



St. Peter's
Church of England Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Issue number	Author	Date written	Approved by Governing Body	Comments
1	Paul Griffiths	23.2.2024	13.3.2023	
2	Paul Griffiths	7.4.2025	28.4.2025	Updated vision. Reference to teacher support delivery materials and training.



Our Vision

LOVE, LEARN, SHINE.

Love

Love and a strong sense of belonging, are the foundation of our school community's life. We want everyone to know and feel they are nurtured, precious, unique and loved by God.

Learn

Children should be inspired to develop a lifelong love of learning; to empower them to explore new paths and make informed choices. We are ambitious that all children become, fluent confident learners, who seek out wisdom, knowledge and skills that guide, inspire and prepare them well for life in a diverse world.

Shine

Every person has something that only they can offer. Every member of our school community is continually encouraged to shine, as only they can, enabling themselves and others to flourish in the light and love of God.

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never put it out"

(John 1.5)

Vision into Curriculum

Our vision translates directly into our curriculum in that;

Our curriculum promotes a love and appreciation of life and learning enabling children to *SHINE*, realise a passion for what is possible and enjoy life in all its fullness. It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019).

At St Peter's CE Primary School, children and families can expect a high-quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling children to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We follow the [North Yorkshire agreed syllabus](#) and deliver this with the support of [National Association of Teachers of Religious Education \(NATRE\)](#) curriculum resources. Our NATRE membership not only provides quality assured curriculum support materials written by RE specialists but also ongoing updates and wider reading for teachers and leaders in relation to best practice teaching in RE. This compliments the development work of the YCST RE network group and the training and insight provided through our partnership with the Leeds Diocese Education team.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. The use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the children's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on our children. We provide a wide range of opportunities for our children to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Aims and objectives:

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all children;

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum Aims and Purpose

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. A well planned and effectively implemented curriculum begins with a sound and secure knowledge of the National Curriculum purpose and aims for the subject.

Although RE is not part of the National Curriculum, schools are required to teach RE. Non-statutory guidance is provided, which outlines what a well design RE curriculum should entail.

It states;

- Children should develop understanding of concepts and mastery of skills to make sense of religion and belief, at an appropriate level of challenge for their age.
- RE should provide opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect and relate their learning in RE to their own experience.
- Building on the statutory requirements, it is recommended that there should be a wide-ranging study of religion and belief across the key stages as a whole.
- Not all religions need to be studied at the same depth or in each key stage, but all that are studied should be studied in a way that is coherent and promotes progression.
- Children should have the opportunity to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives, and subject matter should facilitate integration and promotion of shared values.
- The study of religion should be based on the legal requirements and provide an appropriate balance between and within Christianity, other principal religions, and, where appropriate other religious traditions and worldviews, across the key stages as a whole, making appropriate links with other parts of the curriculum and its cross-curricular dimensions.

Quality First Curriculum Implementation in Religious Education

Quality first curriculum implementation in RE supports children in becoming secure and fluent in the identified agreed core knowledge and skills. Fluency and security in this core knowledge allows children to explore concepts in greater depth whilst allowing children to find their own place within a diverse, multi-religious society. This then enables children to articulate informed responses about religion and non-religion and provides them with the opportunity to discover their own place in our world.

At St Peter's the journey to becoming RE literate begins in the Early Years. Our youngest children learn about RE following the appropriate EY units from the agreed syllabus which connect with the EYFS areas of learning known as 'Understanding of the World' and 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development'. These will also be complemented by exploration of children's interest and the 'here and how' gained from the observation, assessment and planning cycle. For instance, children will explore their own identity and listen to ideas of those around them, when taking part in circle time. Positive conversations are modelled and shared, to develop positive attitudes about the differences between people.

By the time children reach the end of Year Six they will have developed a secure religious understanding and will be working in line with age related national expectations. All children will have had the opportunity to visit several religious buildings in their time at St Peter's.

Our RE curriculum allows children to develop a deep knowledge and secure understanding of the Christian faith. Our children will also learn about the Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism faiths to reflect upon our diverse society. Through the teaching of RE, children will develop a wide range of lifelong skills including investigation, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. RE helps children to combat prejudice, appreciate diversity and promotes the essential values of tolerance and respect. During RE lessons, children are encouraged to participate in philosophical discussions, exploring some of life's big questions. They will reflect upon their own ideas and beliefs and listen to those of others, in an environment where everyone is listened to, respected and valued.

We 'look through the window' - learning about other religions and gaining a strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together.

We 'look in the mirror' - learning from religion by linking the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose. We consider why one aspect is important to a believer and help children to relate the aspect to their own life.

Wherever possible or appropriate children with SEND access RE along with their peers as we recognise the importance for all our children to access our curriculum in line with our curriculum design principles.

