Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation

Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Reviewed By:	**EHT & Subject Lead**	**Date:**	**May 2025**
Approved by	**Foundation Governors**	**Date:**	**19th May 2025**
Last reviewed on:	**May 2023**		
Next review due by:	**May 2026**		

Religious Education (RE) Policy

This policy has been adopted by the Foundation Governors in consultation with the RE subject leaders and teaching staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies in school including: SMSC, Collective Worship, PSHE, Teaching and Learning, Assessment, Marking and Feedback and other curriculum policies.

The Aims of RE

Within our federation RE will be provided within legal requirements. These are as follows:

1. The Basic Curriculum must include provision for RE for all pupils registered on the school roll, including those in Reception class who are less than five years old.
2. The content of RE must reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are, in the main, Christian; it must also reflect the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain
3. The RE curriculum provided will be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for Lincolnshire and the Understanding Christianity resource

Within this framework our aims in RE are for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths;
- Develop an understanding of the ways in which religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions influence individuals, communities, societies and cultures, from the local to the global contexts;
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the beliefs, teachings, practices, sources of authority and ways of living associated with the principal religions represented in the UK;
- Develop positive attitudes of mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
    - Considering the 'big questions' raised by human experience and reflecting on how religious and other traditions respond to them;
    - Responding to such questions with reference to religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions, relating them to their own understanding and experience;
    - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study of religious and other traditions.

The Context of RE

The context of RE within our federation is that of two small village schools for children in the age range 4 to 11. We work to the Lincolnshire Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE and the Understanding Christianity resource.

As Church of England schools, we recognise the core place that RE occupies in relation to our Christian distinctiveness. The Diocese of Lincoln recognises the opportunities that RE offers for pupils to encounter all religions and advises that Church schools in the Diocese balance the provision of curriculum time as follows: Christianity – 50%, other world religions – 50%.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds that make up our school community and we respect this variety of backgrounds in the spirit of Christian welcome. We are glad to have good relationships with faith practitioners from a range of world faiths and we value their contribution to the delivery of RE.

We actively promote British Values, including respect for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We challenge racism and all forms of prejudice and we see RE as one curriculum area in which our pupils can encounter and critically reflect on a range of world views.

Time Allocation

National Society and Government guidance indicates that RE should constitute a minimum of 5% of curriculum time. We provide the minimum time of 36 hours per year for KS1 and 45 hours per year for KS2. This time is arranged as discrete hour-long lessons per week including RE days and visits from outside agencies.

RE forms part of the planning at EYFS; although there is no expected time allocation at this level, we expect that there will be approximately 20 minutes per week of RE related to the Early Learning Goals.

RE curriculum time does not include collective worship or assembly.

Scheme of Work and Planning

Our RE Scheme of Work is based on the Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus and Understanding Christianity and can be provided on request. RE will be based around termly themes/cross-curricular units. At KS1, the principal religions studied will be Christianity and Islam; at KS2, the principal religions studied will be Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. It is not expected that pupils will study all six major world religions in depth during their time within our federation, although they will have learning opportunities that allow them to encounter all these faiths. We will also be implementing the teaching and learning units from the Understanding Christianity initiative, which sets out clear learning objectives for teaching Christianity in every year group. This will ensure clear progression as well as considering a 3-way learning approach of theology (believing), Human and social sciences (living), and Philosophy (thinking).

We carry out curriculum planning for RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the RE topics studied throughout the school; the medium-term plan

gives details of each unit of study delivered to each Key Stage. Within our federation, Marston Thorold 's Charity CE Primary School have mixed-age classes and carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year cycle, St Sebastian's CE School have single form entry we carry out the medium-term planning on a one-year cycle. The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson. These are discussed on an informal basis with the RE Subject Leader and form part of the annual monitoring process for RE teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning

Ofsted guidance encourages a range of teaching and learning styles in RE; our policy is to aim to ensure enquiry, art, drama, thinking skills, speaking and listening activities, multisensory activities, visits/visitors, ICT and other teaching strategies are used in order to enable each child to progress in RE according to their individual needs. Cross-curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. We identify RE as one of the core subjects through which our pupils can develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, but we do not limit the delivery of SMSC to this subject alone. We teach to the attainment targets of the Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus for RE and the Understanding Christianity Units.

