



Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School
Teaching and Living the Christian Way of Life
Building Our Lives on Jesus

Religious Education Policy

Approved: January 2026

Signed

Review Date: Spring 2029

Legal Position of Religious Education in School

Religious Education is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core or foundation subject. In the 1988 Education Act it states, 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.

Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of Religious Education must be in accordance with the school's Trust Deed. The Governors, in accordance with the headteacher, have decided to adopt the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Church of England's *Statement of Entitlement* outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE.

It begins by stating: *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 to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.* Quoting from the Church of England's Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good, it continues *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 and the School's Christian Vision



Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School
Teaching and Living the Christian Way of Life
Building Our Lives on Jesus

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matthew chapter 7 verse 24, NIV)

Our Christian Values

Friendship,
Justice,
Trust,
Generosity,

Perseverance,
Thankfulness,
Compassion,
Forgiveness

We are proud of our school and our Christian ethos which ensures that each child is treated as special and individual.

Our children are enthusiastic to learn and inspired to achieve by a team of happy, highly motivated teachers. We are a small rural school which enables us to create a unique family environment where we know each child well and where children are nurtured and encouraged to excel. We have high expectations for every individual child to achieve their full potential in both academic and non-academic activities.

We will create a family of confident, happy young people who respect and care for each other and our staff by putting Christian values at the heart of all that the school does. Our children will be creative, show initiative, have leadership skills and be able to work as a team with their peers and participate across year groups. They will feel able to ask questions and be encouraged to express their opinions, be hardworking and be tolerant of others. We celebrate perseverance, resilience and risk taking, ensuring children welcome challenge and are not frightened to make mistakes. Children are praised for hard work, determination and having a positive thoughtful attitude.

Being based in the countryside gives us the advantage of having access to a wide variety of habitats, wildlife and farms. We will encourage our children to explore and develop a love of nature and their environment. We are proud to be part of our local community and want to place our school at its heart.

Children at our school will have a love of learning including all subjects. They will have experiences they will remember for the rest of their lives and enjoy their education. When children leave our school, they will be prepared for the next stage of their education and be well rounded individuals. It is our aim for all children to be independent learners with self-belief and an abiding respect for others. We aim to instil a lifelong love for learning and a strong grounding for future success.

We believe that our teaching of religious education should seek to develop children's knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and other principal religions represented in our country and help the children to reflect on this and the big questions in life.

Religious Education Intent

The intent of Religious Education at Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School is to ...

- To give children the experience and language which will help them to develop knowledge, concepts and an understanding of religious beliefs held by people.

- To stimulate an interest in learning about worship, festivals, rituals and other expressions of religious life and practice.
- To introduce children to the lives of key figures in Christianity and other world faiths, and to how people have responded to their teaching and example.
- To help children to understand and respect how religious beliefs and values affect ways of living.
- To foster children's feelings of awe, wonder, delight and mystery and an awareness of a spiritual dimension to their lives.
- To help them face and learn from life experiences which they may encounter such as loss, fear and suffering.
- To develop in children a reflective and caring approach to life.
- To help children develop confidence to express their own thoughts, questions and ideas about religion and to engage sympathetically, constructively and critically with others.
- To prepare children for life in modern Britain.

School Approach to Religious Education

In line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews.

Reflecting the Ofsted research review on Religious Education published in May 2021, RE in this school will aim to ensure that pupils 'get better' in RE through their progressive understanding and awareness of '*substantive*' knowledge: *pupils will acquire knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions*, '*ways of knowing*': *pupils will learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion (also known as disciplinary knowledge)* and finally '*personal knowledge*': *pupils will build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study*.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education#curriculum-progression

In line with the REC (Religious Education Council) Draft Handbook: Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom, this school will build on the research review mentioned above by selecting **content** in RE which explores how worldviews are formed, expressed and organised as well as investigating the context, meaning, purpose, values, commitments and influences behind these worldviews. It will encourage **engagement** with the subject through using diverse ways of knowing, focusing on the lived experience of people and demonstrating that the field of study of worldviews is a dynamic area of debate. Finally, it will encourage pupils to have a personal understanding of their **position**, enabling them, at an age appropriate level, to reflect on and potentially develop their personal worldviews in the light of their study and reflect on how their worldviews affect their learning.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE. Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the Statement of Entitlement, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- a challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework
- an assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts
- a curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide
- a pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place
- the opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development.

Organisation and Time Allocation

In accordance with the structure of Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus we have agreed that:

- in the Foundation Stage pupils will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, and also consider non-religious worldviews. RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.
- RE will be taught weekly in all classes and there may be other times such as theme days when RE will be taught. These are all include in the allocated hours above.
- RE is planned with a 2 year rolling programme in year R and year 1; in year 3 and year 4; and in year 5 and year 6. Year 2 is taught as a single year group each year. The Understanding Christianity Materials and the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus are used. See appendix a.

