

Ettington C of E Primary School

ETTINGTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reviewed December 2024



Learning for Fullness of Life
Trust-Respect - Love

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Review date: December 2025

Learning for the Fullness of Life John 10:10

Introduction

Legal Position of Religious Education in the 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'.

Ettington Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and therefore follows the Coventry and Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, alongside Understanding Christianity.

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

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

It begins by stating: *Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10)* It will help to educate for dignity and respect, encouraging all to live well together. Quoting from the Church of England's Vision for Education: *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, it continues *Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.*

The School Vision

The story of Creation is the bedrock for our vision. Building on the theological concepts that God created the earth and everything in it, including humans, we provide opportunities to appreciate God's creation of the world and how EVERYONE was made in God's image (Imago Dei) and loved, valued, celebrated and represented. As a school, we aspire to live out God's plan for all creation to flourish. We believe in providing our children with varied opportunities to use and develop the gifts and talents they have been blessed with, to ensure they embrace "Life in its fullness" (John 10:10).

As a result of our Christian faith, we recognise our responsibility to show love, trust and respect to all. We, therefore, desire to enrich the lives of the individuals and families within our school and wider community.

Religious Education supports our vision of 'Learning for Fullness of Life' by allowing children the opportunity to gain a broader, in depth understanding of different religions and what other believe, as well to consider and share their own beliefs. It enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. Children also make links to and have chance to reflect on our key values of love, respect and trust.

Intent

At Ettington Church of England Primary School, Religious Education is a key part of the curriculum and we teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum. Through providing high-quality, explicit RE teaching, children have the opportunity to reflect on and analyse a variety of different beliefs and world views, gaining a knowledge and understanding of diversity within and across religions.

We look at different worldviews through the three disciplinary areas of theology, philosophy and human and social sciences. These means children are given the opportunities to reflect on how beliefs shape the way humans see themselves, the world and others, investigate what humans claim to know and ways in which religion and belief impact on living.

Through critically engaging with Biblical texts and exploring core theological concepts, children are given opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and practices and the influence this can have on believer's lives. Children consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide. Children develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and worldviews through looking at examples of different individual and communal worldviews. This allows children to have greater understanding of diversity and the wider world. Children are encouraged to consider, express and evaluate their own views on a range of issues.

School Approach to Religious Education

In line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods ensure effective RE sessions. RE lessons start with a big question which children are given the opportunity to reflect on and answer. Teaching and learning in RE is varied, creative and engaging. Lessons often involve videos and artefacts to enhance understanding. Children are given the opportunity to explore faith and beliefs through different activities including art work, written work, discussion, drama, reflection and computing. Questioning is used throughout the lesson to check understanding and to extend thinking.

As identified in the Statement of Entitlement, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- A challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework.
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development

Spirituality

Opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed through the RE curriculum. Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those who hold different worldviews, an opportunity for pupils to develop spiritually.

Visits and Visitors

We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE as they allow children to experience different individual and communal worldviews. Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. Regular visits to different churches (including Coventry Cathedral), a local Mosque, the Gurdwara and other places of worship are organised. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils. All visitors and the staff at places of worship visited are asked to read the school's Guidance for Visits and Visitors to RE lessons and sign a code of conduct for partnership between members of belief communities and the school.

Organisation & Time Allocation

Lessons in RE follow units from Coventry and Warwickshire SACRE Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. Understanding Christianity allows children to develop a broad vocabulary and to engage with biblical text. Key concepts of the 'big story' of the bible are revisited to allow children to dig deeper and build on their previous knowledge. SACRE units are based on key questions and use case studies to look at how someone who follows an organised worldview might approach the question. They focus on individual worldviews and encourage children to reflect on their own personal worldview. We also use layover units which look at one organised worldview to ensure that children have the substantive knowledge to support them when exploring the big questions.

More than 50% of RE lessons focus on Christianity, using Understanding Christianity and the SACRE syllabus. Each half term, each year group will focus on either a SACRE unit or an Understanding Christianity unit.

RE is taught for one hour a week in KS1 and one hour and 15 minutes in KS2. RE is taught weekly but whole school focus days/weeks such as a day of Diwali dance workshops and day focusing on Pentecost or whole school visits to places of worship also support and extend learning, as well as adding to the curriculum time.

Assessment/Recording and reporting.

Children will complete pre and post unit mind maps to assess learning within each unit. This is used alongside other teacher assessments to evaluate their understanding of that unit. Pupil progress and attainment in RE will be tracked and recorded at the end of each term. Attainment in RE is shared with parents at the end of the academic year.

Responsibilities for RE in School

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 sharing good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as Understanding Christianity
- Supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact

- 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
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process
- Liaising with the governor who holds responsibility for RE and they will report regularly to the governing body on progress and attainment in RE.

The Head Teacher and Governors make sure:

- RE has a high profile within the curriculum
- 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 offered by the diocese 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

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

At Ettington 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 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 head teacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school.

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 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.