



## Ruardean C of E Primary School

# **Religious Education Policy**

*Love of Learning – Love of Life – Love of One Another*

*Matthew ch22 v33-40*

<b>Policy Reviewed:</b>	<b>Bi-Annually</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Performance, Standards and Community Committee</b>
<b>Agreed:</b>	<b>22/11/2025</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>Autumn 2027</b>
<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>RE Coordinator</b>

### **1.0 Our vision**

At Ruardean C of E Primary School, our vision statement '**Love of Learning, Love of Life and Love of One Another**' is at the core of everything we do. It is rooted in '**You should love your neighbour as yourself**'. This vision reflects the compassion and inclusivity that the staff and pupils of the school show to all members of our community. They underpin our teaching and learning and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident, happy citizens.

### **2.0 Introduction**

Religious Education plays a central role at Ruardean C of E Primary School. We hope that through our RE teaching we are able to nurture, stimulate and support our children and positively influence the caring capacity of our school so that they will always be sensitive to the needs of others. Our school community which includes an attached Communication and Interaction Centre is based on Christian values which underpin the spiritual and moral development of every child. We follow six core values on a two-year rolling plan:

- Friendship
- Creativity
- Perseverance
- Respect
- Hope
- Responsibility

### **3.0 Legal position of Religious Education in school**

Religious Education is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core or foundation subject. In the 1988 Education Act it states, 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National

Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.' Ruardean C of E Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and follows 'The Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025 – 2030.

### **3.1 The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement**

The Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE.

### **3.2 Legal Framework**

At Ruardean C of E Primary School, as stated before we follow the *Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus (2025 - 2030)* a statutory document for a VC school. The syllabus is supported by the *Understanding Christianity resources (50% of the RE curriculum is based on Christianity)*

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons, but as RE is central to the life and identity of our school we would ask parents to discuss with the Headteacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

### **3.3 RE is for all pupils:**

- Every pupil has an entitlement to religious education (RE).
- RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).
- This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age (although there are many examples of good practice of RE in nursery classes).
- Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE 'as far as is practicable'.
- The 'basic' school curriculum includes the national curriculum, RE and relationships and sex education.

#### **3.3.1 RE is determined locally, not nationally:**

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority. Voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the locally agreed syllabus, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.

## **4.0 Aims of Religious Education**

The Gloucestershire syllabus 2025 asserts the importance and value of religious education for all pupils, with on-going benefits for an open, articulate and understanding society.

***The principal aim for religious education in Gloucestershire is for pupils to understand how worldviews influence people's lives, including their own, through the study of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they better understand themselves and the world around them, and become better equipped to contribute to and flourish in society.***

This principal aim incorporates a religion and worldviews (RW) approach. RE following this approach will help pupils to understand:

- a variety of responses to and understandings of the world as presented by religious and non-religious worldviews
- relationships between beliefs, teachings, forms of expression within organised worldviews, and the lived experience of adherents
- questions of meaning, purpose and truth, including about ultimate reality, and how these questions may be posed, addressed, understood, evaluated and responded to differently within worldviews and across disciplines
- the concepts, language and ways of knowing that help organise and make sense of religion and worldviews
- how to deploy a range of different tools and methods used to investigate religious and non-religious worldviews
- how their own personal worldview shapes their encounters with and responses to the world, and how their context, experiences and study can shape their personal worldview.

## **5.0 School approach to Religious Education**

At this school, RE supports and strengthens the vision, ethos and values which are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim. The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. Understand how religious and non-religious worldviews influence people's lives, so that they can:
  - identify and make sense of religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, teachings and traditions that shape organised, communal and individual worldviews
  - explain how and why worldviews both form and express people's ways of being, behaving and belonging
  - explain a range of ways in which worldviews offer responses to fundamental questions, provide guidance and influence people in how to live
2. Engage with religious and non-religious worldviews in thoughtful and scholarly ways, so that they can:
  - select and use an appropriate range of research methods, weighing up their findings
  - recognise how the lived experience of individuals and communities relates to the teachings and traditions of organised religious and non-religious worldviews

- understand the role of dialogue and interpretation in the dynamic development of organised worldviews, and developing their own skills of dialogue and interpretation

3. Understand themselves, and others, and their personal worldviews better, so that they can:

- use scholarly methods to come to informed judgements about the answers reached through their study, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
- draw attention to their own position, and others', in their learning, both in terms of impact on their encounters and also the effect of the encounters of their own worldviews, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
- challenge ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, being and ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding, including potential choices and responses to the world.

