

Howden Church of England Infant School

Religious Education Policy



Roots to grow so together we flourish.

At Howden C of E Infant School, we live and learn together and look after one another as part of the family of God. We are deeply rooted in the values of the Christian faith and experience the kindness, respect and support that come with being connected in a loving community. Together, our children are able to grow, flourish and bear much fruit which they will take with them as they travel through life and out into the wider world.

'I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.' John 15:5.

'Rooted and grounded in love.' Ephesians 3:17.

Our school vision outlines our hope that our children will 'grow, flourish and bear much fruit which they will take with them as they travel through life and out into the wider world'. These words have been at the heart of all conversations had and all decisions made whilst creating and continually developing our whole school curriculum, including our Religious Education curriculum. 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. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)*

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Executive Head teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff. It was approved by governors in July 2023 and will be reviewed in July 2026.

Introduction

At Howden Church of England Infant School, pupils and their families can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We teach according to the East Riding Agreed Syllabus. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Aims

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the

teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy*

**Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)*

- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

Curriculum Balance and Time

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Time Allocation.

It is recommended that RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two (this reflects 5% - see above). In addition to this 5%, further enhancements are built into the curriculum through visits, visitors and cross-curricular projects.

The time allocated for teaching RE at Howden Church of England Infant School is:

EYFS	planned within the EYFS Framework
KS1	1 hour per week

Scheme of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in accordance with the East Riding Locally Agreed Syllabus.

EYFS	Themes emerging from the EYFS Framework
KS1	Christianity, Judaism, Hindu Dharma and Humanism

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions.
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

Cross-curricular links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with the whole school approach to curriculum planning and teaching and learning. In response to initial conversations around our school vision and priorities for our pupils, RE is 'host subject' and therefore the key curriculum driver for our Summer 1 Big Idea which has an 'I am a Courageous Advocate' theme across the whole school. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, history, geography, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Visits and visitors

We are able to visit places of worship in the immediate vicinity of our local area, as well as further afield in the East Riding, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class.

The school has links with the following places and worship and therefore children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school:

EYFS - Howden Minster

Year 1 - Hull Reform Jewish Synagogue

Year 2 - Hull Hindu Temple

Children in Years 1 and 2 also have the opportunity to listen to and ask questions of a visitor from the 'Understanding Humanism' organisation.

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the [Church of England Statement of Entitlement](#).
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.

- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation, applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Be directly related to the expectations of the East Riding Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.

- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next three years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.

Self-Evaluation

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

Resources

We have a range of resources, to support our RE teaching, that we continue to develop. Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; posters, CDs, DVDs and artefacts. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the SACRE / Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on the major religions and world views as appropriate. A regular audit of resources takes place by the RE subject leader in order to update our collection.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over). (*DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28*). The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the Head of School any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Head of School before making this decision.

Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Date of validation.....

Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Date of review.....

Signed.....

Chair of Governors

