

Church Hill C of E Junior School

“Let Your Light Shine” (Matthew 5:16)



Together Everyone Achieves More


Religious Education Policy 2025

Signed by: 

Date:27/11/25

Approved by Governor

Date:27/11/25

Signed on behalf of the Governing body: 

Next Review Date: January 2027

'Let your light shine!'

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5 v.16

Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave.

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. (Religious Education Non Statutory Guidance).

At Church Hill C of E Junior School, our vision is to *"let your light shine"* (Matthew 5:16) through every aspect of learning, including Religious Education. Following the locally agreed Leicestershire syllabus, our RE curriculum enables pupils to explore beliefs, practices, and values from Christianity and other world faiths, fostering understanding, empathy, and spiritual growth. It equips children with the knowledge, skills, and vocabulary to reflect on their own beliefs, ask challenging questions, and make sense of the world around them.

Through RE, pupils learn **courage**—to stand up for their beliefs and values—**thankfulness**, developing an appreciation for the good in life and the contributions of others, and **mutual respect and tolerance**, valuing diversity and differing worldviews. They are encouraged to explore moral and ethical issues thoughtfully, making responsible choices and understanding the impact of their actions within their community.

Together with Jesus, everyone strives to make a difference within our community by letting God's light shine. In the same way, pupils achieve and flourish by living out our Christian values of **thankfulness, respect, truthfulness, kindness, responsibility, courage, fairness, and community (Koinonia)**, contributing to a school where everyone can grow spiritually, morally, and socially, glorifying God our Father.

INTENT

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Church Hill C of E Junior School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only

of Christianity but also of other selected world religions, particularly those represented by some faith communities within Leicester and Leicestershire. 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.

Our religion and world view studies build on the legal requirements of the curriculum and our tradition of being a Church of England School. We follow the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026. Children examine systematic, thematic and faith units; Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Questions across the Bible's major themes of creation, fall, people of God, incarnation, gospel, salvation and kingdom of God are taught and revisited for consolidation and expansion of other aspects. The Big Bible Story is retold through a series of pictures depicting these sections of the bible which the children are encouraged to link their ideas to.

The syllabus explores ideas through key questions. Children are encouraged to explore their ideas and understand that everyone's opinion matters even when different to their own, hence developing a strong emphasis on understanding, tolerance and personal Spiritual Development. In this way, we encourage an individual child's light to shine! R.E. is taught for the equivalent of an hour every week in all year groups. Additionally, RE is taught through RE themed days, educational visits and enrichment activities.

The aims of religious education are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain and the world;
- 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 the fundamental questions of life;
- 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 diversity in society.
- develop understanding of British Values (Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual respect and Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The attitudes and values:
- The development of positive attitudes and values is part of school life as a whole but R.E has a particular contribution to make. It deals specifically with issues of belief, with things which are valuable or precious to people; as a result, the attitudes and values of staff, pupils, parents or particular religious groups are often on display or under discussion. In this situation it is important that:

- pupils feel they are working in a secure atmosphere where it is safe to share their thoughts and ideas.
- religious views, traditions or customs are not just subject to ridicule or criticism simply because they are 'different'.
- staff draw on pupils' own experience of life in order to help them understand more specifically religious stances.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done after the parents have met with the Headteacher and given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social and cultural teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is planned in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus and Leicestershire Diocesan guidelines and it meets the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

IMPLEMENTATION

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 or have visitors of faith speak and present to the children.

Children study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues, working individually or in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these in class.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, 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 all tasks);
- using mixed ability groupings or mixed ability pairs.
- 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.

Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Leicestershire LA's Agreed Syllabus. 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.

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 year group. The RE subject leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects or the Christian church calendar wherever appropriate.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. This ensures that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus.

Each Year group RE representative organises the plans for each lesson, these will detail differentiation and resources that are to be used.

Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Occasionally, texts that we use in the English curriculum have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write at length and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Computing

We use computing where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use computing to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

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. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

British Values

The DfE have reinforced the need *“to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.”*

The Government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy and these values were reiterated in 2016.

