



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

October 2024

Signed:Chair of Governors

..... Headteacher

Next review: July 2027

“Building Firm Foundations For Life”



Chesterton CE Primary School
Generosity Integrity Humility Compassion Respect Resilience

Religious Education Policy

In Chesterton School, Religious Education plays an important role in supporting the Christian vision of the School. R.E. reflects the values that are held and promotes understanding of people of all faiths and none. R.E. has the same high status as any other subject and contributes to the overall development of our pupils from all backgrounds and traditions.

The legal position with regard to the teaching of R.E. at Chesterton School.

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject. However, the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'. These requirements were reaffirmed in the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Chesterton is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. Therefore, the provision of R.E. must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School:

'Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan levels. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.'

The Governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, have decided, following advice from the Diocese, to adopt the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus, which is supported by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) 2023 Scheme of Work. Which also reflects the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education published by the Education Office of the Church of England in February 2019. The statutory section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) inspection will evaluate R.E. and the way that it contributes to the Christian character of the school. Religious Education has the same status and importance as any other subject and, as such, the same high standards are applied to this as to other subjects.

Purpose and Aims of R.E.

The purpose of R.E. is to teach children about the religious and non-religious world-views that they will encounter in modern Britain and enable them to engage in meaningful and considerate dialogue with those of all faiths and none. This is religious literacy.

Therefore, at Chesterton School, we aim that Religious Education will:

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It should develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and has helped shaped British culture and heritage. It should also develop knowledge of other principal world faiths, religious traditions and worldviews that examine the above questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development. It should teach diversity and similarities between the worldviews and within them.
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. RE

should also contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and their own spiritual and philosophical convictions. This will also build resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.

- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity, belonging and integrity**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice.
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **teach pupils the skills** of enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection by looking at R.E through different disciplines including: theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.

Objectives

Learning

In R.E., we foster a reflective approach to learning by encouraging an open and honest enquiry*, awareness of prejudice, a growing self-understanding and respecting the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own by 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion'. Learning will be organised to encourage the development of attitudes such as self-awareness, respect for others, open-mindedness, appreciation and wonder, as well as providing opportunities to engage appropriately with Fundamental British Values. All faiths and worldviews are treated respectfully.

*Which is based around Big Questions, different disciplines and an investigative approach, as recommended by the Diocesan Scheme of Work 2023 and Understanding Christianity.

These two areas of learning, with their associated statements, set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the R.E. curriculum.

Learning about Religions and Worldviews

- explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism;
- explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.
- apply academic skills such as analysis and critical and creative thinking.
- use different disciplines to view religions and worldviews.

Learning from Religion and Worldviews

- give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues;
- reflect on what might be learnt from religion and worldviews in the light of personal beliefs and life experience;
- identify and respond to the questions of meaning within religion and worldviews.

The contribution that R.E. makes to other aims, in particular to community cohesion

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions, beliefs and worldviews, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in R.E. within a broad-based and deep curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion, belief and worldviews and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community cohesion

R.E. makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective R.E. will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

The school community – R.E. provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

The community within which the school is located – R.E. provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

The UK community – a major focus of R.E. is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community – R.E. involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions 'British Values' and human rights.

Teaching and Planning

R.E. has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced, deep, sequential and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. Units of work are planned using the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus, with the support of the ODBE 2023 scheme of work. The total time for RE is between 5% and 10% and can be taught in blocked groups of lessons or regular weekly sessions. The time dedicated to R.E. is separate from the time given to Collective Worship. Christianity is taught in every year group with at least 50% of the time devoted to Christianity. Other religions and worldviews are covered according to the syllabus; e.g. Judaism in KS1, Hinduism, Islam and humanism in KS2, as well as other faiths to a lesser extent. Pupils learn

from and about religion while considering Big Questions which relate to ‘belonging, behaving and believing’.

In order to make R.E. a lively, active subject which enables all children to make progress, we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, drama, discussion, the development of thinking skills, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. As with accordance with the SEN and Equal Opportunities policy and the ‘Valuing All God’s Children’ document, the teaching of R.E. is planned and taught so all children can engage with the subject regardless of their starting points, ability or background.

Where possible, we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring of R.E.

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording:

It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of their pupils through marking work set. At four points in the year, each teacher will assess three examples of work to show the range of attainment across the class and include them in the Class Portfolio for that year. These assessments will be used by both the Curriculum and R.E. subject co-ordinator to track pupil progress through the school to ensure that all pupils are experiencing the correct level of progression and coverage.

Teaching, learning and assessment in R.E. is monitored, in line with foundation subjects, by the Curriculum, subject co-ordinators and governors via classroom portfolios, work book scrutiny and teaching and learning observations according to the whole school monitoring schedule.

Resources

The RE subject leader will ensure that R.E. resources are kept up-to-date and that staff are informed when new resources are purchased or made available electronically. Resources will include source materials (e.g. Bibles, visitors, artefacts) where appropriate and be treated with respect by all staff.

Right of Withdrawal

Pupils may be withdrawn from R.E. or part of R.E. by a parent or guardian in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject. However, we hope that all parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the type of religious education being taught at this school. Parents who wish to withdraw their children must provide written notification to this effect and provide suitable activities for their children. The school will keep pupils safe, but will not provide any work or reading material for pupils who have been withdrawn. Any concerns about the subject should be discussed with the Headteacher.

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