Federation of Grewelthorpe and Fountains CE Primary Schools

 Religious Education Policy 

**Discover, grow and make a difference: our path to a brighter world.**

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.’

John 10v10

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

**Rationale**

**Religious Education 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.

At our Federation*,* pupils and their families can expect a high-quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We teach in accordance with the Diocese of Leeds syllabus, which we supplement with the Understanding Christianity resource.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil’s own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. This links strongly with our school vision, and supporting pupil’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied. We enable the children to learn about religions and to learn from religion.

The principle aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.

**Intent**

* 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 (including non-religious) 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 of living, believing and thinking.

**Implementation**

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other core curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

•is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

•is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.

•reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy.\* \*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)

•enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.

•provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.

•supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.

•encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils’ needs

•offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.

•ensures that all pupils’ contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

**Curriculum Balance and Time Allocation**

Parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, as we are a Church school, 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 be no less than 5% in Key Stage 1 and 2.

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

**36 hours of RE** **per year**

This will be a mix of explicit teaching and through continuous provision. Provision for RE will follow the guidance as set out in the EYFS statutory framework.

**Key Stage One**

**36 hours of teaching per year**

This is flexible to the needs of the schools timetabling and curriculum design. RE is taught through weekly hourly lessons and also whole school World Religion theme days.

Units from the Diocesan Syllabus and Understanding Christianity units will be used across Key Stage one. Details of this can be found in the Federation’s LT RE plan.

**Key Stage Two**

**45 hours of tuition per year**

This is flexible to the needs of the schools timetabling and curriculum design. RE is taught through weekly hourly/ 75 minute lessons and also whole school World Religion theme days.

Units from the Diocesan Syllabus and Understanding Christianity units will be used across Key Stage two. Details of this can be found in the Federation’s LT RE plan.

**Teaching and learning**

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

• Posing and discussing ‘big’ and challenging questions

• Reading and critically analysing texts.

• Interpreting information from different sources.

• Researching information for themselves.

• Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.

• Engaging in pair and group work.

• Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.

• Experiencing visits and visitors.

• Taking part in outdoor learning.

• Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

**Matching Work to Pupils' Needs**

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

**Legal Requirements**

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents’ request (or their own request if aged 18 or over).

(DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to ‘all registered pupils at the school’, it includes pupils in Reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the Headteacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision.

Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

**Assessment**

Assessment in Religious Education will:

* Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
* Be directly related to the expectations of the Diocese of Leeds Syllabus
* Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
* Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
* Include pupil self-assessment.
* Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil’s knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
* Enable effective reporting to parents.

# Self-Evaluation

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject’s strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review*.*

# Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader’s identified areas for development. This is either ‘in house’ or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends Diocese network meetings.

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| **Policy:** | **RE Policy** |
| **Signed Chair of Governors:**  | **R Bain** |
| **Governors Meeting Ratified:**  | **February 24** |
| **Review Date:**  | **Spring 26** |
| **Review schedule** | **Annually** |