Democracy

Children have many opportunities for their voices to be heard. Each child has the opportunity each year to stand and be nominated as a school councillor for their class. The school council meets to discuss a variety of topics related to school life. These discussions are fed back to their class and class discussions return to the next school council meeting. These discussions are then fed back to staff and have a direct impact on the children’s education.

The Rule of Law

The importance of Laws, whether they are ones which govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout the school day and curriculum. Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service help reinforce this message.

Individual Liberty

Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school, we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example, through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it is through choice of learning challenge, how they record their work, or participation in our extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make choices.

Mutual Respect

Respect for all is one of our central aims and children learn that their behaviour has an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

Church Hill Junior School is a Church of England School which promotes Christian Values. However, tolerance for all people whether it be faith, belief or lifestyle is actively promoted. Our RE and PSHE teaching reinforce this in order to make our light shine in our community, country and world. Children visit places of worship that are important to different faiths and take part in activities from different religions e.g. rangoli patterns on Indian Culture day.

Each year, a focus for one day on British Values is held where through activities and tasks the children learn in depth about one or more of these values.

At Church Hill we will challenge pupils, staff or parents who express opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

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.

Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

At our school, we teach religious education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus objectives allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities will be supported through an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Children are supported to reach the greater depth standard in RE through carefully planned lessons that give opportunities for children to show deeper understanding and to make links within and between other areas of the curriculum.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a place of worship, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Resources

Whilst we have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education units of work, we annually update and extend our range of resources. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment, clearly labelled for each faith, which contain a collection of religious artefacts that are used to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books. Teachers use the Internet as a source of information to support all topics. Each classroom has access to a range of Bibles.

IMPACT

At Church Hill Church of England Junior School, the Religious Education (RE) curriculum is a vital and valued part of our pupils' education and personal development. Rooted in our Christian vision and values, RE provides a rich and engaging learning experience that enables children to explore life's big questions, develop religious literacy, and deepen their understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths.

The impact of our RE curriculum is seen in the way pupils confidently engage with theological concepts, make connections between beliefs, practices, and values, and reflect on their own views with curiosity and respect. Our curriculum encourages critical thinking, thoughtful discussion, and empathy—skills that support wider learning and social development across the school.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of Christian teachings and traditions, as well as a growing awareness of religious diversity in Britain and beyond. Through enquiry-based learning, they ask meaningful questions and consider how faith impacts individuals and communities. As a result, they show respect for different beliefs and worldviews, contributing to a school culture of inclusion, compassion, and mutual understanding.

RE at Church Hill supports our whole-school ethos, helping pupils to grow spiritually, morally, and culturally. It prepares them for life in a diverse society and equips them with the knowledge and values to become thoughtful, respectful, and responsible citizens.

MONITORING

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the standard of work and quality of the teaching in religious education through learning walks, book studies and pupil interviews.

She is also responsible 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.

Annually, a pupil book scrutiny of work to check coverage, content and standard is performed by the subject lead.

Pupil interviews also take place discuss learning and progress through the school RE curriculum.

The RE subject leader regularly reports progress in subject to the head teacher and to the governors.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers will assess children during each unit of work through observations and class discussions with children. Teachers also measure success criteria, through both formative assessments of weekly lessons and summative assessment, when the individuals have worked over time to produce a final assessment piece of work. Teacher assessments will be recorded on the Foundation Subject Teacher Assessment Grid The following points will also guide teachers' judgements:

- Children's extended knowledge of the inter-relationship of religious ideas e.g. similarities and differences between religions
- Children's ability to express their personal viewpoints and how they are similar or different to the faith being taught.

The RE Subject Leader will further assess the children's learning through pupil book studies: learning walks and pupil interviews, focusing on structure (content and knowledge, teaching sequence, vocabulary) and participation (explanation and modelling, tasks, questioning and retrieval and feedback).

