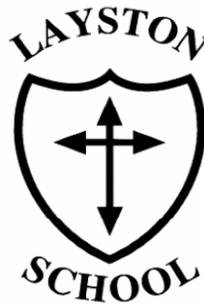




Layston C of E First School



RE Policy

Reviewed Feb 2019

Reviewed Feb 2021

Next review Feb 2023

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body bi-annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on

It is due for review in Spring Term 2021 (up to 2 years from the above date) by the Governing Body.

Signature: *A McMurrough*
Head Teacher

Date

Signature: *M McGarry*
Chair of Governors

Date



Intent

This document is a statement of our intent, implementation and impact regarding the teaching and learning in Religious Education at Layston Church of England First School. Religious education is unique in the curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that: 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'. The broad aims of religious education are set out within Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2017-2022) and the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2019).

Our Vision:

Our primary vision is to create a caring Christian community in which Christian values and beliefs permeate the whole of school life. Links with the church and community are vital, providing an ethos which results in a meaningful and unifying sense of purpose. In achieving the following aims, religious education contributes in a significant way to the flourishing of all children, allowing them to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

In particular we aim 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 studied;
- ✓ To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human experience and existence;
- ✓ 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; and
- ✓ To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

'Loving to learn, learning to love, for every child a chance to shine.'

At Layston we believe in the reality of God in our lives and the Christian Values that guide and inspire us. We are bold in our application of Christianity to transform relationships and take the Gospel intent of '**love one another**' as a blue print for making active choices in our day-to-day lives together. We foster awe and wonder through a creative curriculum that underpins and promotes our love for learning. We are **inclusive** and **nurture** each person as a child of God with every chance to shine. Matthew 5:14-16 "...let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

The Purpose of RE

Religious education is an academic subject, delivered in an academic, objective and pluralistic manner. The purpose of teaching RE is to enable pupils to become 'religiously literate', learning both *about* and *from* religion. We define religious literacy as "the ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs". Through a deeper understanding of ourselves and others we hope to provide the foundations for peaceful and respectful relationships across and within communities. This is achieved through an RE curriculum that ensures a balance between *theology, philosophy and sociology*.

Theology: This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

Philosophy: This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

Sociology: This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

A sequential curriculum map has been designed in order to allow pupils to become religiously literate through developing, year on year, their knowledge and skills. The three disciplines detailed above provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached.

Skills developed through teaching & learning in RE include:

- ❖ Investigation: the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, and stories.
- ❖ Questioning: developing curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world.
- ❖ Empathy: developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as awe, wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, and joy, and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
- ❖ Reflection: the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs of oneself and others.
- ❖ Relating: linking significant features of religions, and making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar.
- ❖ Expression: the ability to identify and explain feelings and aspects of religion.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2019), two thirds of curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of religious education, and through additional 'RE' days which focus on an aspect of the Christian Faith.

The use of the resource *Understanding Christianity* particularly supports the development of the theological perspective, and is a key resource.

Implementation – Teaching & Learning

Understanding Christianity is based on a narrative structure which helps children understand more about the theology, reality and diversity of Christianity by exploring the 'big story' told in the Bible. This is represented by the 8 key concepts of: God, Creation, Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and the Kingdom of God, with accompanying symbols which will support understanding. In addition, at EYFS, we will be using the *Puddles* resources by Gill Vaisey from Books at Press together with soft toys and other practical equipment.

The remaining third of the RE curriculum will be drawn from the Hertfordshire New Agreed Syllabus 2017-2022 and its accompanying resource 'Religion for Today and for Tomorrow'.

Teaching the programmes of study contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provides opportunities for reflection in six key areas.

- Belief and Teachings - e.g. stories, prophets, founders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
- Religious Practices and Lifestyles - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, effects on individuals;
- Ways of Expressing Meaning - e.g. art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, silence/stillness;
- Human Identity, Personality and Experience - e.g. preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on our own lives, inspirational people;
- Questions of Meaning and Purpose - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, connection with the natural world and life's journey, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- Values and Commitments - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, moral dilemmas.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following: religious texts and stories, art and sacred music, visits and visitors, artefacts and photographs, thinking skills and through parental support. The teaching of RE will involve direct teaching and whole class, group, paired and/or individual learning activities. Lessons will include enquiry, exploration, discussion, role play, drama, asking and answering questions, using a range of sources including ICT, exploring works of art and artefacts, as well as visits and visitors.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

The six major world faiths are explored as follows:

Year group	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Y1	Christianity	Christianity	Islam/Judaism
Y2	Christianity	Christianity	Islam/Judaism
Y3	Christianity	Christianity	Sikhism/Buddhism
Y4	Christianity	Christianity	Sikhism/Hinduism

Curriculum Maps & Knowledge Organisers

Each year group's learning content is mapped out on a curriculum map (long term plans) and then broken down into learning objectives, skills, key vocabulary and resources on Knowledge Organisers (medium term plans). These are available on the school website for parents to view.

Strategies & resources for the teaching of RE

RE can be taught as a single subject once a week or in a block over a few days. It can also be linked to other subjects as part of our creative curriculum, where it may be used as a vehicle to inspire and develop other areas of learning such as within Forest School, creative writing, and art in addition to the learning within RE lessons.

