

# Polehampton CE Infant and Junior Schools Religious Education and World Views Policy



<b>Approval required by</b>	LGB
<b>Date approved</b>	Spring 2024
<b>Date for review</b>	Spring 2027

Version	Date	Description
1	03.10.2013	First Federation policy.
2	06.03.2019	Reviewed in light of new locally agreed syllabus.
3	29.06.2022	Reviewed school vision included.
4	Spring 2024	Reviewed as part of review cycle. Added new focus on world views.

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## Introduction

At Polehampton Church of England Infant and Junior Schools, our vision is "Let your light shine" (Matthew 5:16). Jesus reminded us in Matthew's gospel that we are lights for the world. As we seek to follow him, we can share his light with others and change the world. Supported by our school values of gratitude, friendship, perseverance, forgiveness, honesty and compassion, we seek to help pupils make positive choices in all they do. We follow our Christian values to enable everyone in our school community to let their light shine.

At Polehampton Church of England Infant and Junior Schools, we "let our light shine" by celebrating ours and others' religions and beliefs, developing an understanding of the world, asking the big questions and seeking awe and wonder.

It should be noted that all references to 'parents' should be read as 'parents or carers'.

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### Aims

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement states the following:

*"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 educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.*

*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."*

Our aims are as follows:

- To learn about religion by meeting the following:
  - Acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
  - Developing an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- To learn from religion by meeting the following:
  - Developing a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs.
  - Enhancing children's spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development.
  - Developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues.
  - Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their own understanding and experience.
  - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious.
  - Developing positive attitudes including open-mindedness, fairness, commitment, appreciation and wonder, self-awareness and respect for all.

### Intent

RE should allow our pupils to let their lights shine, sharing their views on the world and develop their understanding of other religions and world views, as well as their own understanding of spirituality.

Our RE contributes to our school vision in the following ways:

- Encourage our pupils to develop a passion for learning and a curiosity about the world which will extend beyond their time at Polehampton.
- Enable our pupils to develop confidence, compassion and care for themselves and the world around them.
- Create opportunities for our pupils to develop wisdom, knowledge and skills which they can demonstrate across local, national and international communities. This also links with our 3 Cs, British Values and the Church of England's character education.
- Recognise commonality and difference within and between religions and world views, fostering respect, curiosity and openness.
- Encourage our pupils to demonstrate respect and understanding towards the beliefs and views of others, including spirituality and world views.
- Explore and engage with an RE curriculum that reflects our community and where pupils can develop their own identity.
- Ensure our Christian values are at the heart of all we do.
- Ensure our families and community are involved in our learning.

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## Implementation

We follow the Berkshire agreed syllabus for RE (Discovery), which has an enquiry-based approach. Our carefully-planned scheme of work centres around the key questions taken from the syllabus, ensuring breadth of study and progression across the schools. The enquiry questions ensure pupils use their own views, as well as knowledge from their learning, to draw conclusions to 'big questions' and develop a wider understanding of religion, world views and spirituality, as well as their own understanding.

RE is taught through stimulating class discussion, practical activities, group work and individual projects using a multi-sensory approach. We place an emphasis on the exploration of challenging questions which develop higher order thinking skills. Cross curricular links are made where appropriate to enhance the understanding and breadth of experiences.

The four steps are as follows:

### 1. Engagement

*What is my starting point (my human experience) in my own world?*

The human experience which underpins each key question is explored here within the pupils' own experience, whether that includes religion or not. An example of this centres around the key question "What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?". The human experience of commitment is initially explored, to help pupils connect this with their own experiences from their own lives. If pupils can relate to this human experience, they will be better able to understand the world of religion into which the enquiry takes them. This personal connection with a human experience is the bridge into the world of religion and world views, so that pupils may understand others' experiences as well as how their experience relates and connects.

### 2. Investigation

*What do I need to know about the world of religion to support my enquiry?*

By guiding pupils through the enquiry, pupils gain subject knowledge which is carefully selected to assist their thinking about the key question. The acquisition of the factual information about a religion/belief system being studied is important, but not as a sole end in itself – it should be a vehicle or lens in which to better understand a concept or key question.

### 3. Evaluation

*What is my answer to the enquiry?*

This step draws together the pupils' learning and their conclusions about the key question of that enquiry. This is an assessment task which can be assessed by using the age-related expectation descriptors at the end of each enquiry.

### 4. Expression

*How does this enquiry affect my position/starting point?*

Pupils are taken back to Step 1 (their own experience), to reflect on how this enquiry might have influenced their own starting points and beliefs. There is often further evidence for their books produced in this step.