For some children with SEND, particularly those with high needs, access to RE is considered along with ensuring they have access to their personalised or adjusted curriculum. For example, enabling access to specialist programmes such as those advised by speech and language therapists, occupational therapy programmes or the SEN Hub. These programmes are timetabled to minimise the impact on the child's access to a broad and rich curriculum and do not impact on access to educational visits relating to this subject. Typically, these programmes are identified in EHCPs and ILPs and curriculum adaptations are agreed with parents.

Higher attainers in this subject are challenged to ensure they become fluent with the core key concepts through additional questioning and prompts (and tasks where appropriate) which helps extend their verbal reasoning skills as well as supporting them to engage in creating, evaluating, and analysing, delving deeper into the subject content.

For children with SEND, access to the learning in this subject in lessons may need to be differentiated and scaffolded, whilst the planned, progressive curriculum content is retained. Children are supported to succeed through:

- Breaking down tasks into smaller chunks to achieve and prioritising understanding over task completion.
- Giving sufficient time to process instructions, or adapted verbal or written instructions.
- Wherever appropriate or possible, information is supported by pictorial or concrete cues. For example; images are provided to support understanding of religious stories and artefacts are used to bring unfamiliar ideas or concepts to life.
- Scaffolded questions from adults and orally rehearsing thoughts with an adult.
- Where appropriate or necessary, pre-teaching core vocabulary or concepts.
- Resources that support reduced cognitive load. For example, key words with images or symbols provided.

For children with very high needs, they may require additional resources such as time to discuss own ideas with a trusted adult before listening to those of others. A social story may be used to support the idea of different people having different ideas.

They are supported with additional teaching assistant time that is proportioned to enable children to succeed in RE whilst promoting independence.

Curriculum balance and time:

Christianity is studied in each year group in both units solely focusing on this and units where comparisons are made with other major world faiths. RE is taught for a minimum of 45 mins per week in KS1 and 60 mins per week in KS2. Securing understanding of new content is frequently supported by applying and using new knowledge gained in other subject areas such as English reading and writing work in the weeks following on from new content being taught.

Core knowledge of the core purpose and value of studying Religious Education and the major world faiths including the name of the faith, the people and the place of worship are revisited at the start of every lesson via core agreed slides for KS1 and KS2 (see appendices).

Essential Characteristics of Religious Education

A feature of our curriculum design is the use of Essential Characteristics. These are the learning characteristics developed through the subject overtime. They act as a common thread between all the units studied in a subject and are developed from Early Years to Year 6.

In RE they are;

- An outstanding level of religious understanding and knowledge.
- A thorough engagement with a range of ultimate questions about the meaning and significance of existence.
- The ability to ask significant and highly reflective questions about religion and demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues related to the nature, truth and value of religion.
- A strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together.
- Exceptional independence; the ability to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out investigations, evaluating ideas and working constructively with others.

- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity, which are shown in their responses to their learning in RE.
- The ability to link the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose.
- A wide knowledge and deep understanding across a wide range of religions and beliefs.

Religious Education Threshold Concepts

A further feature of our curriculum design are Threshold Concepts.

Threshold Concepts are the 'big ideas' that shape children's thinking within each subject. The same Threshold Concepts will be explored in every year group and children will systematically build their understanding of them. An important principle, is that exploring concepts will never be complete; children will continue to explore them for as long as they continue to study the subject.

In Religious Education they are;

1. To understand beliefs and teachings.

This concept involves understanding the key teachings of some of the world's major religions.

2. To understand practises and lifestyles.

This concept explores how religion impacts on day to day lives and practices of various religions.

3. To understand how beliefs are conveyed.

This concept involves understanding how books, scriptures, readings and other important means of communication are used to convey beliefs.

4. To reflect

This concept involves an appreciation of how religion plays an important role in the lives of some people.

5. To understand values

This concept involves an appreciation of how many people place values as an important aspect of their lives.

Knowledge in Religious Education

Knowledge in RE typically falls into two categories. Substantive knowledge such as identifying the ten commandments or recognising the importance of Seder plate, allows children to develop thinking underpinned with purpose and meaning. Disciplinary knowledge provides children with an opportunity to apply their substantive knowledge to philosophical questions and ideas. For example, children will develop a balanced understanding as to how a Christian might react to seeing plastic in our oceans once they have a secure knowledge that Christians believe that God created the world and they have duty to show care and respect towards it.

Monitoring & Assessing Progress in Religious Education

By progress, we mean children knowing and remembering more. The key question we ask is; *'has a child really gained the knowledge to understand the key knowledge and concepts?'*

Assessing children's progress is vital to establish their acquisition of knowledge and skills in order to build confidence and fluency in all subjects. At St Peter's learning always starts with the children's prior knowledge and any misconceptions they may have. Class teachers decide upon the most appropriate age-related way of obtaining the children's prior knowledge. Misconceptions that arise throughout the unit are identified and addressed appropriately by the teacher.

