Great Massingham & Harpley CofE Primary Schools Federation

United. Resilient. Respectful.

# Religious Education Policy

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Policy produced by** | Headteacher | |
| **Date policy reviewed and approved** | Jan 2025 | |
| **Reviewed and approved by** | Governing body | |
| **Next review due** | Jan 2028 | |
| **Published on website** | **Yes** | No |

OUR VISION & VALUES

**The Lord says, 'I will instruct you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.' Psalm 32:8**
Inspired by our vision, the schools have three dynamics at the heart of their mission: **Living, Learning & Flourishing together**.
**Living** – We live as role models and advocate good choices under God's eye
**Learning** – We learn in all we do with a loving eye upon us
**Flourishing** – We flourish in the way we go, within our school and into the world beyond
Through a positive caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

**RE Policy Statement**
Religious education is unique in the school's 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'. Great Massingham and Harpley CE Schools Federation adopt the principles of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (Norfolk/Suffolk) and supplement this with material from the Diocese.

**Aims**
The broad aims of religious education (RE) are set out within the locally agreed syllabus and the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2019). The purpose of religious education in all academies is to promote religious literacy. By this we mean that pupils are able to hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief. The aims of religious education are to enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British Culture and heritage.
- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Know about and understand other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Show a well-informed, balanced and respectful attitude to religions and world views
- Engage in meaningful and well-informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

**Curriculum**
The curriculum for RE is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

**Theology**: This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

**Philosophy**: This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

**Human/Social sciences**: This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

These three disciplines provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached. In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- At KS 1 pupils study primarily Christianity and Judaism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldviews.

- At KS 2 pupils study primarily Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, with reference made to other principal religions, beliefs and worldview. In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2019), at least 50% of curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of RE, and through additional RE days which focus on an aspect of the Christian Faith.

**Teaching RE**
Religious education uses an enquiry-based approach to learning. This is based on the best practice framework in the Norfolk/Suffolk agreed syllabus. This approach enables pupils to focus on an enquiry question which explores aspects of the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities. Assessment Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines within RE. In broad terms the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

- Extending knowledge and understanding from the concrete and familiar to the abstract and complex
- Moving from simple ideas and beliefs/concepts to making connections between them and placing these within a bigger picture or meta-narrative
- Demonstrating increasing layers of interpretation of religion, religions, beliefs and worldviews through engagement with a broadening and increasingly complex range of information
- Showing an increasing ability to critically question and form coherent, logical arguments, including increasing recognition of divergences of opinion about and the controversial nature of religion and belief
- Expressing a broadening understanding of diversity in terms of the nature of religion, religions and worldviews

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is carried out in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work. In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents. Monitoring & Evaluation The co-ordinator will monitor RE provision and standards within the academy through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff. The Headteacher is responsible for contributing to the Federation's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitor the role of religious education in upholding the Vision, Values and Christian ethos of the school.

**Responsibilities for RE**
- As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the local Governing Body and Headteacher make sure that:
- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed
- 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 regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject

- clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the Federation can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

**The Right of Withdrawal from RE**
We are 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 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. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher of their school to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education. Managing the right of withdrawal will be undertaken sensitively by the Headteacher.

**Role of the RE Leader**
- To ensure that the RE policy is implemented and to keep up to date with reviews.
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes.
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement.
- To maintain and build priorities set by the Federation.
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese.
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate.
- To liaise with parents to ensure all children receive their entitlement.

**Entitlement and Inclusion**
All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers should include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child should be given the opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

**Parental and Community Involvement**
Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE. Parents are invited into school to look at their children's work, and a report on their child's standard and progress in RE is given out annually. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of RE through visits and visitors, eg: the children visit the church to learn about concepts such as salvation.

**Professional Development**
Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the Federation's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

**The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims**
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

**Personal development and wellbeing**
RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and

responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

**Community cohesion**
RE makes an important contribution promoting community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

**The community**
RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored. 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. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive academy ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

**Monitoring & Review**
The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the Federation's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

**Links to Other Policies**
- Teaching & Learning
- Spirituality
- Collective Worship