



## Long Sutton Church of England Primary School Religious Education Policy

Date of Last Review	Date of Next Review
January 2024	January 2026
Responsibility for Review and Monitoring / Auditing	
Headteacher in partnership with staff & Foundation Governors	
Purpose	
To establish a clear and workable framework for the learning and teaching of Religious Education at Long Sutton C of E Primary School	

## Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. We are a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with a Christian foundation and, as such, Christianity forms the basis of all the teaching in our school and underpins our relationships. We believe that learning and growing in a caring Christian environment will strengthen the values, principles and personal beliefs of our pupils, equipping them for living life in the 21st Century. At Long Sutton Church of England Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major faiths, with an emphasis on the process of learning and teaching based on conceptual enquiry and the importance of pupils and students developing their own beliefs and values. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially Hinduism (KS1), Judaism (KS2) and Islam (KS2). Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- \* in developing their own coherent patterns of values and principles, and to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- \* develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- \* develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- \* be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions and their own and others' cultural and life experiences
- \* develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- \* develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- \* have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the religious and cultural diversity in society.

**Our Values:****LOVE COURAGE & HOPE****Our Vision:**

**Through our core Christian values of Love, Courage & Hope, we nurture, encourage and challenge each unique child to be kind, be respectful and be the best they can be.**

At Long Sutton Church of England Primary School, we aim to provide rich, memorable learning experiences which build character in each individual child. Strong relationships underpin all we do in our small church school, where we value and respect each other's uniqueness. We provide the space for all children to flourish and be the best they can be. Our broad curriculum inspires great learning through engagement with the outdoor environment and enables our children to develop positive emotional and mental health and an understanding of their place in the wider world. Our children are nurtured and challenged to become resilient learners with high aspirations.

**How our Vision and Values impact this policy:**

The strong relationships which are fostered between staff and children in our small school contribute to a culture of openness and trust, where children know they will be listened to, valued and taken seriously, so that during RE lessons they feel confident to share their personal views, beliefs and questions. In the context of RE, we show love through valuing the beliefs of others, even if they are different to our own; courage through displaying tolerance and respect for different beliefs; hope through believing that educating children about different religions will lead to a more peaceful world.

**The Legal Position of Religious Education**

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1996 Education Act. This requires that religious education be taught to all students in Primary Schools except for those withdrawn at the wish of their parents. This should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors after a consultation with the Headteacher. Similarly, teachers' rights are safeguarded, should they wish to withdraw from the teaching of Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors.

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton (Living Difference) and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. Living Difference reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions in Great Britain. The Agreed Syllabus is non-denominational and has not been designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils. RE is provided for all pupils regardless of religion, race, gender, ethnicity, age or ability. Our Christianity curriculum follows the 'Understanding Christianity' scheme, which supports the cycle of enquiry set out in Living Difference IV.

## Teaching and Learning Style

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on concepts such as 'angels' or 'worship'. Children discuss religious and moral issues using ICT where appropriate and by working individually, in pairs or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in school have children of widely differing abilities and mixed ages, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example by:

- \* setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- \* setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete tasks);
- \* grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- \* providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- \* using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

The recommended hours devoted to Religious Education are 36 hours per year in KS1 and 45 hours per year in KS2.

## Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

### 1.1

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton (Living Difference IV). We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

### 1.2

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE co-ordinator has worked out this plan in conjunction with a HIAS advisor and it will be reviewed regularly. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent study of religious themes and topics.

**1.3**

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE co-ordinator keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat topics.

**1.4**

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. As part of our monitoring policy, these individual plans are kept and discussed with the RE co-ordinator when appropriate.

**2. Foundation Stage****2.1**

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

**2.2**

In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

**3. Contribution of Religious Education to the Teaching of Other Subjects****3.1**

**English** – Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use have religious themes or content, which encourage discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening.

**3.2**

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** – We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

**3.3**

**Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship** – Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society.

**3.4**

**Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development** – Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. Alongside such opportunities, we continue to reaffirm these values through whole school, Key Stage and class assemblies in which members of the local community are invited to participate.

**4.****Teaching Religious Education to Children with Special Needs**

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When

teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs).

## **5. Assessment and Recording**

### **5.1**

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completing of a unit of work, we make a personalised comment on the child's attainment over the unit, in the form of an 'I can' statement for both pupil and teacher to complete which reflects the 'cycle' approach from the Living Difference. We record the attainment grades on the end of year report, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child and for passing information onto the next teacher at the end of the year.

### **5.2**

The RE co-ordinator keeps samples of children's work. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

## **6. Resources**

### **6.1**

We are continuing to develop sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep teacher resources, we have class sets of Bibles for both key stages and boxes of artefacts and resources for each of the 6 major religions in a central store which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a supply of RE topic books and we are continuing to develop a selection of computer software (i.e. Purple Mash) to support the children's individual research. Resources from the internet are also used when appropriate. We have introduced additional units, as suggested by the Diocese, such as Humanism. These units are accompanied by online resources.

