WISTOW PAROCHIAL C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Head Teacher: Carla Cox

Religious Education Policy

Document Status		
Date of Next Review	**March 2027**	**Responsibility – Full Governing Body**
Date of Policy Creation	**November 2010**	Responsible Governor Name
Date of Review and Ratification at FGB Meeting	**October 2026**	**Abigail Lund**
Policy Publication/Communication ☐ On the school website ☐ Shared staff network drive ☐ Updates to staff in staff meetings		*Signed off by the above named Governor during the full governing body meeting held on the date stated as ratified.*

Our vision for Religious Education.

The essential place of religious education (RE) in a Church school flows from our deep commitment to the flourishing of every child articulated in our Vision for Education. This document sets out the aim for young people to leave school with a rich and well-informed understanding of Christianity. Equally important is the development of a commitment to generous hospitality, expressed through deep respect for the integrity of other religious and belief traditions, and for the religious freedom of every individual. *(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2026)*

Religious Education is to engage children in big questions about religion and world views so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own. The Agreed Syllabus for 2024-29 is used throughout school and helps to

engage the children to think about the awe and wonder of the world. Challenge and excitement are to be evident in all lessons. During the year the Wistow story of Bumble and Tweet at Conker Tree Corner will be embedded throughout the school and will enhance the children's understanding of the school's values. The Parable of the Sower is at the heart of all we do at Wistow Parochial CE Primary School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies in school including: SMSC, Collective Worship, PSHE, Teaching and Learning, Assessment, Marking and Feedback and other curriculum policies.

Introduction

At Wistow Parochial CE School, 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 religious and non religious worldviews.

We teach according to the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus.

We teach RE as a core part of our school curriculum to help our pupils develop their religion and worldview literacy. We understand this to be our pupils' ability to hold informed, balanced and critically-engaged conversations about religions and beliefs, including their own. RE in our school is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralist manner.

As a Church of England VC school, we recognise the core place that RE occupies as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We also understand the contribution of effective RE to our journey towards realising our school's distinctively Christian vision.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds that make up our school community and we respect this variety of backgrounds in the spirit of Christian welcome. We are glad to have good relationships with faith and belief practitioners from a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, and we value their contribution to our provision of effective RE.

We actively seek to prepare our pupils for life in modern Britain. As such, we promote key British values, including respect for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We challenge racism and all forms of prejudice and we see RE as one curriculum area in which our pupils can encounter and critically reflect on a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Our school mission statement is:

Faith is all around us. We have to have faith in ourselves in order to be the best that we can be. We are a small school, with big hearts and together we beat as one. Sowing seeds of knowledge and faith, with nurture and love; we thrive, we grow.

This is theologically unpinned by:

Matthew 13: 13-18

The Parable of the Sower

Intent for RE / Aims and objectives

RE at Wistow Parochial Church of England Primary School will be provided within legal requirements. These are as follows:

1. The Basic Curriculum must include provision for RE for all pupils registered on the school roll, including those in Reception class who are less than five years old.
2. The content of RE must reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are, in the main, Christian; it must also reflect the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain
3. The RE curriculum provided will be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus of North Yorkshire.

We deliver RE in accordance with the Church of England Education Office's *Statement of Entitlement*. We also pay due attention to the Ofsted RE Research Review (2021), the National Content Standard for Religious Education (2023) and the Ofsted RE subject report (2024).

Within this context, our aims in RE are for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of other religious and non-religious worldviews;
- Develop an understanding of the ways in which religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions influence individuals, communities, societies and cultures, from the local to the global contexts;
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the beliefs, teachings, practices, sources of authority and ways of living associated with the principle religions represented in the UK;
- Develop positive attitudes of mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
    - Considering the 'big questions' raised by human experience and reflecting on how religious and other traditions respond to them;
    - Responding to such questions with reference to religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions, relating them to their own understanding and experience;
    - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all registered pupils. As RE is not nationally determined, the Local Education Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. It is this North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2024-2029, which we currently use as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE (note 1).

The purpose and intent of Religious Education is captured in the principal aim of RE, in the Agreed Syllabus:

The principal aim of Religious Education is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied response to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principle aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. **Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses, offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. **Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. **Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

We believe at this school that Religious Education both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

The teaching of Religious Education also supports our school's Christian Vision and the recognition that each pupil is a unique individual. Spirituality is encouraged throughout school through windows, mirrors and doors.

Windows: Opportunities to look out on the world to gaze and wonder: The Wow and Ows moments. The things we find amazing and bring us up short.

Mirrors: Giving opportunities for children to reflect, to look inward to consider some of the big questions of life: To explore their own insights and those of others.

Doors: Giving opportunities to children to respond, to do something to go through the door of a creative expression of their own thoughts and convictions.

At Wistow Parochial Church of England Primary School **Spirituality** is defined as:

An awareness that there is something other, something greater than the course of everyday events, which includes the relationship of the individual with self, others and the world.

The teaching of RE also supports the school's vision to educate all the children by developing their understanding of the British Values of:

- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty

Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' of Christian background. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. RE is concerned with "learning about religions and beliefs" and "learning from religions and beliefs" and it is not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times.

Curriculum for Religious Education

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 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

It is the expectation of the Church of England Education Office that RE should constitute a minimum of 5% curriculum time. This is in line with the recommendations made by the Dearing Report (1994) Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE.

The time allocated for teaching RE at Wistow Parochial CE School is:

At Foundation Stage RE, will be delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS. At Key Stage 1 pupils spend 60 hours over 2 years (approximately 10 hours per term) and 156 hours over 4 years (approximately 13 hours per term) at Key Stage 2. The time allocation does include visits and RE curriculum days, but not school productions related to festivals or collective worship time. (See Collective Worship policy: note 3).

RE Curriculum Overview

Our RE curriculum is based on the North Yorkshire locally agreed syllabus.

In Reception children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.

In Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.

Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils build on their understanding of Christianity and also study Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. The pupils will also engage with non-religious worldviews, such as Humanism, as part of the RE curriculum.

At Wistow Parochial Primary School we also believe that we should learn about the minority faiths that might be followed by our children and we will therefore make every effort to include them during the school year.

Teaching and Learning

The Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity are structured around units of work to explore and answer a key question. These are arranged around 3 main groups:

Believing-
Religious beliefs; teachings; sources; questions about meaning; purpose and truth.

Expressing-
Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identify and diversity.

Living-
Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

Curriculum Implementation

We ensure that teaching and learning in RE meets the needs of all pupils; the implementation of the curriculum focuses on ensuring all pupils develop the expected substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge in RE. The curriculum provides 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. Pupils explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. Our RE curriculum introduces pupils to a range of relevant disciplines

including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. The curriculum provides opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religious and non-religious 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 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.

Planning

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school uses the North Yorkshire units of learning for RE, which builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the Agreed Syllabus. We use a combination of teaching RE through creative curriculum, RE days and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus but do not have to repeat all topics.

Short term planning of individual lessons is a matter for the class teacher. The RE Subject Leader is available to help with this and keeps a range of teacher's resources as a guide (which are kept in the staff room). When planning each unit of work the teacher will identify which parts of the programme of study are to be the

focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, time allocated and any resources, visits or visitors needed. The work planned must be relevant to the needs of the pupils.

Cross Curricular Opportunities

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions.

There are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

Children's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

Meeting the needs of All

Whole school policy with regards to SEND and adaptive teaching applies to RE. Teachers ensure that the learning activities employed in RE are adapted to meet a variety of learning needs. RE forms part of our commitment to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive to meet the needs of all pupils and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate school policies.

Visits and visitors

We consider that an essential element of the delivery of effective RE is encounter with a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. We encourage our pupils to participate in visits to places of worship when the opportunity arises; these visits are arranged in line with the programme of study for RE and provide pupils with the chance to encounter world religions as living faiths in modern Britain. We also encourage members of different religious and non-religious worldviews to visit Wistow Parochial C of E School/Academy.

Pupils will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school.

Year 1 York Minster
Year 2 York Minster
Year 3
Year 4
Year 5
Year 6

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits in line with the school educational visits policy.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Resources

We have a wide range of resources, to support our RE teaching, that we continue to develop. These include a wide range of appropriate books, artefacts, audio and visual resources, posters, persona dolls, etc. We take advice from the Diocesan RE Adviser and other RE professionals on the best resources to support the delivery of an effective RE curriculum.

Our staff are given protected time to familiarize themselves with any new materials. A regular audit of resources takes place by the RE subject leader in order to update our collection.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious education will:

- Be directly related to the expectations of the *North Yorkshire Agreed 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 disciplinary knowledge and skills which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- 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.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review **(see school Assessment policy)**

We intend that this policy should operate for the next 3 years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors.

Through activities, for example discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements.
This information is then recorded against key objectives on Medium Term Unit plans. These unit plans are working documents and are passed on to the pupils' next teacher as they move through the school. This is in order to help identify gaps in knowledge and then teachers can plan to fill gaps and enhance existing knowledge. At this school we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment through self evaluation and taking part in discussion.

The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.
The RE Subject Leader must work with their line manager to ensure that leadership of RE remains a high priority and is of a high quality.

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 local network meetings.

Inspection

The effectiveness of the RE curriculum is inspected as part of the Section 48 SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection. Wistow Parochial Church of England School is a VC school. As such, progress and attainment in RE is not inspected as a distinct element of the Section 48 SIAMS inspection. It is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leader to review and maintain evidence for the RE elements of this inspection, with appropriate support from the head teacher, governors and Diocesan RE Adviser.

Withdrawal from RE - Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the right of parents/guardians 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. Should a parent/guardian wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons we ask that they inform the school [e.g. via the enquiries@ email address].

We will endeavour to communicate clearly the place of RE within a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that parents are in possession of all the necessary information. However, should a parent/guardian request that their child be withdrawn from RE, we will not attempt to persuade them to alter their decision. If a pupil is withdrawn from RE lessons, the school is required to provide supervision but *should not incur any additional cost in so doing*.

Any queries regarding withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE Subject Leader in the first instance, and thereafter to the head teacher.