The vision of this agreed syllabus is of RE for all. Every pupil can achieve and benefit from RE including all pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Our attached Communication and Interaction Centre accesses the agreed syllabus taking into account the individual needs of the pupils within the setting.

Curriculum planning in RE occurs in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan (two-year rolling) maps the RE units studied in each term during each key stage.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The class teacher uses plans for each lesson which contain the specific learning objectives for that lesson.

Class teachers and HLTAs are expected to:

- Encourage a positive, enthusiastic attitude towards RE.
- Start all RE lessons reflectively e.g. with a pause for reflection/listening to music/lighting candle/using scents etc.
- Plan lessons using clear objectives and be able to evidence how the objectives link to delivery and content in the classroom
- Teach the specific units on the long-term rolling plans
- Ensure that there are individual RE books (KS1 and 2) or a class learning journey (EYFS)
- Have a learning wall on term's unit.
- Display the knowledge organiser in the pupils' books and at the beginning of each lesson.
- Start each unit with new vocabulary and check understanding of vocabulary at end of unit
- Use a wide range of imaginative teaching methods and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.
- Demonstrate a respectful attitude towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.
- Invite faith visitors to support their teaching and learning and where possible plan visits to places of worship
- Enable pupils to develop spiritually, morally, culturally and socially by helping them to reflect upon personal feelings, responses and relationships

- Encourage pupils to develop a range of desirable qualities such care, concern and responsibility for living things and the natural world.
- Develop pupils understanding of charities and good causes

We maintain a close relationship with our village church 'St John the Baptist' The clergy play a pivotal role in delivering the Christian doctrine to our pupils in church and within the school Environment. The vicar in Ruardean helps develop worship for the whole school and support religious education in the school.

### 5.1 Organisation & Time Allocation

RE is taught mainly as a discrete lesson on a weekly basis but where possible it is included as part of a class topic or theme days. Pupils are taught the following faiths:

<p><b>4-5s Reception</b></p> <p>36 hours of RE (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)</p>	<p>Children will encounter Christian worldviews and other religious and non-religious worldviews, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.</p>	<p>Consideration of other religious and non-religious worldviews can occur at any key stage, as appropriate to the school context. Humanism is a recognised example of a non-religious worldview to be studied within this syllabus.</p>
<p><b>5-7s Key Stage 1</b></p> <p>36 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)</p>	<p>Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims</p>	
<p><b>7-11s Key Stage 2</b></p> <p>45 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours of RE)</p>	<p>Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews and non-religious worldviews, such as those of Humanists</p>	

- Faith resource boxes are in the staff room for everyone to access.
- The long-term plan ensure opportunities for trips and visitors within the two year rolling programme.

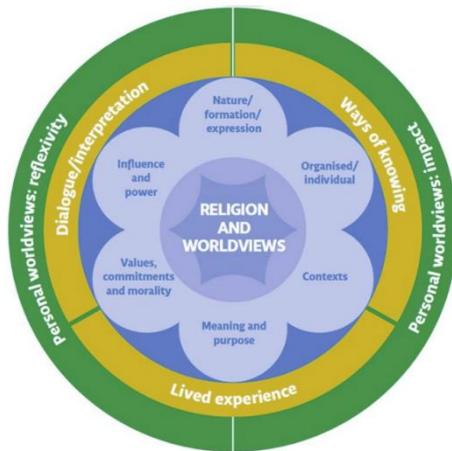
Important notes:

- Notice the language. 'Christians' rather than 'Christianity', 'Hindus' rather than 'Hinduism'. This is to reflect the fact that RE starts with encounters with living faiths and beliefs rather than the history and belief structures of traditions.
- This also recognises the diversity within and between religions and other traditions. Non-religious worldviews. Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE should be inclusive of both religious and non-religious worldviews.

