

# RE in the Early Years

## RE Activities

Activities children engage in during their nursery years are experiences which provide the building blocks for later development. Starting with things which are familiar to the children and providing lots of hands-on activities and learning are important parts of pupils' learning at this stage. Activities that support religious education in the nursery include:

- creative play, make-believe, role play, dance and drama
- dressing up and acting out scenes from stories, celebrations or festivals
- making and eating festival food
- talking and listening to each other; hearing and discussing stories of all kinds, including religious and secular stories with themes such as goodness, difference, the inner world of thoughts and feelings, and imagination
- exploring authentic religious artefacts, including those designed for small children such as 'soft toy' artefacts or story books
- seeing pictures, books and videos of places of worship and meeting believers in class
- listening to religious music
- starting to introduce religious terminology
- work on nature, growing and life cycles or harvest
- seizing opportunities spontaneously or linking with topical, local events such as celebrations, festivals, the birth of a new baby, weddings or the death of a pet
- starting to talk about the different ways in which people believe and behave, and encouraging children to ask questions.

# RE in the Early Years

Area	RE enables children to:
Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop their spoken language through quality conversation in a language-rich environment, gaining new vocabulary about religion and worldviews</li> <li>• Engage actively with stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems from the RE field, taking opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts</li> <li>• Share their ideas via conversation, storytelling and role play, responding to support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate their thoughts in the RE field</li> <li>• Become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures in relation to RE content.</li> <li>• Offer explanations and answers to 'why' questions about religious stories, non-fiction, rhymes, songs and poems.</li> </ul>
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and join in warm and supportive relationships with adults and learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others</li> <li>• Manage emotions and develop a positive sense of self, understanding their own feelings and those of others e.g. through religious story</li> <li>• Talk and think about simple values as they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably</li> <li>• Notice and respond to ideas about caring, sharing and kindness from RE content including stories, sayings and songs.</li> </ul>
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use and develop their motor skills through RE based arts and craft activities and, for example, small world play, visual representations of their ideas and thoughts, role play</li> </ul>
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build their abilities in language comprehension through talking with adults about the world around them, including the world of religion and belief</li> <li>• Engage with stories and non-fiction in RE settings and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.</li> <li>• Build their skills in RE-related word reading, recognising religious words and discovering new vocabulary in relation to religions and worldviews</li> <li>• Articulate ideas and use RE examples to write simple phrases or sentences that can be read by others.</li> </ul>
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop their spatial reasoning skills, noticing shape, space and measures in relation to RE content</li> <li>• Look for patterns and relationships and spot connections, sorting and ordering objects simply</li> </ul>

# RE in the Early Years

Area	RE enables children to:
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sense of their physical world and their community, e.g. on visits to places of worship, or by meeting members of religious communities</li><li>• Listen to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems to foster understanding of our culturally, socially and ecologically diverse world.</li><li>• Extend their knowledge and familiarity with words that support understanding of religion and belief</li><li>• Talk about the lives of people around them, understanding characters and events from stories.</li><li>• Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read and experienced in class.</li><li>• Explore the natural world around them making observations of animals and plants, environments and seasons, making space for responses of joy, wonder, awe and questioning.</li></ul>
Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop artistic and cultural awareness in relation to RE materials in relation to art, music, dance, imaginative play, and role-play and stories to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.</li><li>• Build their imagination and creativity by exploring and playing with a wide range of media and materials using RE content, responding in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste.</li><li>• See, hear and participate in a wide range of examples of religious and spiritual expression, developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts.</li><li>• Create work drawing from religions and beliefs with a variety of materials and tools, sharing their creations and explaining the meaning of their work.</li><li>• Adapt and recount religious stories inventively, imaginatively and expressively, and sing, perform and learn from well-known songs in RE imaginatively and expressively</li></ul>