We track progress through teacher judgement, supplemented by frequent low stakes knowledge recalls (often in quiz format) and occasional formal tests to ensure knowledge is recalled and children are genuinely building upon secure prior knowledge.

Knowledge organisers are used to summarise key vocabulary (with agreed definitions), facts, and concepts. These clarify what has to be taught and are used as the basis of quizzes so that teachers can check the knowledge has been embedded.

In addition to assessing if children have secured the agreed key knowledge, 'Milestones' related to the Threshold Concepts are used to assess children's understanding and progress. Systematic planning of opportunities to learn and practise the knowledge and skills of each Milestone is built into each subject planning overview.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when children may;

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will follow guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances including undertaking appropriate risk assessment processes

Role of the RE Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all children receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and children's progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and children to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with leaders including Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.

- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Matching Work to Children' Needs

Our approach to inclusion applies to all subjects including RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD, in person or online. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject advocate also attends Trust network meetings. The Headteacher also attends the annual diocesan conference.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered children in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over). (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The law relating to Religious Education for children who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered children at the school', it includes children in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups. We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all children, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals.

We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Appendices

Appendix A

Example of Long-Term Plan

RE Long Term Plan				KS1 Single Year Group Provision Key Stage 2 – Year A 2024 to 2025, Year B – 2025 to 2026		
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Early Years	Unit 1 Why is the word God so important to Christians?	Unit 2 Why do Christians perform Nativity plays and Christmas and why is Christmas special to Christians?	Unit 3 Being special; where do we belong?	Unit 4 Why do Christians put a cross on the Easter Garden and why is Easter special to Christians?	Unit 5 Which places are special and why?	Unit 6 Which stories are special and why?
Y1	Unit 7 Who do Christians say made the world?	Unit 8 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Unit 9 Who is Jewish and how do they live?	Unit 10 What do Christians believe God is like?	Unit 11 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	Unit 12 How should we care for the world and for others and why does it matter?
Y2	Unit 13 & 14 What is the good news Christians believe Jesus brings?		Unit 18 What makes some places special to believers?	Unit 16 Why does Easter matter to Christians?	Unit 15 & 16 Who is a Muslim and how do they live?	
Y3/4 Year A	Unit 19 What is it like for someone to follow God?	Unit 26 For Christians when Jesus left what was the impact of Pentecost?	Unit 21 How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim?	Unit 28 Why do Christians call the day that Jesus died Good Friday?	Unit 23 What do Christians learn from the creation story.	Unit 30 How and why do people mark the significant events of life?
Y3/4 Year B	Unit 25 What kind of world did Jesus want?	Unit 20 What is the trinity and why is it important for Christians?	Unit 27 What do Hindus believe God is like?	Unit 29 What does it mean to Hindu in Britain today?	Unit 22 How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?	Unit 24 How and why do people try to make the world a better place?
Y5/6 Year A	Unit 31 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving?	Unit 38 Why do Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah?	Unit 33 Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?	Unit 40 What difference does the resurrection make to Christians?	Unit 35 How can following God bring freedom and justice?	Unit 42 Why do some people believe in God and some not? How does faith people when life gets hard?
Y5/6 Year B	Unit 37 Christians and how to live: what would Jesus do?	Unit 32 What does it mean to Muslim in Britain today?	Unit 39 Why do Hindus want to be good?	Unit 34 Creation and Science, conflicting or complementary?	Unit 41 For Christians what kind of king is Jesus?	Unit 36 What matters most to Humanists and Christians?

- Year 4/5 split input supported with additional staffing during RE blocks heading towards single year groups.
- Other world religion units given extended time as they are newer concepts and require more time explore in greater depth as most children have less experience.

Appendix B

Example of core knowledge recall slides

‘Bring it Back’ Memory Recall

RE stands for -----.

RE is the study-----

When studying RE we often think about -----.

'Bring it Back' Memory Recall

RE stands for Religious Education.

RE is the study of my own and other people's
beliefs, values and traditions.

When studying RE we often think about what people believe and why and
how this impacts the ways in which they live their lives and the choices
they make.

'Bring it Back' Memory Recall KSI

Faith / Religion	Followers are commonly known as	Common Place of Worship
Christianity		Church
	Muslims	Mosque
Judaism	Jews	

'Bring it Back' Memory Recall KS2

Faith / Religion	Followers are commonly known as	Common Place of Worship
		Church
	Muslims	Mosque
Judaism		Synagogue
Hinduism	Hindus	Temple known as Mandir
Buddhism		Vihara Temple