

Foundation Stage

Introduction

The foundation stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of reception at the age of 5 years. Religious education is statutory for all registered pupils on the school roll.

During the foundation stage, children begin to explore the world of religion and belief in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects, visiting places of worship and through celebration. Children listen to and talk about stories. They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect upon their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

The contribution of religious education to the early learning goals

The early learning goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the foundation stage.

The six areas of learning identified in these goals are:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- mathematical development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development

Religious education can make an active contribution to all of these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to the following goals.

Personal, social and emotional development

| Self-confidence and self-esteem | Examples of what children could do in RE |
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| Respond to significant experiences showing a range of feelings when appropriate. | Children reflect upon their own feelings and experiences in some stories from religious traditions and explore them in different ways. |
| Have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to those of others. | Using role play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important. |
| Have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs, and those of other people. | Children visit local places of worship and talk about why they are important for some people. |
| Making relationships and behaviour and self-control | Examples of what children could do in RE |
| Work as part of group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that there needs to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups of people, including adults and children, to work together harmoniously. | Using story from a religious tradition as a source, children talk about their ideas of what is fair and unfair, and how to behave towards each other. |

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| Think about issues of right and wrong and why. Consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others. | Using story as a stimulus, children reflect upon the words and actions of characters in the story and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. Children also learn about the consequences of their actions through play. |
| <p>Sense of community</p> <p>Understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect.</p> <p>Understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect.</p> | Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children handle sensitively a religious object and talk about why it might be special for some people, showing respect. |

Communication, language and literacy

| Communication, language and literacy | Examples of what children could do in RE |
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| Listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs and other music rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems. | Using stories and songs from religion as a stimulus, children ask questions about things they find interesting or puzzling. |
| Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words. | Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect |
| Using language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events. | Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration. |
| Retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories. | Children identify and talk about the sequence of events in a story about love and forgiveness. |

Knowledge and understanding of the world

| Exploration and investigation | Examples of what children could do in RE |
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| Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate. Find out about and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe. Use ICT to support their learning. | Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about uses and meanings associated with the artefact. Visit a place of worship and explore different methods / explore relevant foods using senses. Using appropriate software children find out about special events in religious traditions. |
| <p>Sense of time</p> <p>Investigate past and present events in their own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know.</p> | Children talk about important events such as the birth of a baby and how, for some people, this is celebrated by a religious ceremony. |
| <p>Sense of place</p> <p>Explore their environment and talk about those features they like and dislike.</p> | Using stories from religious traditions as a stimulus, children talk about the importance of valuing and looking after the environment. |

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| Cultures and beliefs | Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations. |
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Begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Characteristics of Learning

Throughout the foundation stage, children are introduced to the world of religion and belief through focusing on special people, places, objects, stories, music and celebrations. They learn to recognise that religion is important to some people in their local community. They reflect on what is important to themselves and others. They engage with RE through a range of resources especially stories, artefacts, pictures, posters, ICT and simple songs, dance and drama. They reflect on and share their own feelings and become aware of the feelings of others.