



North Curry C of E Primary School

RE Policy



Signed by:

H Morley Headteacher

G Slocombe Chair of governors

Date: 18th September 2024

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Review date: September 2025

Introduction

This policy should be taken and used as part of North Curry Church of England Primary School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims and values as a Church of England school.

At North Curry CE Primary School:

We believe that every child is unique and valued. We aim to provide an environment in which all pupils feel safe and can flourish. We will respond to individuals in ways which take into account their varied life experiences and particular needs. We are committed to providing an education with aspirational outcomes, which enables all pupils to make progress, become confident individuals living life in all its fullness (John 10,10).

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our vision is underpinned by the Christian values of Koinonia, Kindness, Respect, Joy, Hope and Happiness.

**Together
Everyone
Achieves
More**



NORTH CURRY
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

through...

loving learning, loving one another and loving life itself

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' Matthew 22: 37-39

AGAPE: The Good Samaritan Luke 10: 25-37

Intent: Approach to Religious Education

As a Church school academy we follow the Diocesan guidance for RE which is to implement the Locally Agreed Syllabus 'Awareness Mystery and Value' with an adjustment in the balance of learning opportunities toward Christianity, in order to fulfil our Trust Deed. This will be supplemented by the use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource.

We value the contribution RE makes towards our mission statement. RE also plays an important part in fulfilling the aims of the school. We follow a Worldviews Approach when teaching RE.

The three statutory aims of the curriculum are to develop successful learners, confident individuals and positive contributors. RE has a vital role to play in the development of these core aims.

RE helps pupils become **successful learners** by enabling them to:

- develop important skills, knowledge and understanding in RE;
- build progression from simple skills such as naming recognising and recalling, to complex and demanding skills such as synthesis and critical evaluation;
- develop understanding of both learning about and from religion and belief;
- engaging with powerful and important questions of meaning and complex, demanding ethical issues;
- understand both conflict and collaboration within and between religions and the importance of inter-faith dialogue;
- reflect upon and evaluate the role of religion and belief in the world today;
- mature in their spiritual moral, social and cultural development;
- build effective links between their learning in RE and other subjects;
- know how well they are doing in RE and how to improve their learning.

RE helps pupils become **confident individuals** by enabling them to:

- develop important attitudes such as sensitivity, open-mindedness, self-esteem and appreciation / wonder;
- share their own views, ideas and experiences, in a supportive learning environment, without fear or embarrassment
- develop the ability to produce reasoned, thoughtful arguments and well-substantiated conclusions, especially when engaging with questions of meaning and ethical issues;
- develop both dependent and inter-dependent learning in RE;
- express their own ideas and responses in a variety of ways such as creative writing, oral work, the use of ICT, drama, story and music;
- engage with and reflect upon key beliefs and teachings in religion regarding the purpose, value and dignity of human beings.

RE helps pupils become **responsible citizens** by enabling them to:

- develop both respect and sensitivity to other people's beliefs and values;
- learn about and from the contribution of religion and belief to Community Cohesion through engaging with school, local, British and global communities;

- actively contribute to RE lessons through group and class discussions;
- learn about and from the diversity of faith and beliefs in their local, wider, British and global communities;
- analyse how and why religion and belief are portrayed in the media;
- critically evaluate the role and place of religion in the world;
- enrich their learning through visits and visitors;
- investigate and reflect upon their rights and responsibilities;
- develop the key attitude of open mindedness, sustaining their own views, agreeing and disagreeing respectfully and listening carefully to others.

Curriculum balance

Christianity is the majority study in RE and as a Church school we adhere to this. In KS1 and KS2 we ensure that our RE curriculum is at least two thirds Christianity.

Curriculum time

Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, is committed to the delivery of RE. This is between 5% and 10% but must be no less than 5%. The RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for Collective Worship

Aims and Objectives

Teaching and learning styles:

In planning for RE we try to use a collaborative approach to learning that focuses on the 'Essential Core' or 'Core Concepts' approach. We ensure that we are clear about what we are trying to achieve and how we organise learning to achieve our aims.

We use key questions and core knowledge to promote deeper learning. There is a balance of whole class, group and individual work. We use visits, visitors and the local Church of St Peter and St Paul as essential resources when teaching RE.

Skills and attitudes to be developed through RE: see RE Syllabus

3 Opportunities for Religious Education

- Planning

As a school we have designed a long term plan which refers to the study units for each class/year group/ key stage. This ensures continuity and progression across the school. Teachers then develop their own medium term planning using the exemplar planning units

from the Locally Agreed Syllabus 'Awareness, Mystery and Value' supplemented by the 'Understanding Christianity' Scheme of Work.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

RE provides opportunities to promote:

1 Spiritual development through:

- discussing and reflecting upon key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, the being of God and values such as justice, honesty and truth;
- learning about and reflecting upon important concepts, experiences and beliefs which are at the heart of religions and other traditions and practices;
- considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts and related to the human and natural sciences, thereby contributing to personal and communal identity;
- considering how religions and other world views perceive the value of human beings and their relationships with one another, with the natural world, and with God;
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging;
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

2 Moral development through:

- enhancing the values identified within the curriculum, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust;
- exploring the influences on moral choices of family, friends and the media;
- considering how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious leaders;
- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy on values and ethical codes of practice;
- studying a range of moral issues, including those that focus on justice, promoting racial and religious respect and the importance of personal integrity;
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

3 Social development through:

- considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns;
- investigating social issues from religious perspectives, recognising diversity of viewpoint within and between religions, as well as common ground between them;
- articulating their own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues.

