



# Horndon-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School

## Religious Education Policy

October 2021

**We are all part of God's family. Through trying our best in all we do, we find a sense of belonging.**

***1 Corinthians 12:27 - All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.***

***Respect, Honesty, Thoughtfulness, Courage, Responsibility***

*Signed*-----

*Chair of Governors*

*Date approved*-----*November 2021*-----

*Date to be reviewed*-----*November 2023*-----

**Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility, Solidarity**

Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary School is a partner in the Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust. We believe that all pupils in this community should be able to achieve their full potential through good and outstanding teaching and learning based on our Christian values and the values of the Co-operative Trust. All pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders are therefore encouraged to contribute to the school as an autonomous learning community.

## **Introduction**

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject, but 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'. In all Church schools, religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. It should be a coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning developing both knowledge and skills. There should be a clear curriculum vision and intent, a structure for implementation and provision and a process for evaluating impact. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual moral social and cultural development

At Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Thurrock SACRE Agreed Syllabus (SACRE). When following this scheme, the Christian values of the school are drawn upon to support and enhance children's spiritual development as well as helping give context to the more knowledge-based aspect of RE. Alongside the SACRE, and with the parish church of St. Peter and St Paul, we also study the major Christian festivals at the time they fall within the church year.

## **Aims**

The principal aims of Religious Education are:

- Learning about religion – to enable children to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response.
- Learning from religion – to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues; to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

With these principles working alongside the school's Christian ethos, we aim to celebrate community at four different levels:

- *The values and ethos of the school* – RE provides an opportunity to set the school's beliefs into context and demonstrates why we should follow the core values both within the school and beyond.
- *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.

We also aim to:

- 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. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or nonreligious), 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. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, 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. Religious Education encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

In accordance with SACRE, we endeavour to develop the following skills:

Investigation	Expression	Interpretation	Reflection
Empathy	Application	Discernment	Analysis
Synthesis	Evaluation		

### **Teaching Religious Education**

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of the RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1 and 2. We acknowledge that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

At Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary School, this approximates to 75 minutes a week for KS1 and 90 minutes a week for KS2. This is in addition to time spent in Collective Worship. The content of the syllabus is to be predominantly Christian (at least 50%). However, in accordance with SACRE we also teach following world religions:

Y1 and Y2 Judaism

Y3 and Y4 Islam and Sikhism

Y5 and Y6 Islam and Hinduism

In order to make RE a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Each classroom will also have a display reflecting children's learning in RE.

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. In following these aims, we use the units provided by Chelmsford Diocese as a basis for our planning. As a source of ideas and teaching strategies we also make use of those provided by SACRE.

### **Assessment and Recording of Religious Education**

Children's work is marked in accordance with the school's Marking Policy. The published units each have assessment criteria, and these should be used to inform the levels ascribed.

### **The right of Withdrawal from Religious Education**

At Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE. 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.

The 1996 Education Act deals with the right for withdrawal and is summarised below:

1. The 1996 Education Act confirmed the right of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, either wholly or in part.
2. Teachers who do not wish to participate in religious education have the right to withdraw. The Headteacher may also exercise their right to withdraw from religious education although they remain responsible for ensuring that provision is made for its delivery.
3. Information about the provision made for religious education, and the parental right of withdrawal, must be included in the school prospectus.
4. Parents should be free to exercise their right of withdrawal and a school must give effect to any such request. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal. Although it is not a legal requirement to put requests for withdrawal in writing, Head teachers may wish to advise parents to do so. It is the duty of the school to support community cohesion and religious education plays an important role in this.
5. Parents may request alternative provision for religious education, either through attendance elsewhere or through separate provision on the premises. However, in such cases, the Local Authority and governors must be satisfied that attendance elsewhere will not interfere with attendance at school at the beginning or the end of a school session, and that separate provision on the school premises does not involve additional expenditure, and is consistent with overall curriculum aims.