Longhoughton CE primary School
Everyone is Welcome

Religious Education (RE) Policy

This policy is awaiting approval by the Academy Committee due October 2026

God has given each of us a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts; use them well to serve each other. 1 Peter 4:10

We all have something special about us that needs to be recognised, nurtured and valued. We all have our own challenges too. By coming together, we create a richly diverse community in which we can all succeed. Together, *'We are God's masterpiece' – Ephesians 2:10.*

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1. Vision and Rationale

As a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school within the Diocese of Newcastle, Religious Education is a core academic subject that lies at the heart of our Christian vision. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development and supports our commitment to enabling every child to flourish.

Our RE curriculum reflects the Church of England Vision for Education, *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, and the Religious Education Statement of Entitlement (2026), which identifies RE as essential in helping pupils understand Christianity as a diverse, global living faith while developing respect for a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. RE should equip pupils to engage critically with questions of meaning, purpose, belief and identity within the multi-religious and multi-secular society in which they live.

Through RE we seek to develop pupils who are:

- Religiously literate
- Curious and thoughtful
- Respectful and compassionate
- Critical and reflective thinkers
- Confident in exploring their own worldview
- Able to participate positively in a diverse society

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2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy operates within the requirements of:

- The Education Act 1996.
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

- The Newcastle Diocese guidance for Church schools.
- The Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus.
- The Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement (2026).
- SIAMS Inspection Framework requirements, particularly Inspection Questions 6 and 7.

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3. Status of RE in our School

As a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School:

- Religious Education is compulsory for all registered pupils, including those in Reception.
- RE is taught in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus adopted by the Local Authority unless parents exercise their legal right of withdrawal.
- RE is distinct from Collective Worship.
- RE is not National Curriculum subject content, but it is a statutory part of the basic curriculum.

The Academy Committee and school leadership ensure that RE receives sufficient status, curriculum time, resources and professional leadership to be comparable with other core foundation subjects.

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4. Aims of Religious Education

In line with the 2026 Church of England Statement of Entitlement, our RE curriculum enables pupils to:

- Engage meaningfully and critically with a multi-religious and multi-secular world.
- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith.
- Explore biblical texts and Christian sources of authority.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Appreciate diversity, continuity and change within traditions.
- Grapple with questions of meaning, purpose and truth.
- Understand the role of religion and belief in society and culture.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge and religious literacy.
- Explore and articulate their own developing personal worldview.

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5. Curriculum Entitlement

Every pupil is entitled to an RE curriculum that:

Is Rigorous

Pupils develop substantive knowledge, disciplinary understanding and critical thinking skills.

Is Balanced

Christianity is studied in depth and taught as a living, diverse, global faith while pupils also encounter a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Is Inclusive

All pupils, regardless of faith background, belief, culture, ethnicity, disability, gender or family context, are fully included and respected.

Is Sequential

Learning builds progressively across the school, ensuring increasing depth, complexity and challenge.

Is Dialogical

Pupils learn through enquiry, discussion, reflection and respectful debate.

Reflects Real Lived Experience

Learning explores the diversity that exists both between and within religious and non-religious worldviews.

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6. Curriculum Content

Christianity

Christianity will be taught as the principal faith tradition and receive the majority of curriculum coverage across the primary phase.

Pupils will explore:

- God
- Creation
- Fall
- Covenant
- Incarnation
- Gospel
- Salvation
- Kingdom of God

- Church

They will encounter:

- Biblical texts
- Theology
- Worship and prayer
- Christian practice
- Diverse denominations
- Global Christianity
- Local expressions of faith including the work of the Diocese of Newcastle.

Other Religious and Non-Religious Worldviews

Pupils will study a range of worldviews, which may include:

- Judaism
- Islam
- Hindu Dharma
- Sikhism
- Buddhism
- Humanism
- Other non-religious worldviews as identified within the agreed syllabus.

In line with the Statement of Entitlement, these traditions will be explored through authentic lived experiences and contemporary practice rather than stereotypes.

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7. Curriculum Time

In accordance with Church of England expectations, curriculum time allocated to RE should be:

- **Key Stage 1:** minimum 36 hours per year.
- **Key Stage 2:** minimum 45 hours per year.
- **Reception:** RE integrated throughout continuous provision and planned curriculum experiences equivalent to the proportion expected within the EYFS curriculum.

