2026

Policy for Religious Education

Compassion Responsibility Hope

HAINFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

RE Policy Statement

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. The provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of Hainford Church of England VC Primary School. The school adopts the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (*Norfolk).*
Hainford Church of England VC Primary School is inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Aims
The broad aims of religious education (RE) are set out within the locally agreed syllabus and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2026. The purpose of religious education in our school is to enable every child to flourish and promote religious literacy. By this we mean that pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

In a Church school, RE should enable pupils to:

- Engage meaningfully and critically with learning which helps them to make sense of the multi-religious and multi-secular world in which they live.
- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of beliefs and practices, using approaches which engage with biblical text and key sources of authority.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating the complexity, diversity, continuity and change that exists within those worldviews being studied.
- Grapple with questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- Understand the concept of religion and recognise its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals, communities and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge which equips pupils to be religiously literate.
- Explore their personal worldviews; their own religious or non-religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum

The curriculum for RE is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

<u>Theology:</u>
This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

<u>Philosophy:</u>
This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

<u>Human/Social sciences:</u>
This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

These three disciplines provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- At Reception / KS1 pupils study primarily Christianity and Judaism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews.

- At KS2 pupils study primarily Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews including Humanism.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2026), Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group and makes up more than 50% of RE curriculum time. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of RE, and through additional RE days which focus on an aspect of the Christian faith.

The use of the resource *Understanding Christianity* is drawn upon to support the development of the theological strand within Christianity.

Teaching RE

Our RE curriculum will engage and challenge pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions which explores aspects of the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences. There are in-built opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories.

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

Assessment

Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines within RE. In broad terms the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

- Extending knowledge and understanding from the concrete and familiar to the abstract and complex
- Moving from simple ideas and beliefs/concepts to making connections between them and placing these within a bigger picture or meta-narrative
- Demonstrating increasing layers of interpretation of religion, religions, beliefs and worldviews through engagement with a broadening and increasingly complex range of information
- Showing an increasing ability to critically question and form coherent, logical arguments, including increasing recognition of divergences of opinion about and the controversial nature of religion and belief
- Expressing a broadening understanding of diversity in terms of the nature of religion, religions and worldviews

Pupils are assessed using age-related expectations. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion. Progress is tracked using our Foundation/RE assessment grids that are completed at the end of each unit. Coverage can be tracked using Pupil Asset.

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work.

In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The subject leader will monitor RE provision and standards within the school through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The subject leader is responsible for contributing to the school's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitor the role of religious education in upholding the Trust Deed of school and its contribution to the Christian ethos of the school.

Responsibilities for RE within each school (Executive Headteacher, Executive Deputy, Head of School and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and executive headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed
- standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The Right of Withdrawal From RE

Hainford Church of England VC Primary School is an inclusive community but recognises that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head of School to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school will review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although the school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Role of the RE Subject Leader

- To ensure that the RE policy is implemented and to keep up to date with reviews.
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes.
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement.
- To maintain and build priorities set by the school.
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese.
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate.
- To liaise with parents to ensure all children receive their entitlement.

Entitlement and Inclusion

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers should include a range of teaching approaches to allow all children to make progress. Every child should be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

Resources

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of RE in our school and Federation. We have our own resources, share others within the Nebula Federation and borrow others from places such as the Diocesan Resource Centre.

Parental and Community Involvement

Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE within each school. Parents are invited into the school to look at their children's work, and a report on their child's standard and progress in RE is given out annually. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of RE through visits and visitors, e.g. the children visit the church to learn about different concepts and for church services.

Professional Development

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal. The quality of Hainford's RE was recognised through achieving the REQM Silver award in May 2024.

The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims

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'. Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief 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
RE 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
RE makes an important contribution promoting 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 RE will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

The school community
RE 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
RE 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 RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community
RE 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 academy ethos that champions democratic values and human rights**.**

Monitoring & Review
The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if necessary.

Links to Other Policies

- Collective Worship Policy
- Appendix to RSE Policy