



## HILDENBOROUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” (Philippians 4:13) so that I can be the best that I can be, for myself, for others and for God.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

## May 2024

We aspire for our community to flourish as we journey together to fulfil our God given potential by encouraging a delight in the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge. We cherish each person as unique and special, and celebrate God’s creation through providing rich experiences, which enlighten, challenge, shape and enhance life’s opportunities for all.

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Lead Person	Jack Nixon

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## Our Christian Ethos and Values

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Our values underpin our own building and give us skills for life. Our values are:

- Love:** Jesus teaches us to love one another – even those who you consider to be your enemies
- Courage:** Jesus teaches us to stand up for what is right because God is always there to guide us
- Honesty:** Jesus teaches us to tell the truth and do the right thing
- Hope:** Jesus teaches us to keep going through difficult times and know God keeps His promises
- Endurance:** Jesus teaches us to keep on building on firm foundations
- Compassion:** Jesus teaches us to care lovingly about others and seek justice

At Hildenborough CE Primary School we focus on Christ’s teachings to shape us as a Church of England School:

**“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”, (Philippians 4:13) so that I can be the best that I can be, for myself, for others and for God.**

## Introduction

At Hildenborough CE Primary 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. 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. Using the Rochester Diocesan syllabus we learn about other religions and world views, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian vision and values, 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 Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, Religious Education in this school aims:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.

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- To contribute to the development of pupils’ own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

## Objectives

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, appropriate to age at the end of their education in our school, 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 world views 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.

## Teaching and learning

RE has a high profile within our school curriculum and is comparable with other core curriculum areas. Quality teaching in RE helps generate respect for different views and interpretations where real dialogue takes place. Learners develop and use a wide range of higher level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and world views as lived by believers. Key cross-curricular skills such as reading, writing, observation, and discussion are practised. Rigorous assessment based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts shows that attainment is high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a range of other world religions and on other world views as appropriate.

RE offers a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences, understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Listening to the teacher and each other.
- Reading of texts.
- Seeking information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Discussion with the teacher and other pupils.
- Pair and group work.
- Using a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Visits and visitors.
- Artwork.
- Outdoor learning.
- Time for reflection.

The teaching will involve links with the community including our vicar and members of the ministry at St. John’s Church, Hildenborough. There will also be regular visits to St. John’s Church.

## Differentiation and Special Educational Needs

Policy and practice in Religious Education reflects whole school policy and encompasses the full range and ability of all pupils. All pupils’ contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs. A range of teaching and learning strategies to achieve differentiated learning are used including task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping. There is particular concern to ensure that all tasks

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are challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able.

### **Breadth and balance**

Although work on Christianity will predominate, there will be in-depth work on the major world religions and on other world views as appropriate. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes, and develop respect for diversity.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Religious Education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. It seeks 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. All questions, views, and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.

### **Relevance**

Teachers will establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children’s own lives. Teaching will enable 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. This will be done through engaging pupils in an enquiry based style of learning and by posing challenging questions to and by pupils.

### **Reflection Areas, Time and Prayer Stations**

As a school, we recognise the importance of having opportunities for quiet reflection. Our school gives people the opportunity, and gift, to stop and be still. We provide opportunities through mirrors, windows, doors (see appendix one). By providing reflective spaces in our school, and encouraging people to use them, we aim to signal that it is alright to ask big questions and seek answers, to reflect and just take quiet time for thought.

For this reason, each class has time to reflect within each day, we have a communal prayer station for all children and staff to access. High quality RE provision provides opportunities for the children’s exploration. Through the provision of thought provoking stimulus the children are able to question and consolidate their knowledge and understanding through the use of the reflection areas, time within the school day and prayer stations.

Our prayer station has a specific focus each week which underpins or consolidates the focus of worship for the week. Children have the opportunity to visit this during the week and share each other’s learning and reflections. This communal prayer station space is used by the whole school, children and staff alike.

### **Cross-curricular links**

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, drama

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and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

### **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 and risk assessments in these circumstances.

### **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 Rochester Diocesan 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.

### **Role of the RE subject leader**

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education. (Statement of Entitlement June 2016 The Church of England Education Office)  
<http://www.rdbe.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Statement%20of%20entitlement%202016.pdf>
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date. This is done annually (or sooner) but only ratified if there are any changes.
- Ensure all teachers are aware of 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.
- Support colleagues and help develop their subject expertise, including ECT.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy, schemes of work, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of RE, pupils’ progress and standards.
- Liaise periodically with the HT and Governors.
- Seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff.
- Order resources.
- Monitor end of term assessments.
- Observe the teaching of RE in school, providing support and guidance for teachers.

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## Resources

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 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.

## Legal Requirements

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their children from religious education. 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 Christian vision and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the headteacher before making this decision.

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## Appendix One:

### Developing Spirituality

At Hildenborough CE Primary School, we value the development of children’s mind, body and spirit. Our school understanding of spirituality is grounded in Christian tradition and influences all areas of education and life.

Spirituality is an innate human capacity. It enables us to become aware of God, one another, the world around us and ourselves. As a school we provide children with openings for spiritual development through windows, mirrors and doors. This is for the ‘wows’ and ‘ows’ that we experience in the world.

**Windows** – giving children opportunities to gaze and wonder; to be aware of the world in new ways. Children learn about life in all its fullness. It’s here that children encounter and learn about life.

**Mirrors** – giving children the opportunity to reflect on their experiences, to look inwards to consider the bigger questions of life: exploring their own insights and those of others. It’s here that children reflect and learn from life.

**Doors** - giving the children opportunities to respond creatively and expressively. In doing this they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value. It’s here that children experience transformation, putting into action what they believe.

These openings are explored through:

- teaching and learning driven by the school’s Christian vision statement and associated values;
- planned and unplanned spiritual opportunities for spiritual development;
- collective worship;
- spaces in the school for reflection, stillness and prayer;
- an outstanding RE curriculum;
- links with our local church.

Spiritual development, although cannot be measured; continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities for spiritual development are monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- observing and listening to children;
- regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school’s Christian vision and values;
- sharing of classroom work and practice;
- ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spirituality means in this school by providing them with induction and development training;
- evidence from pupils’ work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, creative writing, art;
- regular inclusion in the SEF;
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.