This generally equates to approximately:

- 5% of curriculum time in Key Stage 1.
- 5% of curriculum time in Key Stage 2.

RE must not be routinely displaced by other curriculum priorities.

8. Teaching and Learning

High-quality RE teaching will:

- Be enquiry-led.
- Encourage questioning and curiosity.
- Use high-quality texts, artefacts, stories and visits.
- Incorporate theological, philosophical and human/social science approaches where age appropriate.
- Develop disciplinary thinking.
- Promote respectful discussion.
- Challenge misconceptions and prejudice.
- Help pupils make informed connections between ideas, beliefs and practices.

Teaching will reflect current best practice in Religion and Worldviews education and the expectations of SIAMS.

9. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All pupils are entitled to access high-quality RE.

Staff will:

- Adapt learning to meet individual needs.
- Ensure ambitious outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Remove barriers to participation.
- Celebrate diversity.
- Promote equality and inclusion.
- Challenge discriminatory attitudes and prejudice.

RE contributes significantly to the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and supports mutual respect and understanding.

10. Assessment

Assessment in RE will:

- Be based on the progression expectations of the agreed syllabus.
- Assess knowledge, understanding and disciplinary thinking.
- Identify misconceptions.
- Inform future teaching.

- Include formative and summative approaches.

Assessment will focus on pupils' learning in RE and not on personal faith commitment or belief.

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11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Lead will monitor provision through:

- Lesson visits
- Learning walks
- Pupil voice
- Work scrutiny
- Assessment analysis
- Curriculum reviews
- Staff discussions

The Academy Committee, particularly foundation governors where appointed, will monitor RE as part of their responsibility for the Christian character and effectiveness of the school.

Evaluation will consider:

- Pupil achievement
- Curriculum quality
- Inclusion
- Religious literacy outcomes
- Impact on flourishing
- SIAMS readiness

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12. Professional Development

The school is committed to ensuring staff receive:

- Subject knowledge training.
- Pedagogical development.
- Diocese-led professional learning.
- Opportunities to engage with current RE research and developments.
- Support relating to the 2026 Statement of Entitlement and SIAMS expectations.

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13. Resources

The school will maintain:

- High-quality curriculum resources.
- Sacred texts.
- Artefacts from a range of traditions.
- Age-appropriate literature.
- Digital resources.
- Links with local faith communities.

Resources will accurately represent diversity within worldviews and avoid stereotyping.

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14. Visits and Visitors

Educational visits and visitors are an important component of RE.

Where possible, pupils will encounter:

- Churches
- Cathedrals
- Mosques
- Synagogues
- Mandirs
- Gurdwaras
- Humanist representatives
- Members of faith and belief communities

All visits and visitors will comply with safeguarding and educational visit procedures.

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15. Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child wholly or partly from Religious Education.

Any request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will invite parents to discuss the request so that they fully understand the educational aims and content of the RE curriculum.

Alternative supervision arrangements will be made for withdrawn pupils.

Staff do not have an automatic right to withdraw from teaching RE.

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16. Relationship with Collective Worship

Religious Education and Collective Worship are separate legal requirements.

RE:

- Is educational.
- Explores religion and worldviews critically and academically.
- Develops knowledge and understanding.

Collective Worship:

- Is invitation-based.
- Reflects the school's Christian foundation.
- Contributes to spiritual development and community life.

Please see the Collective Worship policy for more information.

Both contribute to the school's Christian vision but fulfil different purposes.

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17. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to:

- Legislative changes.
- Amendments to the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Newcastle Diocese guidance.
- Changes to SIAMS requirements.
- Developments in Church of England guidance.

Approved by Academy Committee

Awaiting Approval – October 2026

Headteacher: Matt Hetherington

RE Subject Leader: Matt Hetherington

Date: _____

Sources: The policy reflects the requirements of the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement (January/September 2026 implementation), including its emphasis

on Christianity as a diverse global living faith, religious literacy, engagement with religious and non-religious worldviews, and its role within SIAMS inspection expectations.