





Love of Learning, Love of Life, Love of One Another
'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10.



Religious Education Policy

Approved by:	N Ball – Head Teacher D Harvey – Chair of Governors	Date: GB6 2024 2025
		
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At Ashlands Primary School, our RE curriculum enables every child to flourish and live ‘life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10). It fosters dignity and respect, encouraging all to live well together. Through the teaching of RE, pupils engage with challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

Our curriculum is designed to help children revisit and build on their prior knowledge of different beliefs and practices across the school. Through engaging lessons, discussions, and reflective activities, we encourage pupils to appreciate diversity, foster empathy, and cultivate a deep respect for different worldviews. Our RE curriculum is deeply connected to our core values, ensuring that pupils develop not only a broad understanding of religious traditions but also a strong moral and spiritual foundation.

Overview of Provision

Religious Education alongside the National Curriculum

The Religious Education (RE) Guidance (2010) states that the “curriculum for a maintained school must be a balanced and broadly based one which ‘promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.’” (page 4)

It is noted that “Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It can develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these.” (RE Guidance, 2010, page 7).

Somerset RE Syllabus

As RE is not nationally determined, Ashlands Primary follows a locally agreed syllabus of RE prepared by a local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and adopted by the Somerset Local Authority. Awareness, Mystery and Value 2019, is the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for Somerset. This is used as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE. It is a requirement on schools and governing bodies to ensure that all learners gain their statutory entitlement to RE throughout all years of compulsory education. This has been part of statute since 1944, it was reinforced in the 1988 Education Reform Act and it remains so today.

Purpose of Study and Aims

Religious Education (RE) plays a vital role in supporting and strengthening every aspect of school life. It contributes to the holistic development of each child—spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, and intellectually.

We believe RE encourages pupils to explore big questions about life, helping them to develop their own beliefs and values. It provokes thoughtful inquiry into topics such as:

- Belief in God.
- The purpose and meaning of life
- Moral and ethical issues
- What it means to be human

Through this, RE nurtures respect for others, deepens understanding of world religions and worldviews, and promotes reflective, informed, and compassionate individuals.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of RE is to ensure high-quality teaching for all pupils, providing them with a systematic knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of other worldviews.

RE equips pupils to engage meaningfully in life within an increasingly diverse society. It is not about promoting any particular belief, but rather about fostering shared human understanding, encouraging the development of personal identity, and supporting pupils in their search for meaning.

Through RE, pupils learn to evaluate different beliefs and perspectives with respect and insight, enabling them to reflect critically, think deeply, and participate responsibly in a pluralistic world.

Aims of the RE Curriculum

RE teaching and learning at Ashlands Primary should allow children to:

- Extend knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs.
- Introduce pupils to Christianity as well as other major world religions (e.g. Islam, Judaism, Hinduism), while respecting the predominantly Christian heritage of the local community and out church school background.
- Explore local religious places, people, and festivals where possible to make learning relevant and meaningful.
- Compare stories, practices, and traditions to help children see both similarities and differences across beliefs.
- Develop an ability to use religious vocabulary effectively and interpret religious symbolism in various forms.
- Teach and reinforce key religious terms through stories, songs, artwork, drama, and discussion.
- Encourage pupils to recognise and interpret symbols (e.g. cross, crescent moon, candles) in religious artefacts, places of worship, and festivals.
- Support pupils in expressing ideas clearly and respectfully, using appropriate vocabulary when discussing beliefs and practices.
- Encourage deeper reflection on life's meaning, enabling thoughtful and informed insights into both religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Create space for open discussions where children can share and reflect on their own experiences and ideas about big questions.
- Include non-religious worldviews (e.g. Humanism) to ensure a broad and inclusive understanding of belief and values.
- Use stories, poetry, and real-life scenarios to prompt reflection and develop empathy and emotional awareness.
- Explore fundamental questions of belief and values in relation to contemporary issues.
- Connect RE learning to current, age-appropriate issues such as fairness, kindness, the environment, and helping others.
- Discuss moral questions in the context of both religious teachings and pupils' everyday lives (e.g. Why is it good to forgive? Why do we help others?).
- Encourage respectful debate and critical thinking, helping pupils to understand and evaluate different viewpoints.

