

Pennington C of E Primary School



*'God has given each of us different gifts,
together we can do great things.'*

Religious Education Policy

September 2025

Our vision for Religious Education (RE)

At this school, RE expresses and strengthens our vision, ethos and values that are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life that offers human flourishing for all. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally (SMSC) and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

At Pennington Church of England School where pupils and staff come from different faiths and none, RE is a highly valued academic subject that enables understanding of how religion and beliefs affect our lives. There is *‘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’*, Statement of Entitlement 2019.

The school provides an RE curriculum that is rich and varied and studies a range of world religions and worldviews. At the heart of RE in this school is the teaching of Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ that enables learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.

By working closely with children, staff, parents and the community we aim is to 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 studied. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities that match the needs of all children. This includes providing relevant support, adapted activities and using a range of teaching and learning styles within lessons. We strive to help our pupils develop into well-motivated, responsible and fulfilled young people.

Pupils are encouraged to know about, understand and respond to the ultimate questions of life and ethical issues. Our curriculum inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith/worldviews and values whilst having respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others and will contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Encountering religion and belief includes:

- Enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion;
- Key beliefs and teachings, practices;
- Impact on the lives of believers and communities;
- Different ways of expressing beliefs, teachings and practices;
- Developing pupil skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation in relation to religion;
- Pupils' communication of their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary;
- Pupils reflection on and response to their own experiences, questions of identity and belonging, meaning purpose and truth, values and commitment; and
- Development of religious literacy.

Aims

In keeping with the expectations set out in the Statement of Entitlement, the aims of RE **in this school** are:

1. 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.
2. To enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.

3. To facilitate pupils' engagement with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
4. To enable pupils 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.
5. To encourage pupils to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways through living, believing and thinking.

Legal Framework

As a voluntary controlled school, as required by law, we provide RE which meets the requirements of the Cumbria Locally Agreed Syllabus 2023 (the **LAS**).

Parents have a legal right in accordance with the Education act 1996 to withdraw their children from RE lessons. As this subject is central to the life and identity of Pennington Church of England School, we ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this. We aim to provide a quality RE curriculum that can be sensitively and appropriately taught to all pupils, by all staff. We ask that requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the headteacher. Careful consideration would be given to any child whose parents requested that they should be withdrawn from RE and alternative arrangements would be made accordingly.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is given priority by leaders, including governors, 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;
- 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;
- provides meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions of worldviews;
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, human science and philosophy;
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is diverse;
- 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;
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs;
- is adapted to ensure **all** pupils make progress and flourish.

In addition to providing RE in accordance with our trust deed which meets the requirements of the LAS, we use Questful RE as our chosen whole school scheme. Some staff have also completed training on Understanding Christianity to support the teaching of RE.

There are clear learning outcomes for all units of work, based on the appropriately high expectations we have for all our pupils. Our RE curriculum is sequential and builds on prior learning which ensures that there is continuity and progression for all pupils as they move through the school.

Curriculum balance and time

In this school the faiths/worldviews taught in RE are:

- In EYFS KS1 and Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and they encounter Judaism and Humanism
- KS2 Christianity and Sikhism Hinduism Islam Judaism and encounter Sikhism, Buddhism

RE has at least 5% of curriculum time in both KS1 and KS2 one hour a week is devoted to RE. Additionally celebrations of special events/festivals are explored as part of our outdoor learning curriculum. A range of visitors support the teaching of RE, and whenever possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship and other places of interest. Allocated curriculum time is only ever spent on RE related learning. Collective worship is timetabled separately.

Of the RE taught, approximately 65% focused on Christianity and 35% focused on other faiths.

Our RE lessons celebrate diversity and develop our pupils as global citizens with a respectful and secure understanding of the beliefs and practices of their neighbours across the country and round the world.

Data from the 2021 census indicates that 57% of Cumbrian residents identify as Christian, 35.8% reported having no religion and 1.3% other religions. Due to the small minority of other faiths encountered in our local area we recognise the importance of educating our children to become more globally, socially and culturally aware. As a voluntary controlled school we are following the time allocation and choice of world faiths and worldviews advice from Questful RE.

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from all faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) / British Values

- RE is a key opportunity to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. We invite pupils to reflect on their personal responses to issues and respectfully consider those of others.
- We encourage pupils to consider the answers offered by faith and other groups to questions of meaning and purpose and to problems within societies as well as their own experiences.
- RE also strongly supports the school's citizenship work by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, diversity within communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice. This includes work on the British Values of *democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect.*

Health and Safety

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

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

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

Recording, Feedback and Assessment

All the outcomes for each unit of work are in each individual child's book and the Learning Outcome Sheet is assessed using a dot to represent a limited understanding, a tick to represent some understanding and a double tick to present a good understanding. This is in line with our marking policy and is completed in conjunction with the child. Each unit also has a Questful learning Map which is glued into the RE learning journey and completed as a class. Class Learning Journeys are used to document whole class activities, visitors and visits within RE. Feedback is live and verbal, written comments are limited and focus on RE rather than presentation/spelling ext. Assessment is through Bromcom with a summative judgement for each child. These are inputted at the end of each term, recording whether children are working at expected level, above or below. Live feedback is given high priority to ensure children know their next steps to success. Feedback focuses on understanding and quality of verbal responses and discussions and specific learning outcomes. There is less focus on spelling, grammar and punctuation but there is an expectation that books are well presented.

Teachers will:

- identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject beyond the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop;
- employ well-defined criteria against which to measure progress and achievement;
- ensure that pupils are involved in determining and understand their next steps through verbal feedback;
- 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

Leadership & Management

The teaching, assessment and resourcing of RE is managed by the RE subject leader (in collaboration with leaders) to ensure that statutory requirements and those set in the Statement of Entitlement are met.

The RE subject leader will:

- will support and regularly monitor the subject across the school for its strengths and areas for development in line with SIAMS and Ofsted guidance about self-evaluation;
- undertake relevant and regular CPD to keep their subject knowledge and expertise up to date, and to ensure that staff receive appropriate training for the teaching and assessment of RE;
- report regularly to the governing body so that everyone has an overview about progress and outcomes in RE; and
- ensure that RE provision reflects diocesan advice and recommendations.
- Purchase, order and review R.E. based resources ensuring that they are available and maintained.
- Observe colleagues occasionally with a view to identifying any support which they may need.

- Compile, and collect portfolios of children's work samples from each year group.
- Monitoring pupil's work to ensure continuity and progression

Review

There will be a review of this policy every 2 years. Its impact will be monitored by Helen Storey, Georgina Lloyd along with governors. This will include discussions with pupils, other members of staff, observing teaching and scrutinizing pupils' work.

Date of policy: 5th September 2025

Review date: 5th September 2027

Signed: Helen Storey, Georgina Lloyd