## Impact

Our chosen scheme, Discovery RE, is planned to ensure that content progresses year on year, giving pupils the knowledge, skills and attitudes that they need to build on their previous learning and reflect on their new learning. We value all beliefs and encourage pupils to become confident in explaining and sharing their beliefs, views, customs and practices as a way of bringing out the best from everyone and celebrating diversity. Pupils will leave our school with a strong understanding of the beliefs and practices of a range of religions and world views that exist across the

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world. They will have the ability to question what they are learning and challenge anything that they believe to be prejudice or discriminatory. They will be inquisitive, respectful and kind.

### Planning and assessment

The planning, teaching, learning and assessment of RE is informed by the Agreed Syllabus for RE and the eight-level scale of attainment descriptors published therein.

Formative assessment in RE involves gathering evidence about pupil's learning through observation, discussion, written/recorded work and photographs. Pupils are also encouraged to peer assess and to evaluate their own learning. This evidence is then used to inform planning.

Summative assessment opportunities are built in periodically to enable teachers to make judgements of pupils' attainments against the level descriptions.

### Resources for RE

A variety of stimulating resources are used in the teaching of RE throughout the school. These include books, artefacts, music, posters, photos, videos, internet and other ICT resources. Visits to the local church are a regular feature of the school year. Visits to other places of worship are arranged as appropriate. Visitors include local members of the clergy, who take assemblies. In addition, we also invite members of other faith and cultural traditions (including parents) to be a part of collective worship.

### Cross curricular links

Religious Education promotes learning across the curriculum in a number of areas, such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, language and thinking skills and other key skills such as communication, problem solving and working together. The arts lend themselves particularly well to exploring religious traditions and beliefs through music, movement and artistic representation.

### Effective use of technology

The use of IT is embedded in the RE curriculum through use of videos, recording equipment, internet resources, and teaching aids for the interactive whiteboard. Digital cameras are often used to record work and experiences. Children are encouraged to find out about religion from a variety of sources including the internet and school software.

#### EYFS

In Foundation Stage children explore religious ideas as part of their everyday learning. They develop knowledge, understanding and appropriate vocabulary about the following:

- Where they belong within their family and the wider community.
- Different ways of expressing and celebrating faiths.
- Religious figures, books, stories, times, places and objects.

The pupils also develop attitudes and skills such as curiosity, self-expression, open-mindedness, empathy, inquiry and enjoyment in discovery.

#### Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Across KS1 and KS2 our teaching covers 3 themes within each key aspect of RE:

Learning about religion and world views:

- Believing: Beliefs, teachings and sources
- Behaving: Practices and ways of life.

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- Belonging: Forms of expression.

Learning from religions and world views:

- Identity and belonging: making sense of who we are.
- Meaning purpose and truth: making sense of life.
- Values and commitments: making sense of right and wrong.

The core religions studied in each key stage are as follows:

- KS1 – Christianity and Judaism
- KS2 – Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Judaism Other religions and belief systems are explored as relevant.

## Equal opportunities and SEND

Our RE teaching makes a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. It has a role in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating, positively, differences in others. It also helps to develop pupils' self-esteem.

All children have equal access to the whole RE curriculum and are given opportunities for developing their skills regardless of gender, race or special needs. Some children may need support to access text or communicate their ideas by working with a suitable partner or teaching assistant.

The RE curriculum lends itself well to challenging more able pupils through the use of higher order questioning and development of thinking skills. These skills are embedded in our approach to teaching RE.

## Monitoring standards and quality of teaching and learning

Standards and achievement in RE are monitored by the RE Coordinator and other senior leaders through lesson observations, collection of evidence and discussion with staff and pupils. The Local Governing Body (LGB) monitor the subject area in liaison with the Head teacher and RE coordinators. Governors make regular visits to the schools. Regular staff meetings are held to familiarise staff with the agreed RE syllabus, monitor its implementation and moderate assessment.

RE network meetings are attended by the RE co-ordinator and allow for opportunities to moderate, compare practise and keep abreast of current developments in RE.

## Legal requirements

It is a statutory requirement that schools teach RE as prescribed by the locally agreed syllabus and our scheme of work meets all the requirements set out in that document.

Time can be allocated to RE creatively and flexibly. The subject can be planned in combination with other subjects. It is usually taught in lessons of 1 hour per week.

However, as a Church of England School, we endeavour to ensure that our Christian ethos and values are an integral part of daily life and work of the school.

## Withdrawal from Religious Education

Under the Education Act of 1944, parents may withdraw children from Religious Education and teachers can exercise the right to withdraw from teaching the subject. However, we would hope that all parents and teachers would feel

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comfortable with the type of religious education being taught at this school and our open ended, enquiry based approach to the subject. Parents who still wish to withdraw their children must provide written notification to this effect. Arrangements will be made for any children withdrawn and suitable supervision provided for them.

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