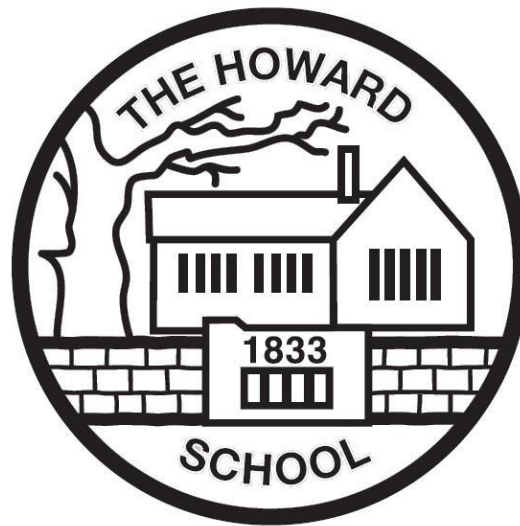


# Ackworth Howard C of E School

Educating for 'life in all its fullness.'



## Religious Education Policy



# ACKWORTH HOWARD POLICY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



'Providing opportunities for growth  
in mind, body and spirit.'

## RE Policy

Date	Review Date	Subject Leader
October 2023	October 2025	Katie Tordoff

## INTENT

At Ackworth Howard J&I School, we believe that in RE we should develop the children's skills so that they can explore people's beliefs and asks questions about life. Children should learn to understand the differences and similarities between people and how they live, based on their beliefs. Through RE children will learn to reflect and respond to their own ideas.



### Mind

RE at our school engages pupils in an enquiry approach where they can develop an understanding for the expression of beliefs, cultural practices and influence of principle religions and world views in the local, national and wider global community.



### Body

We encourage our children to be inspired by moments of awe and wonder and respond to God through worship and seek solace and support from their faith. Through our inspiring curriculum will give children the opportunity to respond creatively to their life experiences.



### Spirit

RE in our school has a significant role for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We promote respect and open-mindedness towards others with different faiths and beliefs and we encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging through self-awareness and reflection.

### **Christian Distinctiveness - Educating for 'life in all its fullness.'**

We are providing opportunities for growth in mind, body and spirit through inspirational and innovative education underpinned by a deeply Christian ethos. Those who learn and work here will develop confidence, embrace creativity and enhance their knowledge and skills so that they can experience 'life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10)



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## Strategic Aim

**To build a Religious Education curriculum which develops learning and results in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Children will know more, remember more and understand more.**

To design a curriculum subject with appropriate subject knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus.

To build a curriculum subject which ensures children recognise and celebrate cultural diversity.

## Research Link

Wakefield Agreed Syllabus indicates that pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should be introduced to an extended range of sources and subject specific vocabulary. They should be encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. Pupils should learn to express their own ideas in response to the material they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views.

School: Children evidence a positive approach and engagement towards the Religious Education units of work. Children evidence an understanding of the diverse cultural beliefs around them in the wider community, and the implementation of British values in the work they produce and the environment created around them.

## Essential for RE

It is essential that all pupils:

- have the opportunity to explore big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that they can make sense of religion, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living
- have a mutual respect and understanding of all cultures and religions, which in turn fosters tolerance, understanding and friendship in their childhood and adult life.
- have the skills and maturity to make their own decisions and create their own values and not be led by others.
- challenge stereotypical views, racism and discrimination and to appreciate difference positively.
- have a safe environment for discussion and exploration of theological ideas and questions



