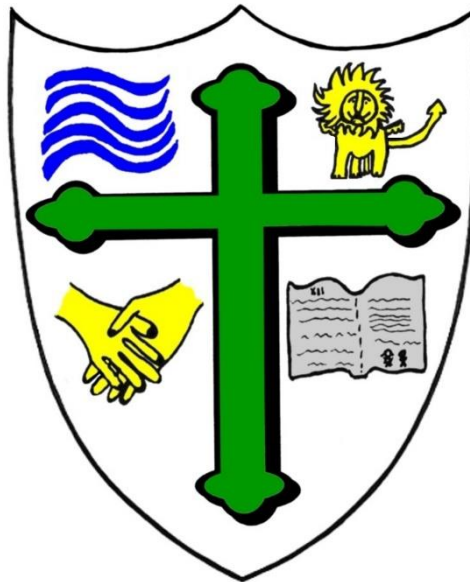


Highcliffe St Mark Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Reviewed (date)	October 2023
Reviewed by (name)	Liz Booth
Approved by Governors (if applicable)	
Review due (date)	October 2025

Please note that we are currently awaiting our SIAMS inspection report which took place on 16th October 2023. This Policy remains in draft form until amendments can be made following receipt of the final report.

Our Vision for RE

The R.E. curriculum at Highcliffe St Mark Primary is designed to nurture an attitude of respect and understanding for the various worldviews in an increasingly diverse world. We aim to develop our children's knowledge of these worldviews and how they impact people's lives. We aim to prepare our pupils for a world of diversity and to develop an understanding of their own sense of identity, self-worth and belonging. We give opportunities for our children to look beyond themselves, recognising the significance of these beliefs whilst living harmoniously alongside each other.

The Legal Position

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but 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'.

Highcliffe St Mark Primary School is a Church of England Foundation School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head of School have decided, following advice from the Diocese, to use the schemes Understanding Christianity and Discovery RE to meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Responsibilities for RE

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and Head of School ensures that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum.
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD.
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion.
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations for RE and pupils can make good progress.
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.

Aims and Rationale

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'. RE and spirituality play a central role in our curriculum. We teach the children about being Global Neighbours and this forms a large part of our work across the curriculum.

We believe that the aim of Religious Education is to educate pupils in the area of religious and life experiences. In their study of worldviews and the spiritual moral, social and cultural issues with which they deal, pupils should be encouraged to search, question and learn in a caring sensitive atmosphere. Religious Education should be a challenging area of the curriculum through which pupils should be helped to develop an awareness of their own identity and worth. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and worldviews, 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.

Learners in RE lessons will:

- Acquire a rich, deep knowledge of a variety of beliefs and practices.
- Explore core concepts relating to religious traditions and worldviews.
- Develop both knowledge of religious traditions and worldviews and skills, including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection.
- Understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals and practices in a range of religious traditions and worldviews.
- Engage in discussions which encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Show tolerance of and respect for different religious traditions and worldviews.
- Appreciate the diverse, global nature of religious traditions and worldviews.
- Explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living, thinking, believing and belonging.

Personal Development Through RE

RE plays an important role in preparing our children 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.

Promoting British Values

RE makes an important contribution to our school's duty to promote British Values. 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. RE 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 school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

Our work on being Global Neighbours, our school's core Christian values of respect, courage and compassion and our vision clearly support the development of British Values.

RE also contributes to the Prevent strategy by providing a safe space, where pupils can discuss their own ideas and learn to understand other peoples' beliefs.

Teaching and Learning in RE

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. In order to make Religious Education an engaging subject, we use the arts, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits or virtual visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities and non- religious worldviews.

We use Understanding Christianity, and Discovery RE for other religions that meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, REfocus 2023-2028.

Sequence of Learning in RE

In their foundation year in school our children learn to understand that some places, books and objects are special to members of the community. They learn to recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways and in different places. They learn to listen to and talk about stories in various religions, asking questions and reflecting on their own feelings and experiences which may relate to these. Children will develop their own narratives in relation to these stories from different traditions and be able to use the ideas of these stories in context to their own lives.

By the end of KS1 children will have heard and be able to explain the meaning of some Christian and Jewish stories and sacred texts as well as religious symbols. They will be able to name and explain a number of festivals, worship and rituals and draw some comparisons between them. They will identify and explore how religious beliefs make a difference to people's lives. This will be taught through posing questions and reflecting on how spiritual and moral values explored affects theirs or others' behaviour.

By the end of KS2 children will be able to describe and make connections between named religions discovering more about celebrations, worship, symbols, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their ideas. Using these ideas, they will discuss ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all. They will describe and understand links between stories and other aspects, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources, beliefs and teachings. They will be able to discuss and present views about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, ideas about what is right and wrong, just and fair, applying ideas of their own.

Assessing RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording, it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils' understanding, reflections and responses in RE. In day to day lessons, teachers check understanding and re-visit content to help children remember their learning. Plans highlight the key learning for each unit. Assessment and reporting descriptors are provided for teachers to make a summative

judgement at the end of the year, which is reported to parents.

Assessment analysis of responses is used to inform future planning. Concepts need to be evaluated before deeper coverage is engaged in. Summative assessment is expected at a minimum 3 times a year ensuring at least 1 is Christianity and 1 a different worldview. Assessments are stored in each year group's assessment folder. It is expected that the children will achieve the Age Related Expectations (ARE) statements for each unit so it is only those children who are working below or above these statements that are specifically noted. Additional evidence can also be stored here in the form of photos of creative responses where appropriate. A copy of this assessment data is also stored in the subject leader's folder which is electronically stored on the school system.

Evaluating the Impact of RE

The subject leader is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data, monitoring of books, lessons and pupil voice. Most importantly, leaders will talk to children about their learning.

The subject leader supports the Senior Leadership Team in the Church school self-evaluation process.

Foundation governors monitor RE as per the monitoring and evaluation schedule for the year.

The Right to Withdraw

At Highcliffe St Mark Primary School, we aim to be an inclusive community but recognise 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 PSHE.

We would ask any parent considering withdrawing their child from RE to contact the Head of School to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at our school.

We have a process which must be followed if a parent expresses that they wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons.

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and understand that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made fully aware of what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- The school may also wish to 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 RE without influence from the school.

- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE 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 RE 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 RE.

VERSION	DATE	REVIEWER	COMMENT
1	07.10.23	LB	Major update and change to format