Resources

St Sebastian's and Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary Schools are investing in a wide range of appropriate books, artefacts and resources, which the RE Subject Leader will audit annually. We take advice from the Diocesan RE Adviser and other RE professionals on the best resources to support the delivery of high-quality RE.

Our planning is available on the school website to enable parents to support their child's learning in RE.

Visits and Visitors

We consider that an essential element of the delivery of quality-first RE is encounter with world faiths. We encourage our pupils to participate in visits to places of worship when the opportunity arises; these visits are arranged in line with the programme of study for RE and provide pupils with the chance to encounter world religions as living faiths in modern Britain. We also encourage faith leaders and other members of faith communities to visit St Sebastian's and Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary Schools. These visits are arranged in accordance with the school's trips policy.

Assessment

The Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus for RE provides descriptions for each level of attainment; we reflect these in our planning outcomes, ensuring that work is both matched to pupil need and enables progression. Our Learning Journey walls provide a teaching tool where we can revisit concepts and key vocabulary with children to embed learning. At least two Knowledge Recaps are included in books for us to consolidate previous learning. We use Knowledge Organisers in books to refer to in lessons. At the end of the year, we provide an annual report on each child's progress in RE. This report will be based on regular monitoring of work in RE using a variety of methods, including verbal feedback, RE books and written comments on individual pieces of work.

Ensuring Progress

Whole school policy with regards to SEND and differentiation applies to RE. Teachers ensure that the learning activities employed in RE are differentiated to meet a variety of learning needs.

RE and Inclusion

At St Sebastian's and Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary Schools we teach RE to all pupils, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of our commitment to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with special gifts and talents, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate school policies.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range or exceeds significantly beyond 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.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in RE. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, a visit to Lincoln Cathedral, for example, that involves a journey, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Inspection

St Sebastian's and Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary School are inspected as a separate element of the Section 48 SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection. It is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leaders to review and maintain evidence for the RE elements of this inspection, with appropriate support from the head teacher, governors and Diocesan RE Adviser.

Monitoring and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next year, and then be fully reviewed by staff and foundation governors in the light of a new syllabus. The RE Subject Leaders will monitor the delivery of RE during each academic year to ensure that this policy is being appropriately implemented. Their role is to support and hold accountable all members of staff involved in the delivery of RE. To this end, they will ask each member of staff involved in the delivery of RE to provide a copy of their medium-term planning for RE, along with a folder of evidence of pupil progress in RE during each academic year.

The RE Subject Leaders must evaluate their own leadership of the subject during each academic yea. RE Subject Leader must work with their line manager to ensure that leadership of RE remains a high priority and is of a high quality.

Withdrawal from RE

We acknowledge the right of parents/carers to withdraw their children from RE lessons and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. We acknowledge that parents/carers/teachers do not need to provide a reason why they wish to withdraw from the subject. Should a parent/carer wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons or a teacher wish to refuse to teach RE, we require that written notice be sent to the school governors.

Should a parent/carer request that their child be withdrawn from RE, we will endeavour to communicate clearly the place of RE within a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that they are in possession of all the necessary information before confirming their decision. However, we will not attempt to persuade them to alter their decision. If a pupil is withdrawn from RE lessons, the school is required to provide supervision, *but should not incur any additional cost in so doing and is not obliged to provide alternative work*. We do not support selective withdrawal from RE (e.g. withdrawal from the study of one religion in particular).

Any queries regarding withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE Subject Leaders in the first instance, and thereafter to the head teacher.