4 Cultural development through:

- promoting cultural understanding from a religious perspective through encounters with people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures;
- considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religious beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices;
- promoting racial and inter-faith harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion and promoting

- awareness of how inter-faith co-operation can support the pursuit of the common good;
- promoting inter-cultural understanding by encouraging pupils to question their own cultural pre-suppositions.

- **Resources**

As a school, we have boxes of RE resources which are stored in the back kitchen storage unit. Other resources are available from outside of the school from the Resources Centre and through Resources for Learning. We also use websites such as www.request.org.uk (Christianity), www.reonline.org.uk, www.natre.org.uk

- **School policy on visits and visitors:**

We ensure all visitors have DBS clearance where appropriate. We ensure that the role of any visitor to school is to educate, not evangelise. We use the local parish church of St Peter and St Paul as well as other local churches including the Baptist and Methodist chapels. We also ensure that we adhere to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy when organising visits and visitors.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment, Recording, Reporting

- **Assessment.** As a school we follow the assessment guidance from the Locally Agreed Syllabus 'Awareness, Mystery and Value'. We also use the assessment guidance from the 'Understanding Christianity' Scheme of Work.
- **Monitoring.** The Head teacher is responsible for monitoring and evaluating standards in RE teaching. This is through either learning walks, book looks, planning scrutiny and lesson observations.
- **Recording RE activities and pupil progress.** This is done through RE books and lesson evaluations.
- **Reporting arrangements.** All children receive a comment particularly about their achievement and progress in RE in their end of year school report.

Parents/Governors/Diocesan Liaison and Local Community issues

Parental right to withdraw children from RE

Any parent of a pupil has the right to request that the pupil be excused from all or part of the RE provided. Schools should ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware that RE is taught in an objective way that is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. They should be made aware of the RE syllabus learning objectives and

what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents. 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.

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, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE 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 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 (Section 71(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998). 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.

Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA 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. If the school is a secondary school and parents have withdrawn a pupil from RE provided at the school and asked for alternative RE to be provided in accordance with the tenets of a particular religion or denomination, then the LA must either: provide facilities for the alternative RE to be given at the school unless there are special circumstances which would make it unreasonable to do so, or agree to outside arrangements being made as long as no financial burden falls on the LA or school as a result of these arrangements. The intention of giving a right for withdrawal was so that pupils could be provided with an alternative form of Religious Education (eg: Catholic, Jewish, etc). Current concerns with radicalization, extremism, and the worrying rise in Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance means that Religious Education has increased in importance. It is the main vehicle for confronting these issues in order to prepare pupils for life in our multi-cultural society: life in modern Britain. Although parents may legally request withdrawal from RE and not have to give a reason it nonetheless should be a matter of great concern to the school. It would be reasonable for the school to seek a discussion with the parents in order to explore the reasons behind the request and ask what alternative provisions for appropriate Religious Education parents wish to provide or seek to be set in place.

Somerset SACRE would like to offer the following suggested course of action when parents request that their child be withdrawn from Religious Education Lessons.

1. Ask to see the parents on an individual basis.

2. Gently explore the reasons behind the request for withdrawal from Religious Education. While the parents have a right to refuse to give their reasons, this is not an unreasonable question if appropriate alternative arrangements are to be made.

3. Explain why Religious Education is important in preparing pupils for life in the UK today. Is the real reason for the request for withdrawal that the school has failed to adequately communicate this to parents?

4. Explain the importance of the role of studying other faiths in encouraging tolerance and confronting extremism and explore the parents' views about this.

5. Do they wish their pupils to be withdrawn from part of the RE provision or the whole of it?

Hopefully by this point some parents may have changed their mind, or the school may discover a wider issue that they need to address.

6. Should the parents still wish for their children to be withdrawn from RE a discussion can then follow as to what alternative Religious Education provision they wish to put in place. This was the intention behind provision of the right to withdraw. They may be withdrawn, for instance, because they belong to a religious group who will be willing to provide their own materials.

7. Explain that the school has a duty to supervise pupils who are withdrawn, but not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra costs.

Governor roles and responsibilities – refer to RE page on diocesan website:
www.bathandwells.org.uk

Diocesan support – www.bathandwells.org.uk

The headteacher will review this policy on an annual basis, considering feedback from practitioners on the effectiveness of the identified support for transition and in light of changes to the law or statutory guidance, and will make any changes necessary.

The next scheduled review date is September 2025.