

# ***Curriculum Policy for Religious Education***

DATE OF REVIEW: Summer 2024

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Summer 2026

TO BE REVIEWED BY: Teaching & Learning Committee



## **Introduction**

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of race, gender, religion or ability.

Religious Education is a distinctive, but core part of the curriculum for maintained schools in England. It is a curriculum subject in its own right, but it is also closely allied to PSHE which together make a unique and important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in school, therefore supporting wider community cohesion. Our personalised RE curriculum is based on The Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus for R.E 2024 - 2029, which states: **The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.**

This policy outlines the Intent, Implementation and Impact of the RE taught in our school. The Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. Religious Education is considered to be a key driver subject, meaning that this is a specialist area of the curriculum. The school policy for Religious Education reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body.

## **Intent**

We believe that RE contributes to children's education by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, right and wrong and what it means to be human. Pupils learn about religions, beliefs and worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider alternatives, including those with no religious worldviews. They learn how to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources (including texts), to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully. Teaching, therefore, equips pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions, beliefs and worldviews, enabling them to develop their own ideas, values and identities.

As a school, our intent is fully aligned with the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus for RE 2024 - 2029, which aims to ensure all pupils:

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:
  - Identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religious and non-religious worldviews, using appropriate vocabulary
  - Explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
  - Recognise how and why sources of authority (eg. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation
2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews, so they can:
  - Examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
  - Recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs in action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
  - Appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning
3. Make connections between religious and non-religious worldviews, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so they can:
  - Evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
  - Challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
  - Discern possible connections between ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

## **Implementation**

Religious Education forms part of our broad curriculum, and teachers use the RE Curriculum Overview to plan for children to be able to make sense of beliefs, make connections and understand the impact at different levels. It is a spiral curriculum, designed to build on children's prior learning, giving them the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to explore questions raised by religion, beliefs and worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living. It is based around the 'Key Question Approach', with questions that open up the content to be studied. Where appropriate, links are also made to other areas of the curriculum, such as history and PSHE, and the wider school community, promoting the Golden Rules.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children encounter religious and non-religious worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship (sometimes virtually due to the location of Hatherleigh). They are introduced to subject-specific vocabulary and use their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences and use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of the world we live in.

In Key Stage 1 (KS1) children are taught knowledge, skills and understanding through learning about Christians, Muslims and Jews, investigating how they live and care for the world. Basic subject-specific vocabulary is extended and they begin to raise questions and express their own ideas in response to what they learn. They compare and contrast what it means to belong to each faith and to non-religious communities.

Key Stage 2 is split into Upper (UKS2) and Lower (LKS2).

In LKS2 children extend the range of sources used and subject-specific vocabulary. They are encouraged to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, worldviews, values and human life. This is achieved through learning about Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews, as well as non-religious worldviews, comparing how they celebrate festivals and significant life events.

In UKS2 Children are encouraged to ask increasingly challenging questions and to express their ideas, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views. They continue to learn about Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews and Humanists, exploring their customs, important texts and relevance in today's society.

Teaching is delivered through a variety of methods, including drama, art and story, appropriate to the theme and children's needs. For example, in EYFS Divali is explored by making Diva lamps and in Year 2, children act out some of the rituals associated with praying in a mosque. In Year 6, the Hindu story of the Man in the Well is used to encourage debate not only of the relevance to Hindus, but also in society today.

Our dedication to inclusive practice means that, regardless of their ability, pupils are aided to access learning with the highest possible levels of independence, due to carefully designed tasks. Where necessary, pupils requiring extra help are sensitively supported, with minimal disruption to quality-first teaching. Our ambition is to narrow the gap between different groups of pupils and to ensure that their life-opportunities are equal, irrespective of background or ability.

### **Extended Curriculum Opportunities**

Revd Leigh from Hatherleigh Church is a welcome and much-loved visitor in school. As part of his work, he delivers whole school assemblies that illustrate religious stories and moral

values in an exciting way. The church is also visited as part of our syllabus and to celebrate events, such as Christmas.

Hatherleigh Methodist Church also hosts the annual whole-school Harvest Festival, which is attended by the local methodist minister.

### **Impact**

The pupils at Hatherleigh Community Primary School understand that people have different beliefs and worldviews, and are respectful and considerate of the needs and feelings of others. Pupils feel comfortable and confident to ask challenging questions about religions, beliefs and worldviews, knowing that school, and specifically RE lessons, provide a safe environment in which these can be discussed and explored without prejudice or judgement.

Throughout the RE curriculum, our pupils develop a knowledge of several of the main religions and world views. Over time, the cumulative acquisition of knowledge enables pupils to become deeply familiar with the cultures and practices associated with these faiths. As a result, they are able to discuss and write about key features, highlighting the similarities and differences, and comparing them to their own developing ideals. During discussion, pupils express their RE knowledge and personal viewpoints coherently and sensitively whilst showing respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others, even when they differ from their own. As a consequence, within our school, pupils feel a sense of belonging and understand the importance of being part of a community where they feel appreciated and valued, with the understanding that each and every member contributes in an equally significant way, through their own special skills and attributes.