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## IMPLEMENTATION

- Clear and comprehensive 'knowledge essentials' provide a road map to rigor and inform a progressive and aspirational scheme of work. The Wakefield Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity are planned for and covered in full within the EYFS, KS1 and KS2 school curriculum. Whilst the EYFS and Agreed Syllabus forms the foundation of our curriculum, we ensure that learning goes deeper, and within a local context where possible.
- The promotion of a language rich Religious Education curriculum is essential to the successful acquisition of knowledge and understanding in Religious Education. The promotion and use of an accurate and rich vocabulary throughout school is planned in Religious Education within the knowledge essentials document.
- The subject leader produces medium term plans utilising the Religious Education knowledge essentials. This ensures continuity and progression throughout school.
- Alongside medium term plans, knowledge organisers are also developed for each unit of work. Children have access to these and they are used in a variety of ways within the classroom and at home where appropriate. They include key knowledge, language and definitions to understand Religious Education and to use this knowledge across the curriculum.
- Utilising the documents produced by the subject leaders ensures that teachers have the required information they need in order to develop their year group long term plans and deliver an aspirational curriculum. This is monitored by the subject leader.
- Religious Education is taught in formal and informal contexts throughout the school. The children may be taught through whole class, group or individual approaches. They are taught about religious practices in a way that makes sense to them. Questioning, dialogue, listening and discussing are encouraged, as are quiet times for reflection.
- During each Key Stage pupils are taught knowledge, skills and understanding through learning about Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jewish and Humanist people through three key questions: Believing, Expressing and Living. Each unit of work identifies prior learning and shows how this is built upon.
- Religious Education displays, where evident throughout school, focus on key aspects of Religious Education and exemplify the terminology used throughout the teaching of the subject. They also link back to the school vision and enable pupils to make links across the wider curriculum.
- Independent learning: In Religious Education children may well be asked to find out about and investigate key concepts and develop their learning independently. This allows the children to have ownership over their curriculum and lead their own learning in Religious Education.
- Basic skills - English, Maths and ICT skills are taught during discrete lessons but are revisited in Religious Education so children can apply and embed the knowledge and skills they have learnt in a purposeful context.



# ACKWORTH HOWARD POLICY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



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- Enhancement – Regular enrichment is planned throughout the academic year and can include, visits, visitors and involvement in community activity to provide first-hand experiences for the children to support and develop their learning. We believe that Religious Education should provide children with an exciting, stimulating and searching educational experience, an exploration of living religion as experienced by people today. We recognise that to have impact planned cultural capital must be clearly linked to the statutory Religious Education skills, values, attitudes and knowledge to be acquired and provide the opportunity for children to better understand the knowledge or apply what they already know.

## **Foundation Stage**

We encourage the development of creativity, skills; knowledge and understanding that help children make sense of their world as an integral part of the school's work. In Foundation Stage RE can, through planned purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child-initiated activity, provide learning opportunities in the following areas

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Understanding the World
- Literacy
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Communication and Language

In EYFS RE sessions children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their sense in exploring religion and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which we live. They learn through play. These activities, indoors and outdoors, attract the children's interest and curiosity. Practitioners also reflect on the different characteristics of effective learning. We relate the development of the children's Religious Education to the Understanding the World Educational Programmes . The Educational Programmes underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. This learning forms the foundations for later work in religious education.



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## **Teaching and Learning Strategies**

The school uses a variety of teaching and learning styles in religious education sessions. The principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in Religious Education. Teachers ensure that the children apply their knowledge and understanding whilst being encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. We do this through a mixture of whole-class teaching and individual/group activities. Within lessons, we give children the opportunity both to work on their own and to collaborate with others, listening to other children's ideas and treating these with respect. Children express their own ideas in response to the materials they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and explaining their reasoning. They have the opportunity to use a wide range of materials and resources, including computing. In all classes there are children of differing ability and we recognise this, providing suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

## **Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs**

At Ackworth Howard we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of the school's Delivering the Curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced, local education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus Expectations allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against age related expectations. We try to enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in religious education. All enrichment activities are inclusive.



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## Reasonable Adjustments in Religious Education

The curriculum leader in Religious Education recognises the importance of ensuring that children with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities have access to an ambitious Religious Education curriculum. Within the curriculum area of Religious Education, SEND children will be provided with reasonable adjustments through their tasks and level of challenge provided. Advice can be sought from the school's SENDCO where applicable.

## Resources

Our school has a wide range of resources to support the teaching of Religious Education across the school. Classrooms have a range of basic resources, with the more specialised equipment being kept in the Religious Education resource cupboard and resource room. All classrooms have an RE display displaying the Big Frieze from Understanding Christianity and the key concept and strand is on display for each unit / big question being covered.