Content and Approach

According to the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for Somerset: At key stage one, a minimum of two religions (including Christianity) and a non-religion view must be studied. At key stage two, a minimum of four religions (including Christianity) and a non-religious view must be studied.

EYFS	In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children begin their RE journey by encountering Christianity and a range of other worldviews in ways that are engaging, age-appropriate, and rooted in everyday experiences. RE in EYFS supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A growing awareness of self, helping children to recognise their own feelings, beliefs, and experiences.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of community and belonging, encouraging them to explore their place within their family, school, and wider world. • An introduction to a variety of religious and cultural festivals (e.g. Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Hanukkah), which promotes tolerance, curiosity, and respect for others. <p>Learning is delivered through stories, play, art, music, and celebration, helping children begin to make sense of the diverse world around them in a safe, nurturing environment.</p>
KS1	<p>In KS1, children build on their early experiences by exploring key beliefs, stories, and practices from Christianity and at least one other religion, typically chosen to reflect diversity and accessibility (e.g. Judaism or Islam).</p> <p>RE in KS1 aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop children’s ability to talk about beliefs, symbols, and values in simple but meaningful ways • Encourage respect for others and recognition of different ways people express what they believe • Help pupils begin to ask and respond to questions about the world, people, and right and wrong <p>Through stories, visits (virtual or in-person), artefacts, and discussion, pupils begin to explore religious ideas thoughtfully and sensitively.</p>
KS2	<p>In KS2, pupils deepen their knowledge of Christianity and a range of other world religions and non-religious worldviews (e.g. Islam, Hinduism, Humanism), reflecting a broad and balanced curriculum.</p> <p>RE in KS2 enables pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between beliefs, practices, and moral choices across religions and cultures • Use religious vocabulary with increasing confidence and accuracy, interpreting symbols, rituals, and texts • Reflect more deeply on questions of identity, meaning, truth, and values in light of religious and non-religious teachings • Discuss contemporary issues (e.g. fairness, justice, caring for the environment) and how beliefs influence actions <p>Lessons involve discussion, debate, creative expression, written reflection, and inquiry-based projects. Pupils are encouraged to form their own reasoned views while developing empathy and respect for others.</p>

Right to Withdrawal

At Ashlands Primary, we are committed to delivering high-quality Religious Education (RE) that is inclusive, objective, and respectful of all pupils' beliefs and backgrounds.

In accordance with the law, parents have the right to request that their child be wholly or partly withdrawn from Religious Education lessons provided.

Parents are made aware that RE at our school is taught in a balanced and objective way, exploring a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews. It is designed to be relevant to all pupils, regardless of their individual faith or beliefs. We encourage any parent considering withdrawal to discuss the matter with the headteacher. This allows us to:

- Ensure parents are fully informed about the nature and purpose of RE in our school.
- Explore whether their concerns can be addressed within the inclusive and educational context of our RE provision.
- RE is taught for one hour per week and is further enriched through whole-school celebrations of key festivals (e.g. Diwali, Christmas, Remembrance).

Please note:

The right of withdrawal applies only to designated RE lessons. It does not extend to other areas of the curriculum, where aspects of religion or spiritual matters may arise naturally—such as in History, English, or class discussions prompted by pupils.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in RE is based on the end of key stage learning outcomes set out in the Somerset Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. It is viewed in its broadest and most formative sense, supporting both teaching and learning.

Assessment is not limited to formal testing but takes place continuously through a range of classroom activities, including:

- Class discussions and questioning to gauge understanding and prompt deeper thinking.
- Group activities and collaborative tasks, encouraging exploration and expression of ideas.
- Marking and feedback to guide progress and celebrate achievement.
- Observation and display of work, offering insight into creativity, understanding, and engagement.

Each unit of work includes four end-of-unit learning outcomes. These are used to inform teacher judgments and ensure progression. Knowledge retrieval questions are embedded into each lesson to help pupils consolidate their learning and make meaningful connections over time.

