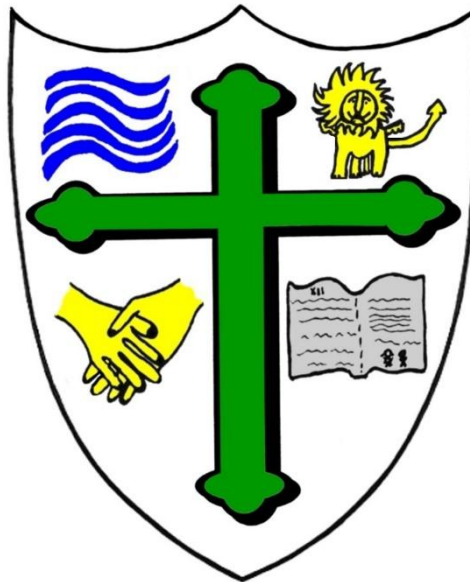


Highcliffe St Mark Primary School



Religious Education (RE) Policy

Reviewed (date)	July 2026
Reviewed by (name)	Liz Booth
Approved by Governors (if applicable)	
Review due (date)	July 2028

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Our Vision for RE

At Highcliffe St Mark Primary School, Religious Education plays a vital role in developing pupils' understanding of themselves, others and the diverse world in which they live. As a Church of England Foundation School, we aim to provide high-quality Religious Education that nurtures respect, curiosity and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Through RE, pupils develop knowledge of beliefs, practices and traditions whilst exploring questions of meaning, identity, belonging, purpose and values. Our RE curriculum encourages pupils to become thoughtful, respectful and informed citizens who can engage positively with people of different faiths, beliefs and backgrounds. We support children in developing their own sense of identity and belonging whilst recognising and valuing the experiences and beliefs of others. RE contributes significantly to our vision, Christian values and commitment to developing pupils as Global Neighbours who can live well together in an increasingly diverse society.

The Legal Position

Religious Education is unique within the curriculum. Although it is not part of the National Curriculum, it is a compulsory subject for all registered pupils in maintained schools. Highcliffe St Mark Primary School is a Church of England Foundation School and therefore provides Religious Education in accordance with the requirements of its Trust Deed and statutory obligations.

The school follows the **BCP Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (REfocus 2023–2028)**. The school uses **Understanding Christianity** and **Discovery RE** as curriculum resources to support delivery of the syllabus.

Responsibilities for Religious Education

The Governing Board and Headteacher ensure that:

- All pupils have access to high-quality Religious Education.
- Pupils make good progress in RE.
- RE is effectively led and managed.
- Standards and provision are regularly monitored and evaluated.
- Staff receive appropriate professional development and support.
- Sufficient curriculum time, staffing and resources are allocated to RE.
- RE contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents are provided with clear information about the RE curriculum and their right to withdraw their child from RE.

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Curriculum development and implementation.
- Monitoring teaching, learning and assessment.
- Supporting colleagues with planning and delivery.
- Maintaining standards across the school.
- Coordinating resources and professional development opportunities.

Aims of Religious Education

Through Religious Education, pupils will:

- Develop secure knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Explore beliefs, values, traditions and practices.
- Understand how beliefs influence the lives of individuals and communities.
- Develop skills of enquiry, interpretation, reflection, discussion and evaluation.
- Ask challenging questions about meaning, purpose, truth and identity.
- Build respect for diversity and difference.
- Develop their own thinking and personal responses to important questions.
- Recognise how people of different backgrounds can live together positively within society.

Personal Development Through RE

RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development by helping them become:

- Successful learners.
- Confident individuals.
- Responsible citizens.

Through RE, pupils develop:

- Spiritual awareness.
- Moral understanding.
- Empathy and compassion.
- Critical thinking skills.
- Respect for different beliefs and lifestyles.
- A sense of belonging and responsibility within local, national and global communities.

Promoting British Values

Religious Education contributes to the promotion of British Values by encouraging:

- Mutual respect.
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Individual liberty.
- Democracy.
- The rule of law.

RE provides opportunities for pupils to discuss diverse viewpoints, challenge stereotypes and develop understanding of different cultures and traditions.

Our Christian values of **Respect, Courage and Compassion**, together with our commitment to being Global Neighbours, complement and strengthen this work.

RE also contributes to safeguarding and the Prevent Duty by providing a safe environment in which pupils can discuss beliefs, values and worldviews respectfully.