Special Needs and Differentiation

Work is planned to provide for a wide range of pupil ability and experience in each class. Where necessary additional resources are provided, including Learning Support Assistants, but more often differentiation is by support and outcome. More able pupils are challenged to question and research in more depth and use deeper thinking skills. Access to the curriculum is provided for all pupils. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from RE and Collective Worship. School would welcome the opportunity to discuss the situation with parents before them using this right.

Assessment/Recording and Reporting

The Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus.

Children are assessed at the end of each unit with a best fit model. These assessments alongside observations in lesson will be used to judge pupils ability and progress in RE.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written in line with other core subjects with reference to assessment records as well as pupils' individual work. (Both attainment and effort are reported to parents.)

Responsibilities for RE in School

The **subject leader** is responsible for overseeing the teaching and learning of religious education in the school. The role includes:

- Ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD for RE and share good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- Supporting and clarifying the school's approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through a range of regular activities to include: lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and be able to discuss impact and standards
- Contributing to the SIAMS self evaluation process particularly around IQ 6 and IQ 7.

The **headteacher and governors** make sure:

- RE has a high profile within the curriculum
- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that 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 effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly appointed to Church schools are given support to become effective teachers of RE
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils make good progress.

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

At Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education for any reason. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship. **This will be granted immediately.**

However, we would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school. (But there is no obligation for parents to do this.)

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE 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 RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to 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 (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), 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 RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, this will be accepted immediately, and where RE 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 RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE 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 RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Development, Sharing, Review and Monitoring of this Policy

Development

This policy was developed by the school/trust taking account of relevant legislation and guidance, stakeholder input (e.g. staff and governor consultation), and current school priorities. It should be read alongside related policies and documents, including:

Curriculum Policy, Spirituality Policy, SMCS Policy, Collective Worship Policy, Safeguarding Policy; Positive Behaviour Policy; SEND Policy; Equality Policy; Complaints Policy.

Sharing and Accessibility

This policy is published on the school website so it is accessible to parents, carers and other stakeholders. All staff are made aware of the policy and any updates via: *staff handbook; induction; briefing; CPD; staff Memos and staff meetings*. Where appropriate, pupils are made aware of key elements of this policy in an accessible, age-appropriate way.

Review and Approval

This policy is reviewed **every 3 years** by the **Full Governing Body**, which considers any views expressed by parents, pupils and staff and gives approval and action as appropriate. As with all policy reviews, we ensure alignment with current statutory requirements, with other relevant policies, and with the school's **Christian vision**. Changes to the Agreed Syllabus will also initiate a review of the policy.

Monitoring of Implementation and Impact

Governors monitor the implementation and impact of this policy in line with the board's monitoring schedule and the school's monitoring arrangements (e.g. headteacher reports, link governor visits, committee scrutiny, and relevant data).

Appendix A

Thurlaston Primary School Curriculum Map RE							
		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Class 1	Cycle 1 2024 - 25	1.10 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	F2 Why is Christmas special for Christians?	1.4 What is the good news Christians believe Jesus brings?	F3 Why is Easter special to Christians?	F5 What places are special and why?	1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers?
	Cycle 2 2023-24	F6 What times/stories are special and why?	1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	1.7a Who is Jewish and how do they live?	1.7b Who is Jewish and how do they live?	F4 Being special: where do we belong?	F1 Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?
Class 2		1.1 What do Christians believe God is like?	1.2 Who do Christians say made the world?	1.6 Who is Muslim and how do they live? (double unit)	1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians?	1.9 How should we care for the world and others and why does it matter?	
Class 3	Cycle 1 2024-25	L2.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation story?	L2.7 What do Hindus believe God is like?	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu living in Britain today?	L2.4 What kind of world did Jesus want?	L2.6 For Christians, when Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	L2.12 How and why do people try to make the world a better place?
	Cycle 2 2023 - 24	L2.2 What is it like for someone to follow God?	L2.10 How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?	L2.3 What is the 'Trinity' and why is it important for Christians?	L2.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?	L2.9 How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim?	L2.11 How and why do people mark the significant events of life?
Class 4	Cycle 1 2024-25	U2.2 Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?	U2.11 Why do some people believe in God and some people not?	Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?	U2.5 What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people?	U2.4 Christians and how to live: what would Jesus do?	U2.8 What does it mean to be a Muslim living in Britain today?
	Cycle 2 2023 - 24	U2.1 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving?	U2.10 What matters most to Humanists and Christians?	U2.6 For Christians what kind of a King is Jesus?	U2.3 Why do Christians believe Jesus was the Messiah?	Why do Hindus want to be good?	U2.12 How does faith help people when life gets hard?