



**Upper
Wharfedale
Primary
Federation**

Religious Education Policy

Our Vision

'Be the Light'

- Matthew 5:14

Our vision is to help each child flourish into a caring, confident, and resilient young person who has a love of learning. We will do this through our shared Christian values of Love, Kindness, Forgiveness, Thankfulness and Trust. We will uphold high aspirations for all our children, through our innovative and inspiring approach to teaching and learning.

'Be the Light' (Matthew 5:14) underpins the federation development plan. The plan is centred around the principal aim that we want all our schools, all our stakeholders to be the light – 'to be the best we can be'. We believe that the light is in all of us and that through the priorities which we aim to achieve over the coming year we will shine even brighter.

Written by. C. Greenwood

Review date November 2026

This policy has been written considering the latest Statement for Entitlement guidance and the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule Religious education 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.

(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

RE must be considered as an academic subject that is non-confessional.

Introduction

The Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation includes four schools:

Burnsall CE VA Primary School

Cracoe VC Primary School

Grassington VC Primary School

Kettlewell Primary School.

Children 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 worldviews.

We teach according to the Agreed North Yorkshire Syllabus, which for Burnsall (A VA school) has been agreed with governors to allow the school to teach a consistent RE curriculum across the federation. We also use the Diocese of York and Leeds RE Agreed Syllabus (2017) within our plans.

For our church Schools the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum, a range of resources are used including the Understanding Christianity resource. Understanding Christianity is an enquiry approach which 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 worldviews studied.

Aims and objectives.

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our Federation 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 living, believing, and thinking.

The Principle Aim of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus is that RE is to engage children in systematic enquiry into significant human questions, which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own. Children should be able to explore big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that children can make sense of religion and worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

The threefold aims of RE elaborates the principal aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain, and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity, which exists within, between communities, and amongst individuals
- identify, investigate, and respond to questions posed, and responses, offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews

- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance, and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values, and commitments clearly to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The principle aim of RE of the Diocese of York and Leeds RE Agreed Syllabus is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and worldviews. This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church schools.

To enable 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 living, believing, and thinking.
- Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:
 - Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
 - Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning.
 - Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
 - Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical, and ethical convictions.

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 children 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 children 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 children to develop their religious literacy*

*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

These are key principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.

- Enables children 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 children 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 children's needs.
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all children, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- Ensures that all children's contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting the school's trust deed, 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 stages 1-4.

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)

The time allocated for teaching RE at The Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation is: EYFS planned within the EYFS Framework; KS1 36 hours; KS2 45 hours. This will be taught as weekly lessons.

The RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for Collective Worship. Collective worship is not considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

Scheme of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written according to the North Yorkshire Locally Agreed, the Diocese of York and Leeds RE syllabus and Understanding Christianity. Themes emerging from our scheme are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism. This is within a rolling programme of study reflecting the nature of mixed year classes within all schools in the Federation. The rolling programme is inclusive of prior learning, differentiation, and challenge to ensure progress for all learners.

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.

Children 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 worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs, and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity.

Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect. Teaching enables children 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.

In Key stage 2, we teach RE as part of our Federation working in single year groups. It is taught by one of our specialist teachers.

Cross-curricular links

The Federation has long term plans in place based on a themed approach to learning. When possible, RE is part of these plans, but more frequently is taught as stand-a-lone units of work.

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, drama, history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social, and emotional education and citizenship, inclusive of British values.

Visits and visitors

We can visit places of worship in the immediate vicinity of the schools, our local area and beyond. 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 children have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class.

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits, in line with the rolling programme of study.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a few 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 children 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 children's 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 Federation 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, suggestions within the Diocesan Agreed Syllabus and the North Yorkshire Agreed syllabus. This is directly related to the above-mentioned syllabuses and the expectations within them.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject 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 and feedback policy.
- Include child's self-assessment and peer 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. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to share a copy of the planning for RE with the subject leader each term.

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. The diocesan adviser and link governor will also support this.

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 or local authority support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

Resources

We have a wide 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. We maintain an RE story shelf in the library, which offers many stories from different traditions. 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 all major religions and world views as appropriate. Our staff are given protected time to familiarise themselves with any new materials. A regular audit of resources takes place by the RE subject leader 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 teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Head teacher 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. If children are withdrawn from religious education lessons the school will ensure that they are engaged in an alternative learning activity supervised by a member of the school staff.