Teaching and Learning in RE

Religious Education forms an important part of the broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum offered at Highcliffe St Mark Primary School.

Learning is planned to be engaging, challenging and relevant through the use of:

- Discussion and debate.
- Storytelling.
- Enquiry-based learning.
- Drama and role play.
- Artefacts and visual resources.
- Artwork and creative responses.
- Reflection and stillness.
- Educational visits.
- Visitors from faith and belief communities.
- Use of technology where appropriate.

Where possible, pupils are provided with opportunities to encounter people from a range of faiths and worldviews through visits, visitors and virtual experiences.

Curriculum Coverage

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children begin to learn about:

- Special people, places, books and objects.
- Religious stories and celebrations.
- Similarities and differences between people.
- Their own experiences and feelings.
- Respect for others and their beliefs.

Key Stage 1

Pupils learn about:

- Christianity.
- Judaism.
- Islam.
- Religious symbols.
- Worship and prayer.
- Festivals and celebrations.
- Sacred texts and stories.
- How beliefs influence daily life.

Pupils are encouraged to explore similarities and differences between traditions whilst reflecting on their own experiences and values.

Key Stage 2

Pupils develop a deeper understanding of:

- Christianity.

- Other major world religions identified within the BCP Agreed Syllabus.
- Humanism and other non-religious worldviews.
- Beliefs, teachings, celebrations and practices.
- Pilgrimage and worship.
- Belonging, meaning, truth and purpose.
- Moral and ethical questions.
- The role of faith and belief in modern society.

Pupils are encouraged to make connections between different worldviews and reflect critically on important questions about life and society.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in RE.

Teachers:

- Assess learning continuously throughout each unit.
- Use questioning, discussion, written work, creative responses and observation to evaluate understanding.
- Identify misconceptions and adapt teaching accordingly.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and reflection.

A summative assessment judgement is made at the end of each unit.

Progress is tracked and reviewed at the end of each term by class teachers and the RE Subject Leader.

An overall judgement in Religious Education is reported to parents through the annual written report.

Assessment information is used to inform future planning, identify strengths and areas for development and ensure appropriate challenge for all learners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Subject Leader monitors the quality of Religious Education through:

- Assessment analysis.
- Learning walks.
- Book scrutiny.
- Pupil voice activities.
- Planning reviews.
- Staff discussions.

The Senior Leadership Team supports the evaluation of RE as part of the school's ongoing self-evaluation processes.

The Governing Board monitors the effectiveness of Religious Education through the school's monitoring and evaluation cycle.

The school's current Foundation Governor is:

Rev'd Ian Witham

Vicar, St Mark's Church, Highcliffe

At the time of this review, there are no other Foundation Governors serving on the Governing Board.

The Right to Withdraw from Religious Education

Religious Education is an important part of the school's broad and balanced curriculum and is taught in an objective, balanced and educational manner. The curriculum explores a range of religious and non-religious worldviews and encourages understanding, respect and critical reflection.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child wholly or partly from Religious Education without giving a reason. This right applies in all state-funded schools.

The right of withdrawal applies only to Religious Education and does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where religion or belief may arise incidentally, including subjects such as History, English, Relationships Education, PSHE or wider classroom discussions.

Parents considering withdrawal are encouraged to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the curriculum and any concerns they may have. This discussion aims to ensure parents understand the educational nature and purpose of Religious Education and can make an informed decision. Parents are not required to provide a reason for their request.

Where a parent wishes to withdraw their child from RE:

- The request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.
- Parents may request withdrawal from all RE lessons or from specific elements of the curriculum.
- A written record of the request and agreed arrangements will be maintained.
- Arrangements may be reviewed periodically with parents.
- The school remains responsible for the supervision of pupils who are withdrawn from RE.
- Pupils who are withdrawn will undertake suitable supervised activities. The school is not required to provide additional curriculum teaching or incur additional costs.

Where parents wish their child to receive alternative religious instruction, arrangements may be considered in accordance with current legislation and where practical to do so.

The school seeks to work positively with families and aims to resolve concerns through discussion and mutual understanding wherever possible.

Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewer	Comment
2	July 2026	RE Subject Leader	Full policy review to align with BCP Agreed Syllabus (REfocus 2023–2028), updated assessment procedures and revised withdrawal guidance
1	October 2023	Liz Booth	Major update and change to format