## Equal Opportunities

- The life and work of a Church school expresses that all pupils are loved and valued by God as part of creation. Therefore, Religious Education as an essential part of the curriculum should be relevant and worthwhile for all. Religious Education should help pupils to respect themselves and be sensitive to the needs of others and to challenge inequalities associated with race, gender, ability, age or socio-economic group.
- All pupils should have equal access to the Religious Education curriculum irrespective of race, gender or ability. Pupils with special needs should be considered when planning units of work and opportunities for differentiation should be considered for both more able and less able pupils.
- Religious Education provides opportunities to address some of the gender stereotypes children may have when considering different faiths.



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## The Legal Requirement

RE is for all pupils:

- RE must be provided for all registered pupils in state funded schools in England, unless withdrawn by their parents. It is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'.
- This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age.

RE is locally determined, not nationally:

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus conference for adoption by a local authority.
- By law Religious Education must be taught according to the local agreed syllabus. The LA also requires a five year review of the Local Authority's RE Syllabus, most recently 2023 - 2028.
- At Ackworth Howard the policy and the units of work follow the guidelines in the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus. Additional units are taken from the Understanding Christianity Resource.

RE is multi-faith:

- The RE curriculum reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- As education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for all registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils, unless as parents you wish to withdraw your child from some or all of the RE curriculum.

(Wakefield Agreed Syllabus for RE, 2023-2028)

## Right of withdrawal:

This was first granted when RE was actually religious instructions and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different now – open, broad, exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, in the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own religious education. (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3)). This will be the parents' responsibility. However, it is our school's aim to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and values of RE before honouring this right.

(Wakefield Agreed Syllabus for RE, 2023 – 2028)





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## Pedagogy

In Religious Education, like all other subjects, we recognise the importance of the methods and practice of teaching (the pedagogy) we choose to use in enabling pupils to know more, understand more and remember more. In Religious Education, the following approaches will be used, and be evident in pupils' books, in order to ensure that the Religious Education learning opportunities are as effective as possible and that pupils progress throughout the year and across year groups during their Religious Education experiences in school.

## Teaching Sequence in Religious Education

Every unit of work will include:

- Big picture: Placing of the Religious Education being studied in the context of similar past learning in the subject.
- Daily review: Brief review of learning covered in previous lesson/s.
- Lesson questions: Posing a problem to be solved in a context the children understand.
- Realistic and relevant information.
- Specific key vocabulary and its meaning.
- Opportunities for the children to work interactively, using other curriculum areas e.g music, drama, art, with the teacher acting as the facilitator.
- Individual reflection on the learning.

## Possible pedagogical approaches used in Religious Education

- Behaviourism - Direct teacher instruction; modelling of skills and techniques; demonstration.
- Constructivism - Inquiry-based learning; outdoor learning.
- Social Constructivism - Teacher modelling; questioning; mix of individual, paired and group instruction.
- Liberationism - Pupil-led learning; opportunities to showcase learning.
- Learning, working and talking about RE with confidence - Being introduced to the key vocabulary relating to RE so that all children can express their understanding, views and opinions confidently.

All teaching approaches currently being developed in school are based on evidenced based research. All developments in teaching and learning identified with the School Development Plan and Delivering the Curriculum Policy should be applied to the teaching and learning of Religious Education also.



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## Contribution to other areas of the Curriculum

**English:** Religious Education contributes to the teaching of English in our school by providing valuable opportunities to reinforce what the children have been learning during their English lessons. Discussion, drama and role-play are important ways that we employ for the children to develop an understanding of the fact that people have different views about Religious Education. The evaluation of religions and practices requires children to articulate their ideas and to compare and contrast their views with those of other people. Through discussion, children learn to justify their own views and clarify their ideas.

**Mathematics:** In Religious Education, there are opportunities for children to apply their mathematical skills through looking at pattern, shape and time. The pattern of the days of the week, the calendar and recurring annual festivals all have a mathematical basis. For older children historical ideas require understanding of the passage of time, which can be illustrated on a time line, similar to the number line that they already know. Religious artwork and architecture may feature pattern and shapes.

**Computing and E-Safety:** We use computing to support Religious Education teaching when appropriate. Children use technology to collect information. Children will be made aware of suitable websites and how to filter specific images. During RE lessons children will have access to laptops and other equipment when needed but this will be monitored by the staff in the classroom and ensure that appropriate websites are being accessed. Children will not use the internet without supervision and all websites will be checked first for suitability.

**Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship:** Religious Education contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:** The teaching of Religious Education offers opportunities to support the social development of our children through the way we expect them to work with each other in lessons. Our groupings allow children to work together, and give them the chance to discuss their ideas and feelings about their own work and the work of others. Through their collaborative and cooperative work across a range of activities and experiences in Religious Education, the children develop respect for the abilities of other children and a better understanding of themselves. They also develop a respect for the environment. They develop their cultural awareness and understanding, and they learn to appreciate the value of differences and similarities. A variety of experiences teaches them to appreciate that all people are equally important, and that the needs of individuals are not the same as the needs of groups.

**Cross Curricular links are made wherever possible.**



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## Skills and Attitudes

Through learning about Christianity and other religions we seek to lay foundations for the future that will enable pupils to begin to mature in relation to their own patterns of beliefs. By helping children to find out about religious practices and beliefs we hope to encourage them to develop personal ideas and feelings special to them, and thus foster spiritual awareness.

Children will be given the opportunity to talk about their own experiences and to ask questions. They will be encouraged to experience the sense of **curiosity and wonder** at the beauty of the natural world and recognise their own individuality and worth in relationship to God. There will be times when they are asked to be still and quiet and to talk about their own thoughts and feelings. They will be encouraged to become familiar with aspects of prayer and meditation.

Through RE we aim to foster the importance of **commitment** to a set of value's by which to live one's life. To foster **fairness** when listening to the views of others. To understand the need for **respect** and the importance of being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others. To feel confident about their own beliefs and identity, their **self -understanding**. To be **open minded** and willing to learn and gain new understanding. To develop **critical mindedness** and have a willingness to examine ideas, questions and disputes about religious and spiritual questions.

Investigate, express, interpret, reflect, empathise, apply, discern, analyse, synthesise and evaluate. The development of many of these skills also occurs across the curriculum in many different subject areas.



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## British Values

Religious Education can make a key educational contribution to pupils' exploration of British Values. RE offers opportunities to build an accurate knowledge base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. Opportunities to discuss and debate social and moral values will aid children to develop attitudes of tolerance, increasing respect and enable them to celebrate diversity.

- **Mutual tolerance** – as a school we do not accept intolerant attitudes towards members of the community. RE can challenge children to be respectful and celebrate diversity
- **Respectful attitudes** – our RE curriculum focuses and promotes developing mutual respect between different faiths and beliefs
- **Democracy** – Through RE pupils learn to debate the fundamental questions of life and respect a range of perspectives. This shared responsibility contributes to their understanding of democracy
- **The rule of law** – In RE pupils examine different codes for human life eg commandments and can appreciate how individuals choose between right and wrong. They learn that fairness requires that the law applies equally to all
- **Individual liberty** – Through RE pupils consider questions about identity, belonging, diversity and learn what it means to live a life free from restraints



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## **Community Links**

Opportunities to use the community as a resource for lessons are encouraged. Parents are welcomed into the school to talk to children about aspects of this subject.

## **Assessment and Recording**

Teachers assess children's work in Religious Education by making assessments as they observe them working during lessons. They record the progress that children make by assessing the children's work against the knowledge essentials. Attainment against the knowledge essentials is continually imputed into our Insight Tracking system to ensure ongoing formative assessment and teacher judgements are made on summative attainment at each data collection point.

## **Professional Development**

Whole school INSET and staff meetings will be arranged when RE is a main focus on the SDP. Staff will be invited to attend courses according to the prioritised needs of the school.

## **Policy and Curriculum Development**

The policy and scheme of work will be reviewed by the staff and adjustments made in response to staff evaluations. The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Religious Education is the responsibility of the Religious Education subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.



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## IMPACT

We ensure that children:

- Will know more, remember more and understand more about Religious Education.
- Will develop competence in the key concepts and knowledge essentials within the school's curriculum.
- Will demonstrate a positive attitude towards people of any religion and show an understanding of cultural beliefs different to their own.
- Will demonstrate respectful behaviour to all and this is transferable outside of school in the wider community and beyond.
- Will learn about important people from the past and the present who have been or are positive role models and who are of a different race or religion.