- Depth rather than breadth. Learning from four religions across a key stage is demanding: the syllabus does not recommend tackling six religions in a key stage. Depth is more important than overstretched breadth. Current guidance (e.g. Ofsted report 20245 ) emphasises that where the curriculum prioritises depth of study, pupils learn more.

## 5.2 Ways of Knowing

The REC's (Religious Education Council) worldviews project offers a different approach to the 2017 syllabus. Now it is comprised of the following: content, engagement, position. This is in line with Ofsted's description of three types of knowledge (substantive, ways of knowing, personal). These elements of content, engagement, position, form the basis for the Gloucestershire syllabus 2025.



- The content strand (blue) sets out six core features of worldviews that pupils need to understand in deepening ways through their RE lessons.
- The engagement strand (gold) is about how the pupils encounter the worldviews studied.
- The position strand (green) is about the pupils' growing awareness of how their own personal worldviews play a role in their learning.

The Gloucestershire 2025 syllabus is based on the NSE, but there are overlaps with the 2017 approach. 'Making sense of beliefs' and

'understanding the impact' overlap strongly with the NSE content elements. 'Making connections' overlaps with the position strand. One new emphasis that was missing from the 2017 syllabus is the engagement strand. This draws attention to the methods pupils will use as they investigate the impact of worldviews in their lives, linking to academic disciplines where appropriate.

### 5.2.1 Components of a religion and worldviews (RW) approach

An RW approach looks at worldviews as objects of study, as part of how we study them, and as part of the experience of those doing the studying.

- As objects of study, an RW approach examines organised religious and non-religious worldviews, including (for example) their doctrines, rituals, creative expression, ethics and spirituality, expressed through institutions and in the responses offered to existential and philosophical questions. These organised worldviews are also studied through the experience of individuals, whose relation to the organised traditions will vary. Not all adherents are equally orthodox, for example.
- As part of how we study them, pupils engage with this content in scholarly ways. They reflect on how the kinds of questions we ask require different ways of finding out the answers, and different measures to check the reliability or truth of the findings. There is a balance between engagement with the theology of traditions and the lived experience of adherents.
- As part of the experience of those doing the studying, an RW approach brings into focus the personal worldviews of pupils (and teachers) and examines how

they affect and are affected by the encounter and engagement with subject content.

### **5.2.2 Some differences the RW approach brings**

- An RW approach moves on from the emphasis on the 'world religions paradigm', where religions are presented as having neatly comparable beliefs and practices. It emphasises instead the fluid lived reality of adherents alongside formal or doctrinal aspects of religions, and the interplay between orthodoxy and lived experience.
- An RW approach addresses the changing demographics of the world, our nation and our region, such as by exploring the diversity of non-religious worldviews that shape the lives of many of our pupils, teachers and communities.
- An RW approach supports pupils in recognising, reflecting on and developing their own personal worldview, as part of inducting them into scholarly virtues, methods and processes with which we can study religious and non-religious worldviews.

## **6.0 Responsibilities for RE in School**

**6.1 The subject leader** is responsible for overseeing the teaching and learning of religious education in the school. The role includes:

- Ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD for RE and RE Hubs
- Supporting teachers and HLTAs via co-planning, observing and giving feedback.
- Providing and sourcing CPD for staff as necessary.
- Ensuring that staff receive adequate training in the teaching of RE e.g. familiarity with the syllabus and supporting resources such as Understanding Christianity
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and be able to discuss impact and standards
- Liaising with the governor who holds responsibility for RE and reporting to the governing body annually
- Ensure that the principles set out in the 'Statement of Entitlement for RE' are implemented.
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process particularly around Strand 7

### **6.2 The Head Teacher and Governors make sure:**

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes of the RE curriculum
- The subject is well led and effectively managed and that 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 effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- Teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils make good progress.

### **6.3 The Teachers will make sure:**

- School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to assessment records as well as pupils' individual work.

## **7.0 The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education**

At Ruardean C of E Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise 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 occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school.

### **7.1 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 may also wish to 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 a 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, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually 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 SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) 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.