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

### **7.1**

The RE co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education, for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

The RE co-ordinator presents the Headteacher with a report (content depending on subject monitoring plan) which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Time is allocated for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.



## Religious Education in Church of England Schools

# A Statement of Entitlement

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.<sup>1</sup>*

A high-quality sequential religious education<sup>2</sup> (RE) programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews<sup>3</sup> fostering respect for others. In voluntary aided schools, RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed: this document will help schools interpret that legal requirement. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE

<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office, 2016), available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/vision-education>

<sup>2</sup> Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. The term religious education (RE) is therefore used throughout this document as it is connected to the Section 48 SIAMS inspection and, if and until the law changes we will need to continue to use the term. This does not stop individual schools, MATs or dioceses using other names including Religion and Worldviews for the subject.

<sup>3</sup> The term worldviews is used throughout the document to refer to a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. It could refer to an 'institutional' worldview to describe organised worldviews including religions as well as Humanism, Secularism and Atheism or a 'personal' worldview for an individual's way of understanding and living in the world which may be drawn from one or many institutionalised worldviews. Based on Commission on Religious Education, *Religion and worldviews: The way forward A national plan for RE* (Religious Education Council for England and Wales 2018) p4.

must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus for RE unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school. In academies and free schools RE must be taught in accordance with the funding agreement.

The effectiveness of denominational education in Church schools is evaluated during the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) section 48 inspection. That subsequent judgement will reflect the expectations set out in this document. The SIAMS evaluation schedule assesses the way RE contributes to the outworking of church school's Christian vision. It highlights the responsibility of Church school leaders to ensure that pupils flourish academically through the provision of high-quality RE. In addition, in voluntary aided schools, a judgement on standards in teaching and learning in RE is included in the SIAMS report.

### **The Entitlement: provision, profile and priority**

In a Church school the pupils and their families can expect an RE curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, this should include the ways in which it is unique and diverse. Parents can expect the use of high-quality resources, for example, the Understanding Christianity resource. Pupils can expect that teaching and learning in Church schools will use an approach that engages with biblical text and theological ideas.

Pupils can expect that a Church school RE curriculum will engage and challenge them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. They can expect Church schools to provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews. There should be opportunities for them to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils should explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. RE will go beyond a sociological study of religious phenomena and will introduce pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. In all Church schools progress in RE should be significant and attainment high enabling pupils to develop confident religious literacy.

Parents and pupils can expect that in a Church school RE will have a high profile within the curriculum and will be a priority for senior leaders. The RE curriculum is intrinsic to the outworking of a Church school's Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual moral social and cultural development.

Learning activities must provide fully for the needs of all pupils. Pupils should develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. Pupils should have a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They should have opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

### **Curriculum statement: challenging, accurate and diverse**

In all Church schools religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews



through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. It should be a coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning developing both knowledge and skills. There should be a clear curriculum vision and intent, a structure for implementation and provision and a process for evaluating impact.

#### **Aims and objectives**

- 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 living, believing and thinking.

#### **Curriculum balance and time: sufficient, appropriate and balanced**

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4.

All pupils in Church schools should follow a recognised and appropriate qualification or course in RE or Religious Studies at KS 4. This includes pupils who have SEND. The study of Christianity will be a significant part of any Religious Studies qualification offered.

The school must make it possible for those students who achieve suitable grades at GCSE or equivalent to follow appropriate A level courses. This should be in addition to the provision of core RE entitlement for all students at KS5 which should continue to develop student's understanding of Christianity and other religions and worldviews.

Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

#### **Developing staff expertise and knowledge: confidence specialism professionalism**

Pupils in Church schools are entitled to be taught by teachers who have a secure subject knowledge and are confident in helping them navigate and challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice and extremism. It should be a priority in Church schools to build up staff expertise in RE specifically, but not exclusively, working towards:

- at least one member of staff having RE qualifications or receiving specialist training.

- secondary schools employing specialist RE teachers and deploying them effectively to ensure pupils receive specialist teaching.
- all staff teaching RE having access to subject specific professional development.
- all staff teaching RE knowing how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigour is balanced with respect for different personal beliefs and identities.
- all teaching staff and governors understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- a governing body which is monitoring standards in RE effectively.

#### **The role of the Diocesan Boards of Education**

One function of Diocesan Boards of Education (DBEs) is to promote, or assist in the promotion of, religious education in schools in the diocese. This should be fulfilled by monitoring the quality of religious education in Church schools through taking note of SIAMS inspection reports and by securing high quality training for all schools throughout the diocese. This will help ensure that the provision for religious education is effective and is able to fulfil the expectations of this statement.

#### **Support for effective and excellent RE**

Teachers in Church schools belong to a wider educational and church community. They are entitled to expect positive support in providing effective and excellent religious education from:

- a named member of staff responsible for religious education and where that person is the headteacher someone who shadows the role
- their senior management team and their governing body, especially foundation governors or academy equivalents
- their local Diocesan Board of Education, including a school's adviser with an appropriate religious education background
- the Church of England Education Office
- local clergy and other ministers and Christian communities.

Derek Holloway  
School Character and SIAMS Development Manager