

2023

Policy for Religious Education



I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

(JOHN 10:10)

Our vision is to create a school where every child and adult has self-belief and the opportunity to be the best they can be, fostered through a sense of belonging, of being valued and with respect for individuality. We will be defined by who we are and what we do.

Compassion

Courage

Responsibility

RE Policy Statement

The 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’. The provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of Horsford Church of England VA Primary School. The school adopts the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (*Norfolk, 2019*).

Horsford Church of England VA Primary School is inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Aims

The broad aims of religious education (R.E.) are set out within the locally agreed syllabus and the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2019). The purpose of Religious Education in our school is to promote religious literacy. By this we mean that pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

The aims of Religious Education are to enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people world-wide and as the religion that has most shaped British Culture and heritage.
- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Know about and understand other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Show a well-informed, balanced and respectful attitude to religions and world views
- Engage in meaningful and well-informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Curriculum

The curriculum for RE is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

Theology:

This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other. For pupils we may describe this as *thinking through believing*.

Philosophy:

This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence. For pupils we may describe this as *thinking through thinking*.

Human/Social sciences:

This explores the diverse ways in which people practise their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies. For pupils we may describe this as *thinking through living*.

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These three disciplines provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- Whilst EYFS does not need to provide R.E. as a subject, as we have chosen to adopt the locally agreed syllabus, there is an expectation that R.E. is encountered in EYFS through continuous provision. The multi-disciplines will be introduced, and Christianity will primarily be studied. Other religions will occasionally be covered such as festivals from other major religions.
- At KS 1 pupils study primarily Christianity and Judaism with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews.
- At KS 2 pupils study primarily Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldview.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2019), at least 51% of curriculum time (the majority) is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of R.E., and through additional R.E. days which focus on an aspect of the Religious Education curriculum.

Teaching R.E.

Religious Education uses an enquiry-based approach to learning. This is based on the best practice framework in the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus (2019). This approach enables pupils to focus on an enquiry question which explores aspects of the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

Assessment

Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines within R.E. In broad terms the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

- Extending knowledge and understanding from the concrete and familiar to the abstract and complex
- Moving from simple ideas and beliefs/concepts to making connections between them and placing these within a bigger picture or meta-narrative
- Demonstrating increasing layers of interpretation of religion, religions, beliefs and worldviews through engagement with a broadening and increasingly complex range of information
- Showing an increasing ability to critically question and form coherent, logical arguments, including increasing recognition of divergences of opinion about and the controversial nature of religion and belief

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- Expressing a broadening understanding of diversity in terms of the nature of religion, religions and worldviews

Pupils are assessed using age-related expectations produced by the Diocese of Norwich. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion, etc. Progress is tracked using the school's tracking system via Excel.

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure they are making good progress in this subject and use it to plan future work.

In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The subject leader will monitor R.E. provision and standards within the school through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The subject leader is responsible for contributing to the school's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitor the role of religious education in upholding the Trust Deed of school and its contribution to the Christian ethos of the school.

Responsibilities for R.E. within the school (Executive Headteacher, Executive Deputy, Head of School and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and executive headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the R.E. curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed
- standards and achievement in R.E. and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching R.E. are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for C.P.D.
- clear information is provided on the school website about the R.E. curriculum
- R.E. is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on R.E. and pupils can make good progress

The Right of Withdrawal From R.E.

Horsford Church of England VA Primary School is an inclusive community but recognises that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head of School to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education.

We will record any requests of withdrawal from R.E. and the reasons for this as they are required to report this as part of the Section 48 inspection process.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from R.E. are aware of the R.E. syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the R.E. curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school will review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from R.E. without influence from the school, although the school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the R.E. syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and in EYFS we will discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from R.E., the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for R.E. of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This R.E. could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable R.E. is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of R.E. that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external R.E.
- Outside arrangements for R.E. are allowed as long as the L.A. is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Role of the R.E. Subject Leader

- To ensure that the R.E. policy is implemented and to keep up to date with reviews.
- To have oversight of the R.E. curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes.
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement.
- To maintain and build priorities set by the school.
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese.
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching R.E., including planning, arranging and delivering C.P.D. as appropriate.
- To liaise with parents to ensure all children receive their entitlement.

Entitlement and Inclusion - EAL, SEN, More Able

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers should include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every

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child should be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

Resources

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of R.E. in our school. We have our own resources and, where necessary and available, are able to use resources from other Nebula schools.

Parental and Community Involvement

Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in R.E. within each school. Parents are invited into the school to look at their children's work, and a report on their child's standard and progress in R.E. is given out annually. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of R.E. through visits and visitors, e.g. the children visit the church to learn about different concepts and for church services.

Professional Development

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal. The aspiration is for the school to achieve the R.E. Quality Mark and the Federation's strategic plan and professional development supports this aim.

The contribution R.E. makes to other curriculum aims

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in R.E., is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community cohesion

R.E. makes an important contribution promoting community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective R.E. will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

The school community

R.E. provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

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The community within which the school is located

R.E. provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

The U.K. community

A major focus of R.E. is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the U.K. and how this influences national life.

The global community

R.E. involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

R.E. subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive academy ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

Monitoring & Review

The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Links to Other Policies

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Collective Worship