



Chess Valley  
Primary  
Learning  
Trust

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Date: Spring 2023

Review date: Spring 2025

### BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT OUR SCHOOL

Religious Education (RE) is a Key Subject at our school. As an academy we are able to determine our own Policy in accordance with the Trust Deed of a Church of England School, which states that the children of Christ Church School should be educated in accordance with the principles of the established Church. It is a necessary part of a broad and balanced curriculum (note 1).

As RE is not nationally determined a locally agreed syllabus of RE is prepared by a local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and adopted by a local authority. We have opted to use the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017-2022, supplemented with the Understanding Christianity resource, published by the Church of England Education Office (note 2).

Christ Church School is closely integrated with Christ Church Chorleywood and for this reason many of the children come from Christian backgrounds. In addition there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. RE is concerned with 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion'. The faith backgrounds and ethnicity of both the staff and the children, whether religious or non-religious, are respected at all times.

### Purpose of Study:

At this school we aim to achieve high quality RE for all pupils. RE teaching provides pupils with a systematic knowledge and understanding about Christianity, principal religions and world views (note 3) which give life value. RE aims to enable pupils to become religiously and theologically literate (note 4) so they can engage in life in an increasingly diverse society. It is not about telling pupils what religious views they should have but rather assists them in gaining shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints.

**Aims:** The curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom (note 5) and their impact, whilst exploring personal and critical responses.

Sources of wisdom and their impact. *All pupils should:*

- know, understand and explore the significance and impact of sacred texts, other sources of wisdom and ways of expressing meaning
- express ideas and insights about the nature of beliefs, values and practices and their impact upon the identity of individuals and communities
- recognise and explore the diversity which exists within and between religious traditions

Personal and critical responses. *All pupils should:*

- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections, critical responses and connections to faith and belief enquiring into philosophical, moral and ethical issues
- engage with the questions and answers offered by religions and worldviews concerning ultimate questions and human responsibility
- develop the skills required to engage with others in dialogue and to cooperate in society with respect and compassion

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## CURRICULUM CONTENT AND INTENT

From Year 1 to Year 6 children must:  
follow a coherent and systematic study of Christianity across each Key Stage and  
be introduced to the other five principal religions represented in Great Britain by the end of Key Stage 2

EYFS	Children will encounter Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community. Religious Education will support a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, their own community and their place within this.
Years 1 and 2	A minimum of two religions are studied. Christianity and at least one other religion. Our focus is on Judaism and Hinduism.
Years 3 and 4 Years 5 and 6	A minimum of four religions are studied. Christianity and at least three principal religions in depth. Lower KS2 – Christianity, with a focus on Islam and Sikhism. Upper KS2 – Christianity, with a focus on Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism. All six principal religions are introduced or revisited by the end of Key Stage 2.

Teaching the programmes of study contributes to developing religious and theological literacy through religions and worldviews. We explore eight key areas of learning throughout each key stage to meet the aims of our curriculum:

- Beliefs and practices
- Sources of wisdom
- Symbols and actions
- Prayer, worship and reflection
- Identity and belonging
- Ultimate questions
- Human responsibility and values
- Justice and fairness

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. Through a range of strategies, such as: enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and visitors of faith and belief, pupils are actively engaged in learning.

### TIME ALLOCATION FOR RE

In line with the requirements of the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017-2022:

At EYFS RE is delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS

At Key Stage 1 pupils spend 60 hours over 2 years (approximately 10 hours per term)

At Key Stage 2 pupils spend 156 hours over 4 years (approximately 13 hours per term).

These minimum time requirements include visits and RE curriculum days but not school productions related to festivals, assembly or collective worship time.

(See Collective Worship policy).

### WITHDRAWAL

At this school it is our practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of the RE curriculum before honouring the right of withdrawal from RE (*note 6*). If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child is expected to consult with the Headteacher.

### ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING (see school Assessment policy)

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017-2022 sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as a requirement outlined in the syllabus. Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing.

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Through activities for example, discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against expected learning outcomes wheels for assessment and in line with other areas of the curriculum. At this school we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

## **PLANNING**

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each Key Stage, the school follows the enquiry based approach set out in 'Religion for Today and Tomorrow' non-statutory guidance, supporting the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017-2022. We also draw upon the resources provided by the Understanding Christianity project.

Our long term planning builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the eight key areas of learning. Our scheme of work ensures that pupils have encountered and explored the religions through the EYFS and Key Stages 1 and 2. We have used a combination of teaching RE through the creative curriculum, RE days and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

Termly planning is provided by every class teacher, and the RE Subject Leader is available to provide support with this. When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts of the programme of study are to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The work planned must be relevant to the needs of all pupils.

## **RESOURCES**

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We recently distributed the resources throughout the school, providing every year group with their own box of relevant artefacts, books, posters, and other media resources. Each class has a selection of age appropriate Bibles in their classroom and there are two full sets in the resource corridor.

### **CROSS CURRICULAR APPROACHES**

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. Children's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

RE presents many opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, knowledge and awareness of Prevent, British values, keeping children safe and the diversity, equality and cohesion agendas. These are all essential contributing factors in providing outstanding RE teaching and learning for all children.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The RE subject leader leads this area of the curriculum in line with our job description for subject leaders.

There is at least one annual staff meeting on RE, led by the subject leader; where areas for development are discussed. The subject leader carries out subject monitoring termly, and written feedback is provided to all staff. The RE policy is reviewed annually to ensure it still represents the values and practice of the school.

## **RE AND INCLUSION**

At our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make good progress. We work to meet the needs of all pupils with special education needs, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language.

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## **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

*Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, Section 80. See also section 78 of the 2002 Education Act, which applies to all maintained schools. Academies are also required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with Section 1 of the 2010 Academies Act.*

*The locally agreed syllabus is statutory for maintained schools without a religious character and Voluntary Controlled schools. Voluntary Aided schools are not obliged to use the locally agreed syllabus. They must, however teach RE in accordance with their trust deed. Faith and non-faith academies and free schools may use their locally agreed syllabus, or a different locally agreed syllabus (with permission of the SACRE concerned), or devise their own curriculum.*

*The principal religious traditions taught are, in accordance with guidance from the DfE, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Humanism and Atheism are worldviews which are appropriate to include as part of the RE curriculum. Where we have pupils who are members of other world faiths, in line with our inclusion policy and valuing of the individual, we include aspects of that religion in RE.*

*'Religious literacy' focuses on the human experience of religion and belief and the development of skills for expressing these experiences. 'Theological literacy' focuses on the big concepts upon which religions are founded, such as God, creation and the afterlife and the development of skills for expressing these concepts. These big concepts are explored through the non-statutory additional guidance document.*

*Sources of wisdom include: sacred texts, psalms, hymns, prayers, poems, letters, paintings, icons, artefacts and people.*

*(DfES Circular 1/94 para 44-49).*