We keep most resources for Religious Education centrally in the staffroom. There is a collection of religious artefacts, which we use to enrich teaching of religious education. There are also Bibles in each class and the school library.

Resources include:

- Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus
- Understanding Christianity
- Puddles resources - EYFS
- ICT for searching for information using the internet, communicating information (word processing and graphics/drawing packages), handling information, virtual tours etc.
- commercial videos and DVDs
- artefacts - owned by the school or borrowed as appropriate
- visits and visitors
- RE Today subscription
- Philosophy Bear
- Jumping Fish resources
- Providing areas for reflection around the school, both inside and outside
- The Qur'an is kept on a top shelf in the Head Teacher's office

Parental and Community Involvement

Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE within school. Parents are invited into the school to look at their children's work, as well as to join us at St Peter's for key celebrations such as Christmas, Easter and the Leaver's Service. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of the subject through visits and visitors e.g. the children visit the church regularly.

Inclusion

Layston Church of England School is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all pupils. Religious Education is an entitlement for all pupils regardless of their own particular religious beliefs or lack of religious belief. Beliefs are respected and valued, however beliefs that undermine the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect & tolerance of different faiths, beliefs and cultural traditions as well as the services & systems for living in Britain will be challenged.

Children on the SEND register will be supported to ensure they are able to access the RE curriculum despite difficulties in literacy, communication or other difficulties to produce meaningful work in line with their ability (see SEND policy).

Strategies include:

- ✓ working in small groups to encourage discussion, and stretch or support learning;
- ✓ differentiation of questions and questioning;
- ✓ scribes as appropriate, so that those with literacy difficulties are not inhibited in their ability to articulate and express their ideas;
- ✓ opportunities to record their learning in a range of ways, so that information is not always presented through the written word;
- ✓ additional support e.g. use of talk partners.

Impact - strategies for Assessment, Recording and Reporting

At Layston our hope is for pupils to leave us compassionate, thoughtful and confident of their place and purpose in the world (see *Gingerbread person* - appendix 1).

We believe that a vital aspect of learning is actively involving pupils in the assessment of their own learning. Assessment for Learning (AfL) is used across the school (see *Teaching & Learning policy*) to assess pupils' understanding as learning takes place and to adjust teaching in accordance with this. This enables teachers to pitch the learning at the correct level and engage the pupils. End points and key skills are identified on each year group's knowledge organisers.

Assessment

Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and sociological disciplines within religious education. In broad terms, the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

- Extending knowledge and understanding from the concrete and familiar to the abstract and complex;
- Moving from simple ideas and beliefs/concepts to making connections between them and placing these within a bigger picture or meta-narrative;
- Demonstrating increasing layers of interpretation of religion, religions, beliefs and worldviews through engagement with a broadening and increasingly complex range of information;
- Showing an increasing ability to critically question and form coherent, logical arguments, including increasing recognition of divergences of opinion about and the controversial nature of religion and belief; and
- Expressing a broadening understanding of diversity in terms of the nature of religion, religions and worldviews.

Pupils are assessed using age-related expectations. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion. Progress and achievement in RE are

reported to parents annually in the end of year school report, and recorded using the terms ARE (age related expectations), +ARE or -ARE.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE lead will monitor provision and standards within the school through observation, work scrutiny, pupil voice and reviewing the curriculum with staff. The subject lead is responsible for contributing to the school's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitor the role of religious education in upholding [the Trust Deed](#) of the school and its contribution to the Christian vision of the school. The implementation and impact of this policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Responsibilities for RE within each school (Headteachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the local governing body and headteacher should also make sure that:

- ✓ all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum;
- ✓ the subject is well-led and effectively managed;
- ✓ 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 regular and effective opportunities for CPD;
- ✓ where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject;
- ✓ clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum;
- ✓ RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress;
- ✓ where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the headteacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to religious education. In these circumstances, headteachers might wish to seek advice from the Diocese.

Professional Development

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

The Right of Withdrawal from RE

Our school is an inclusive community but recognises 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 occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher of their academy to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- Our school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from religious education are aware of the 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 religious education curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish;
- The school may 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 religious education without influence from the school, although the school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the 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 religious education 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 religious education, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on the premises;
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for religious education of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This religious education could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable religious education 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 religious education that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from the school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external religious education;
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the local authority is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at the school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities,

responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in religious education, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

Religious education plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Community cohesion

Religious education makes an important contribution promoting community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective religious education will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

1. The school community

Religious education provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

2. The community within which the school is located

Religious education provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

3. The UK community

A major focus of religious education is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

4. The global community

Religious education involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

Religious education subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

At Layston our hope is for pupils to leave us:
able to reciprocate

reflective

**respectful, responsible
and safe**

**knowing how to be
physically & mentally
healthy**

aspirational

**independent &
resourceful**

**able to
understand and
apply Christian
Values**

**confident,
flexible and
resilient**

**numerate &
literate**



inquisitive

**knowing how to build
and maintain healthy
relationships**

**knowing right
from wrong**

**with a love of
learning**