



Policy for Religious Education

This policy replaces	Previous Policy
Date policy approved by Governing Body	April 2022
Date of next review	3 years
Reviewer	Personal Development, Welfare and Behaviour Sub-Committee. Collective Worship/RE Leader

Introduction

“Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). 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.”

(Taken from the Statement of Entitlement – Church of England Education Office 2019).

“The DBE recognises that relevant RE, which offers pupils opportunities to deepen their understanding of other people’s faith and beliefs and provides opportunities for God and faith to be discussed openly and honestly, also has a vital part to play in offering children and young people from Christian backgrounds the opportunity to grow as disciples. RE in a church school should provide opportunities for children to understand what it means to be a religious believer in the world today and help them to understand how Christian beliefs inspire and underpin the values of the school community that they are a part of. RE in the church school should support children to recognise and act on the insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes and values that could influence, inspire or guide them in life.”

(Leicester DBE guidelines.)

At Market Harborough C of E Academy, pupils and their families can expect a high quality RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the **‘Understanding Christianity’** resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil’s own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the Locally Agreed Syllabus; **Religious Literacy for All**, we learn about other religions and worldviews, fostering respect for them.

Links with our Christian values and 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 learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

Our Vision

Our aim at Market Harborough C of E Academy is to nurture those in our community and encourage children and staff to reach their full potential.

Our vision statement **‘Growing Together in God’s Love’** and our golden threads **Hope for Humanity, Stewards of the Earth, Community of Learners, Confident Communicators and Passionate Readers**, reflect the ethos of our school and are woven into our school values:

Helpfulness and Relationships

Generosity and Thankfulness

Forgiveness and Compassion

Hope and Trust

Courage and Perseverance

Respect and Dignity

RE has an important contribution to make towards this by providing a caring environment where children feel secure and able to express their own views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions and beliefs, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others.

Pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the school and of the wider community. Links are made with a variety of faith and worldview groups to help with this.

Legal Requirements

‘Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents’ request.’

(DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28)

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils 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 pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes.

Aims and Purposes

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

"Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- *Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and:*
- *Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life."*

And: "All state schools... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage..."

(DfE National Curriculum Framework, July 2013, page 4)

The Church of England has set down the following aims for RE in a Church of England School:

- *To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.*
- *To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.*
- *To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.*

The teaching of RE allows all pupils to explore, understand and express their own response to spiritual and religious approaches to life through the study of Christianity and other principal religions. RE makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and development of pupils. The study of world religions, their stories, traditions, history, philosophies and ethics is an essential part of a broad, rich and well-rounded education. Religious literacy, knowledge and understanding make an important contribution to community cohesion, the instilling of British and moral values and our ability to empathise with the viewpoints and beliefs of our neighbours.

'The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.'

Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus 2016

Skills to be developed in Religious Education:

Pupils should:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues

- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

This syllabus makes space for all pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions, and those of others, in engaged and engaging ways. RE taught using the new RE Agreed Syllabus aims to support children to develop positive attitudes of respect towards people from all religions and worldviews.

Curriculum for Religious Education

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.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- Contributes to British Values (mutual tolerance, respectful attitudes, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews;
- Enables pupils to develop their religious literacy;
- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews;
- Supports the development of other curriculum areas and a wide range of skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs;
- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs;
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it;
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Cross-curricular Links

RE supports the development of a wide range of educational skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues, which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

National and Local Context

We provide a range of opportunities for pupils to make links between beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

Our teaching and learning pedagogy uses an enquiry-based approach that engages with text and beliefs and helps to develop religious and theological literacy.

- We have close links with St Dionysius Church. The vicar and members of the congregation support RE and Collective Worship through visits to the church, regular worship sessions, joint events and fundraising,

Prayer Days, and the vicar is also on our board of governors. We also have links with other churches in Harborough

- As we are a school situated within a predominantly white, British community, we realise the importance of welcoming visitors to the academy from a variety of religious and non - religious backgrounds to support RE lessons and talk to the pupils. In addition, we have links with a multi-faith school in Leicester where the children have written to each other and have met virtually. This is invaluable in providing real-life insight into different faiths. Year 2 and Year 5 also take part in an annual conference to explore diversity and community cohesion.
- Pupils also experience visits to diverse places of worship as well as virtual tours. All such visits are fully educational in nature and no confessional religious practice takes place.

Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time here:

EYFS: St Dionysius, virtual mosque Year 1: St Dionysius, virtual synagogue
Year 2: St Dionysius, virtual mosque Year 3: Virtual synagogue
Year 4: Virtual gurdwara Year 5: Multi-faith tour: mosque, synagogue & gurdwara
Year 6: Visitors from a range of faith communities

The RE Subject Leader supports the organisation of these educational visits (in addition to the Education Visits Coordinator - EVC).

- Pupils also have opportunities to experience the celebration of different cultures and festivals other than their own, within RE and other areas of the curriculum and Collective Worship.

Curriculum Balance and Time

Reflecting the school’s trust deed parents and pupils are entitled to expect that Christianity should be studied in each year group for 1/2 of the curriculum time.

Age Group	Annual entitlement
EYFS	36 hours of RE
5–7s:	36 hours of RE
7–11s:	45 hours of RE

Our curriculum provides clear progression of the teaching and learning of all skills and knowledge in RE. In EYFS children begin by learning about themselves and their place in the world. They begin to learn that people belong to different groups and they explore some of the key people, stories and places of Christianity and Islam. In KS1 the children deepen this knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Islam and are introduced to the Jewish faith. They are encouraged to compare and contrast different beliefs and practises and they begin to think about their own views. As the children move into KS2, they have opportunities to explore their own beliefs, ideas and views in more depth. They are encouraged to ask questions about the religions studied, with the addition of Hinduism, and to think about how worldviews impact on the way people live and how they can contribute to the community. Throughout the curriculum children are also learn about people who belong to the Humanist religion and explore what it might mean to not belong to a religious group.

The RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for Collective Worship. Collective Worship is not considered curriculum time for RE.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. RE lessons, provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

We ensure that teachers adopt a variety of teaching and learning styles. The variety enables pupils to encounter their preferred learning style as well as to develop a broad repertoire. The teaching and learning styles used promote a range of skills such as thinking skills, reasoning, enquiry and research.

Examples of active learning strategies and activities, which we use, are:

- Dramatic conventions;
- Group work;
- Individual reflection;
- Use of music and art;
- Artefact handling;
- Multi - sensory approaches;
- Visits and visitors;
- Use of ICT and Multi Media;
- Use of photos, posters, DVDs.

Subject Leadership

RE is a core subject in all Church of England schools. RE has equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing.

The RE subject leader works closely with the PSHE and Collective Worship leaders.

The Subject Leader for Religious Education has the following role:

Policy, knowledge and development

- Reviews the School/Academy RE Policy annually;
- Devises a whole school/academy Long Term Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient across the school/academy;
- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy;
- Ensures that SEN, EAL and gifted and talented school/academy policies are promoted in RE;
- Promotes RE with staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- Audits available resources, buy new ones and deploys appropriately;
- Keeps up-to-date with local and national developments.
- The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, in line with guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Monitoring

- Reviews, monitors and evaluates the provision and the practice of RE;
- Identifies trends, makes comparisons and knows about different groups within the school/academy;
- Monitors planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
- Provides observation feedback and report on findings;
- Samples pupil's work;
- Evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment;

Supporting and Advising

- Prepares a subject action plan, including targets
- Leads curriculum development and ensures staff development through courses, and in-house training;

- Keeps up-to-date with new developments and resources;
- Supports non-specialist teachers and staff;
- Prepares statements about RE for parents and governors, as required;

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in RE:

- Involves identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work/resources used such as “Understanding Christianity”;
- Seeks to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- Recognises the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop;
- Employs well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school’s marking policy;
- Enables effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil’s knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development;
- Enables effective reporting to parents.

An annual report for RE informs parents of their child’s progress and attainment, as required by law, based on regular monitoring of work and with regard to the end of phase outcomes. We will transfer this information to new schools when pupils leave us.

Right of Withdrawal

In keeping with the law, at Market Harborough C of E Academy, we are committed to the principles of inclusion and hospitality to people of all faiths and none. We recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns or questions they may have about the teaching of Religious Education at Market Harborough C of E Academy. Staff always refer to the Subject Leader or Headteacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. There are no pupils withdrawn from RE at present.

Named RE Subject Leader:

Headteacher:

Link Governor:

Date:

Review Date: