



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”
Proverbs 22:6

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Adopted	J. Hackney
Committee	Standards
Date approved	
Review Date	September 2027

We are a Christian school where quality and opportunities make a difference. We value all children as unique ‘Children of God’ and nurture each other to show **LOVE** in our relationships and a **RESPECT** for all. We foster **HOPE** within our community and encourage children to find **PEACE** by creating times and places for stillness and reflection. We strive for excellence, inspiring dreams both now and in the future. We promote **POSITIVITY**, celebrate **COURAGE**, demonstrate **RESPONSIBILITY** and share **JOY** through...

‘Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus’.

Intent

Religious Education (RE) plays a central role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character and in enabling all pupils to flourish academically, spiritually, morally and socially.

Our Christian vision is underpinned by Proverbs 22:6:

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”

Through high-quality Religious Education, pupils are invited to encounter Christianity as a living, global and diverse faith that has shaped individuals, communities and cultures across time and place. They also encounter a rich range of other religions and worldviews through an enquiry-based curriculum that encourages curiosity, critical thinking and respectful dialogue. From the moment children enter our school, pupils are encouraged to explore the Bible, Christian belief and practice, and the ways in which faith influences the lives of believers today within a safe, respectful and fully inclusive learning environment where every child, regardless of their faith, belief, background or identity, is valued and able to flourish.

RE provides pupils with opportunities to engage thoughtfully with theological ideas, ask meaningful questions, and reflect on their own experiences, values and beliefs. Through the study of Christianity and a range of other religions and worldviews, pupils develop understanding, empathy and respect for people of all faiths and none, supporting their spiritual journeys and preparation for life in a diverse and changing world.

Religious Education is core to the school's curriculum and forms part of the basic curriculum required by law. It has a vital role in developing pupils' understanding of Christianity in all its richness and diversity, while also fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions and worldviews. RE supports pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for dialogue, reflection and responsible citizenship, contributing to harmonious relationships and the promotion of justice, inclusion and mutual respect.

In line with the Church of England's vision for Religious Education, our curriculum seeks to:

- provide a coherent, progressive and challenging exploration of Christianity within the wider study of religion and belief in the modern world
- enable pupils to think theologically through enquiry, interpretation, analysis and reflection
- develop pupils' religious literacy so they can understand, discuss and evaluate beliefs, practices and lived experiences with increasing confidence
- support pupils in making connections between belief, practice and lived experience
- enable pupils to appreciate the diversity that exists within Christianity and other religions, recognising that faith is expressed in many different ways across cultures and communities
- foster respect, inclusion and compassionate dialogue so that pupils are prepared to live well alongside people of all faiths and none.

RE at Forsbrook Church of England Primary School is planned and taught in accordance with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (January 2026), ensuring that provision is ambitious, inclusive and deeply rooted in our Christian vision.

Implementation

RE Statement of Entitlement

RE teaching at this school is in line with the recommendations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (January 2026). The January 2026 Statement is the reference point for SIAMS inspection from September 2026; until that date the 2019 Statement of Entitlement applies. RE is taught in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner, and is entirely separate from collective worship.

Religious Education Statement of Entitlement

Christianity therefore comprises no less than half of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to Religious Education in this Church of England school and reflects Christianity as a living, global and diverse faith. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression in knowledge, understanding, and theological enquiry.

As a Church school, we also have a duty to foster an accurate and increasingly sophisticated understanding of other world religions and worldviews. Through this approach, pupils gain insight into the world in which they are growing up, learn to appreciate the beliefs and practices of others, and are supported in developing and articulating their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and challenging prejudice and discrimination.

The RE curriculum

RE teaching follows the legal requirements first set out in the Education Reform Act (1988), which places RE as part of the basic curriculum and as a statutory entitlement for all pupils; the duty now sits in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

As a voluntary controlled school, we are required in law to follow the syllabus adopted by Staffordshire's Agreed Syllabus Conference. Our curriculum is based upon the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2023) and is planned using the NATRE Scheme of Work alongside the Understanding Christianity resource. This combination provides pupils with a carefully sequenced, enquiry-led curriculum that develops both substantive knowledge about religion and disciplinary knowledge, enabling pupils to investigate, interpret, evaluate and reflect upon religious and non-religious worldviews. Enquiry is at the heart of our

curriculum. Lessons encourage pupils to ask meaningful questions, consider different perspectives, make connections between beliefs and practices and communicate their own reasoned responses with increasing confidence and respect. Additional guidance from the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education and other high-quality resources further enrich learning and ensure full alignment with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement (2026).

Curriculum time dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives aims towards 10% and is no less than 5%, although the subject may also be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this allocation, at least half of subject content focuses on Christianity, explored in all its richness, diversity and global expression, including the key concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression in knowledge, understanding, and theological enquiry.

The aims of Religious Education at our school are to:

- Enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living, global and diverse faith that continues to influence the lives of people worldwide, and as a religion that has significantly shaped British culture and heritage.
- Enable pupils to know about and understand other major world religions and worldviews, their beliefs, practices, and impact on individuals, communities, and society, supporting pupils to express ideas, insights, and informed reflections.
- Develop pupils' knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings, and in understanding their significance for the lives of believers.
- Support pupils to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own developing understanding of religion, belief, the world, and human experience, fostering progression and depth of thinking.
- Encourage pupils to explore religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, enabling them to consider and reflect on important human questions, values, and concerns.
- Nurture respect, empathy, open-mindedness, and engagement with the study of religions and worldviews, inspiring curiosity, thoughtful dialogue, and lifelong learning.

Inclusion and Diversity

Religious Education at Forsbrook Church of England Primary School is rooted in the Christian belief that every person is created in the image of God and therefore deserves dignity, respect and the opportunity to flourish. We are committed to providing an inclusive curriculum in which every pupil feels valued, regardless of faith, belief, background, ethnicity, culture, disability, gender or family circumstance.

Our curriculum reflects the rich diversity found within Christianity and other religions, enabling pupils to encounter authentic lived experiences rather than stereotypes. Pupils learn that there is diversity within faith traditions as well as between them and develop an appreciation that people express their beliefs in different ways across local, national and global communities.

Through respectful discussion, theological enquiry and critical reflection, pupils learn to listen carefully, disagree well and engage thoughtfully with different viewpoints. They develop empathy, challenge prejudice and discrimination, and are equipped to contribute positively to a diverse society where difference is understood, respected and celebrated.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We prioritise the holistic development of our youngest learners in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including their exploration of Religious Education (RE). The governing body's nursery admits children from birth to five, and provision for all children below compulsory school age follows the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers. The statutory requirement to teach RE begins at compulsory school age; before that, children encounter religion, belief and celebration through Understanding the World and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Our EYFS RE approach is tailored to their unique needs and developmental stages, guided by these principles:

- Personal Development: RE in EYFS supports personal, social, and emotional development.
- Age-Appropriate Learning: We offer age-appropriate RE activities, recognising that young children learn best through play and exploration.
- Respectful Exploration: Our focus is on fostering respect for diversity and encouraging questions and discovery.
- Inclusivity: We ensure all children, regardless of their background or faith, can explore different religions and beliefs.
- Parent Engagement: We actively involve parents in their child's RE learning journey, providing information and ways to continue learning at home.
- Play-Based Learning: Play is integral to our approach, allowing children to engage with stories, traditions, and celebrations creatively.
- Celebration of Diversity: We celebrate various festivals and events to promote understanding of diverse traditions.
- Formative Assessment: We use formative assessment to understand children's progress and adapt our teaching.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible Religious Education (RE) curriculum that meets the diverse needs of all our pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Our SEND provision is guided by the following principles:

- Inclusion: All pupils, regardless of ability or need, are fully included in RE learning and able to access the curriculum meaningfully.
- Differentiation: Teaching is flexible and adapted to accommodate a range of learning styles, abilities, and needs, ensuring each pupil can engage with RE at an appropriate level of challenge.
- Accessibility: RE materials, resources, and activities are designed to be accessible to all pupils, including the use of appropriate assistive technologies, support strategies, and scaffolded learning.
- Individualised Support: Pupils with SEND may receive personalised support plans or adaptations to enable full participation in RE learning, including opportunities for theological enquiry and reflection at a level suited to their needs.
- Collaboration: We work closely with parents, specialists, and support staff to provide the best possible learning experience and ensure that every pupil can engage with the study of Christianity, other religions, and worldviews.

This approach ensures that all pupils are able to encounter, explore, and reflect on faith in ways that are meaningful, challenging, and appropriate, in line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (2026). Inclusive practice is an expectation for all pupils, not solely those with identified SEND. Teachers carefully consider barriers to learning for every child and provide appropriate support and challenge so that all pupils can participate fully in theological enquiry, discussion and reflection.

Pupil Outcomes

At the end of their time in our school, pupils are able to:

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs, practices, and lived experiences of the religions studied, showing how they are connected to the lives of believers worldwide.
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion, including symbols, stories, festivals, beliefs, faith in action, rituals, and worship.
- Express religious beliefs and ideas using appropriate language, vocabulary, and terminology, and explain their meaning thoughtfully.
- Ask sensitive and informed questions about the lives of believers and offer considered, reflective responses.

- Reflect on the decisions people make, including those of believers, and suggest possible consequences or outcomes.
- Compare and relate their own experiences and identity with others, including those of people of faith.
- Reflect on and empathise with life's big questions, offering insights and considering multiple perspectives.
- Confidently explore their own spirituality, beliefs, and search for truth, within a safe and supportive environment.
- Value and respect the religious journeys of others, recognising the diversity of expression and practice within faith communities.
- Develop the ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery, symbolism, and expression, and understand their significance for believers.
- Demonstrate religious literacy by using increasingly sophisticated religious vocabulary accurately.
- Recognise and explain the diversity that exists within Christianity and other religions.
- Engage respectfully with viewpoints that differ from their own, offering balanced and thoughtful responses.
- Challenge stereotypes and appreciate the value of diversity within modern Britain and the wider world.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

In addition the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Spiritual	Widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.
Moral	Helping each pupil develop their own informed values.
Social	Helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values of our society.
Cultural	Aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with personal, social, health and education (PSHE) and British values. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

The management of RE

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects. As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

The RE coordinator is responsible for:

- producing a scheme of work for the school
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision
- ensuring Religious Education has status within the school
- keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff INSET
- monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- ensuring assessment strategies are in place in line with the Agreed Syllabus
- creating the RE Development Plan and ensuring its regular review
- accountability for RE standards in the school
- meet with member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

The governing body, through the Standards Committee, monitors the quality of Religious Education through curriculum reports, monitoring activities, pupil outcomes and SIAMS self-evaluation. Governors ensure that RE receives sufficient curriculum time, appropriate resourcing and high-quality professional development in line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.

Teaching and Learning

Religious Education is taught through an enquiry-based approach using the NATRE Scheme of Work and Understanding Christianity resources. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to investigate questions of meaning, purpose and belief, explore a range of evidence and viewpoints, engage in respectful discussion and reflect upon their own thinking. This approach develops curiosity, critical thinking, theological understanding and religious literacy while encouraging pupils to become thoughtful, respectful and informed members of society.

Assessment

Assessment in RE is ongoing and informs future planning. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, understanding and ability to engage in theological enquiry through discussion, questioning, written work and reflective

responses. Assessment is based on the progression of knowledge and disciplinary skills identified within the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and the school's curriculum, enabling teachers to identify next steps and ensure all pupils make good progress.

Impact

In Religious Education, pupils will be encouraged and have opportunities to:

- Think theologically and explore ultimate questions, developing curiosity and depth of understanding.
- Demonstrate increasing religious literacy through confident use of theological vocabulary and disciplinary skills.
- Apply enquiry skills to investigate religious and non-religious worldviews, considering evidence before reaching informed conclusions.
- Appreciate the diversity within Christianity and other world faiths through encounters with authentic lived experiences.
- Value diversity, challenge prejudice and contribute positively to an inclusive society.
- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living, global, and diverse faith.
- Develop the skills to analyse, interpret, and apply religious texts and teachings, understanding their significance for believers' lives.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with people of other faiths, worldviews, and those with no faith, showing empathy and respect.
- Recognise that faith provides particular ways of understanding and responding to God, the world, and human experience.
- Analyse and explain the varied nature, traditions, and expressions of the Christian community, including local and global contexts.
- Show informed, respectful, and reflective attitudes towards religions and worldviews, fostering tolerance, curiosity, and open-mindedness.
- Reflect sensitively on areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths, identifying connections and differences.
- Enrich and expand their understanding of truth, exploring moral, spiritual, and philosophical questions.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical, and ethical convictions, developing personal insight.
- Express religious ideas confidently using appropriate language, vocabulary, and terminology, demonstrating understanding and precision.
- Be confident in exploring, expressing, and nurturing their own faith journey, while respecting the beliefs of others.

Right to withdrawal - see appendix

At Forsbrook Church of England Primary School, we aim to be an inclusive community, while recognising that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education (RE) or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without needing to provide a reason.

Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the Head Teacher, who will then invite them to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided, and outline the options available under education law. Requests are recorded and reviewed annually with parents, and the RE syllabus we follow is published on the school website.

It is important to note that the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum, where spontaneous questions on religious matters may arise or where religion-related issues form part of learning in other subjects.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE and does not participate in alternative RE provision, they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff and provided with work set by their parents. This work should aim to further the pupil's knowledge and understanding of their parents' beliefs and values.

Denominational religious education

As a voluntary controlled school with a religious character, parents have a separate legal right to request that their child receives religious education in accordance with the tenets of the Church of England, rather than the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. Where such a request is made, the governing body will make arrangements for that religious education unless, because of special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so. Any such teaching would be given by a teacher selected for their fitness and competence to provide it, and arrangements would be made in consultation with Staffordshire County Council and the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education. This right, and the associated staffing provisions, are set out in Schedule 19 to and section 58 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Changes to the teaching of Relationships, Sex and Health Education and PSHE

At Forsbrook Church of England Primary School, we recognise that relationships, health, and sex are gifts of God that should bring joy, and we are committed to preparing pupils for the opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities of forming and maintaining positive relationships.

Our RSHE programme equips pupils with the knowledge, understanding, vocabulary, and strategies they need to keep themselves safe, make informed choices, and thrive within healthy, stable, and respectful relationships of all kinds. Through RSHE, we aim to ensure that all pupils flourish and have the opportunity to live fulfilled lives.

RSHE is taught in a way that promotes an understanding of the diversity of healthy relationships, lifestyles, and beliefs, while remaining flexible to reflect our Christian ethos, school values, and local context.

Our RSHE curriculum is taught in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, published in July 2025, which schools must follow from 1 September 2026. Full detail of the content taught, how it is delivered, and the parental right to request withdrawal from sex education is set out in the school's separate RSHE policy.

Church of England Education RSHE: [Relationships, Sex and Health Education](#)

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in September 2027, or sooner if required. The government has accepted the recommendation of the Curriculum and Assessment Review (November 2025) that Religious Education should form part of a new National Curriculum framework, with content to be developed by a sector-led task and finish group. The policy will be revisited when that work is published, and when Staffordshire SACRE next revises the Agreed Syllabus.

Appendix

Guidance on the right of withdrawal from Religious Education

Religious Education

The government guidance *Religious Education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010* states that:

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).

In voluntary controlled schools such as Forsbrook, religious education must be provided in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus provided by the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) of the local authority in which the school is situated. For this school that authority is Staffordshire County Council.

In voluntary aided schools, the decision on the content of religious education rests with the governing body, and should be in line with the trust deed of the school. Academies provide religious education in accordance with the requirements set out in their funding agreement.

In all forms of church school, the religious education provided should contribute to the Christian character of the school, and this is an aspect of the school's work which is subject to the *Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)*, whether VC, VA or academy.

Under the SIAMS framework (2023, revised 2024) the effectiveness of religious education is evaluated through Inspection Question 6. Inspection Question 7 applies to voluntary aided and former voluntary aided schools, and to former voluntary controlled schools in which denominational religious education is taught. 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. (Non-statutory Guidance 2010)*

Any parent considering withdrawal must contact the Head teacher to discuss any concerns relating to the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the school.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

It is important that the school makes clear on its website and through other forms of communication, the RE syllabus being taught in school. There needs to be a clear understanding of the relevance of the RE curriculum and how it respects pupils own beliefs. It is good practice to review requests to withdraw from RE and collective worship annually.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Whether the parents wish their children to be withdrawn from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it.
- Parents can withdraw their child from a specific activity, such as a visit to a place of worship, and not withdraw their child from the remainder of the RE.
- Where pupils are withdrawn from RE or collective worship, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or incur extra cost.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn from RE, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This could be provided at the school or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided. Outside arrangements are permitted providing the necessary safeguarding procedures are in place and the local authority is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from withdrawal will only affect the start or end of a school session (*Non-statutory Guidance 2010*)

It is important that schools are fully aware of issues surrounding religion, race and culture and ensure that parental right of withdrawal requests do not hamper their responsibilities to ensure equality for all and the promotion of British Values.