.

SMSC Links

Religion and Worldviews explores the big questions about life, to find out what makes people believe and what difference this makes to how they live. Religion and Worldviews helps our pupils to make sense of religion and beliefs, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Spiritual: Spiritual development refers to the aspects of our children's spirit which are enhanced by school life and learning at Westacre. It describes the 'spirit' of determination, sharing and open-mindedness.

R&W at Westacre supports this by promoting self-awareness through our learning values-our 6Rs. We promote curiosity: encouraging children's capacity for critical questioning in lessons, when visitors come into school and on visits out of school. Reflection and resilience are a part of our school learning values and encourage our children to reflect on their own values and views, as well as those of others, and to consider the impact of these values. We promote a spirit of open enquiry into emotive or complicated questions, in order for our children to learn how to cope with difficult ideas when they arise in the future.

We regularly welcome speakers into school assemblies and visit places of worship to learn from people of different backgrounds. Over their time at Westacre our children visit local places of worship including churches, a mosque and temple.

Moral: moral development is about exploring and developing our children's own moral outlook and understanding of right and wrong. It is also about learning to navigate the fact of moral diversity in the world. We promote this through discussions and shared stories. In the classroom, we offer activities which enable teamwork and trust and require empathy. Year 7 take part in an annual enterprise project and part of their profits are given to a charity of their choice.

Moral character development: R&W offers a safe space where pupils can learn from their mistakes, appreciate ideas of right and wrong, continue to strive after setbacks, take the initiative, act responsibly and demonstrate resilience. We involve our children in establishing appropriate moral codes for classroom, school (through our Pupil Parliament) and the wider community.

Moral diversity: we incorporate debates and discussions into lessons to prepare pupils for the fact that there will always be disagreement on matters of morality and their right of expression is balanced by a responsibility to listen to the views of others. We choose age-appropriate topics which allow exploration of different moral outlooks such as religious texts about right and wrong, codes for living, treatment of animals and the environment, gender roles in religion, religious views of homosexuality, and so on.

Social: Developing our children socially means we aim to give them the opportunities to explore and understand social situations and contexts they may encounter in school at Westacre or outside in the wider world. We do this through role play as well as classroom-based lessons.

We investigate shared values, idealised concepts such as justice, fairness, honesty and truth, and specific examples of how they affect life, who influences us from family, friends, and the media to the wider society as well as inspirational role models from people in our own communities to world famous people.

Cultural: Religion and Worldviews is the perfect subject in which to explore Britain's rich diversity of religious, ethnic and geographical cultures. At Westacre, we explore food, festivals, music, art, architecture and other forms of religious and cultural expression.. Children, who belong to a particular cultural group are, encouraged to share their experiences in class discussion, give a talk or even an assembly. Previous Christmas showcase productions explored Christmas in different cultures and incorporated a drama written and performed by some of our children with Polish heritage. Our harvest celebration likewise looked at the importance of harvest in different cultures and included a reading in Polish.

How we promote Aspirations in Religion and Worldviews

We aspire to make our children global citizens by teaching our pupils about the characteristics of successful citizens through our 6Rs approach-responsible, resilient, ready, reflective, reasoned and resourceful. We aim to show how these values are intrinsic parts of many religions and non-religious beliefs. We encourage our children to aspire to be kind and caring citizens by investigating how many religious and non-religious groups and charities help others around the world. We listen to our children's concerns and ideas about who and how we can help others. They have organised and run their own fundraising activities.

Through our curriculum, we aim to inspire our children to foster a caring attitude and empathise with others. We promote charities and encourage our children to take part in charity fundraising and work, which we show could be a possible career path for them to follow. Other career paths could include teacher, youth worker, lawyer, aid worker as well as a career linked directly to a specific religion such as a chaplain or missionary.

How we promote Communication in Religion and Worldviews

We promote communication by encouraging our children to discuss and share their opinions and views on the topics they learn about. Communication is key in the promotion of tolerance and understanding. Communication takes on many guises from partner talk to whole class debates as well as written work.

We encourage our children to question ideas and learn through communication. We have visits out of school and visitors into school.

How we promote Diversity in Religion and Worldviews

We promote diversity by studying a wide range of religions and worldviews. We visit three different places of worship as well as having visitors into school from many different communities to talk to our children assemblies or as part of lessons.