Teachers use this ongoing assessment to:

- Plan next steps in learning.
- Track pupil progress against expected outcomes.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.

RE progress is formally reported to parents in the summer term each year, including:

- Attainment against age-related expectations.
- Progress across the year.
- Attitude to learning, including engagement, respect for others' beliefs, and curiosity.

This approach ensures that RE remains a rigorous, reflective, and inclusive subject, fostering both knowledge and personal growth.

Planning

RE planning at our school is systematic and progressive, ensuring that learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding from year to year. Units of work are planned by the RE Lead, with clear learning objectives and outcomes aligned to the Somerset Agreed Syllabus. All necessary resources are provided, including activities, teaching materials, and assessment tracking.

A cover sheet accompanies each unit, offering useful background knowledge, links to relevant websites, and subject knowledge support to aid teacher confidence and understanding.

Class teachers are encouraged to:

- Adapt planning to meet the needs of their specific class, including pace, differentiation, and teaching style.
- Draw on the provided materials and guidance, while maintaining flexibility to respond to pupil interest and engagement.
- Organise educational visits and invite visitors as part of their RE teaching (places of worship, inviting faith representatives, virtual visits).

RE learning is enriched through:

- Visits to the local church, helping pupils connect with Christian practices in their own community.
- Virtual experiences of other places of worship (e.g. mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras), ensuring children encounter a range of worldviews even within a rural setting.

This structured yet adaptable approach ensures that RE is engaging, inclusive, and rooted in real-life experience, while also supporting staff in delivering high-quality teaching with confidence.

Cross Curricular Approach

At Ashlands Primary, RE is more than a subject—it plays a central role in supporting cross-curricular learning and nurturing the whole child. The RE curriculum offers rich opportunities to develop wider educational skills and values.

1. Core Skills and Personal Development

- RE supports the development of key skills across the curriculum by:
- Enhancing speaking, listening, and literacy skills through storytelling, discussion, drama, and reflective writing.
- Encouraging problem-solving and decision-making through exploring moral questions and ethical dilemmas.
- Developing interpersonal and collaborative skills through group tasks and shared enquiry.

2. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development

RE makes a strong contribution to SMSC by:

- Providing opportunities for spiritual reflection and exploration of life's big questions.
- Discussing moral issues, helping children develop a sense of right and wrong.
- Supporting social development through shared values and respectful dialogue.
- Promoting cultural awareness and appreciation of religious and non-religious diversity.

3. British Values, Equality and Safeguarding

RE contributes to wider school responsibilities by:

- Embedding British Values, including respect for different beliefs, individual liberty, and democracy.
- Supporting the school's Prevent Duty by fostering understanding and respect across worldviews.
- Promoting equality, diversity and community cohesion as part of a safe, inclusive learning environment.

4. Local and Global Connections

As a church school in a small market town setting, RE is rooted in both local tradition and global awareness by:

- Creating strong links with the local church through visits, celebrations, and shared worship.
- Offering virtual visits and resources to explore global faith communities beyond the local area.
- Enabling pupils to connect their learning to real people and real communities, both near and far.

This cross-curricular approach ensures RE is not only academically enriching, but also instrumental in preparing pupils to become respectful, reflective, and responsible citizens in a diverse and changing world.

Leadership and Management

The RE Subject Leader manages and oversees this area of the curriculum in accordance with the school's job description for subject leaders. They play a key role in ensuring the quality, consistency, and progression of Religious Education throughout the school.

Key responsibilities may include:

- Attending the annual Baths and Wells Diocese RE Conference to stay informed of current developments, guidance, and best practice within the subject.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of RE across the school. This includes:
- Leading staff meetings and training sessions where appropriate
- Conducting lesson observations to support high-quality teaching
- Reviewing pupils' work through book scrutiny
- Gathering pupil and staff voice to evaluate the impact and relevance of the RE curriculum

The subject leader identifies strengths and areas for development and supports staff in delivering a progressive and inclusive RE curriculum that reflects both the Somerset Agreed Syllabus and the Christian foundation of our church school.