



**Parbold Douglas**

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

## Religious Education Policy

**Date of last review:** November 2021



# Parbold Douglas CE Academy

Religious Education Policy [Last updated: November 2021]

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## **The legal basis for Religious Education**

Religious Education is unique in the School 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’.

Parbold Douglas is a Church of England Academy therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Academy. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Agreed Syllabus from the Diocese.

## **The contribution of Religious Education to the school vision and values**

In all that we do, we seek to pursue our deeply Christian vision: to equip children with the **vision, passion** and **skills** needed to transform society.

Our motto – **let your light shine** (Matthew 5:16) – is all about transforming society. When we let our light shine, we let the light of Jesus radiate from within us to transform lives and communities around us. When we let our light shine, we shape society with the peace, joy and compassion of Jesus. When we let our light shine, we pursue love and unity.

Our school values (love, friendship, forgiveness, thankfulness, compassion, community and hope) are woven within all parts of our curriculum. We know that, if we are to be successful in the pursuit of our ambitious [vision](#), we need to provide a values-based education.

Effective Religious Education (RE) is one of the most important factors in achieving our school vision. RE is rich, varied and inspiring, with the teaching of Christianity and the person of Jesus Christ at the heart. We are an inclusive community, placing high value on the need to learn about other religions and world views as well as the need to foster respect for all.

## **Aims of Religious Education at Parbold Douglas**

The aim of Religious Education (RE) at Parbold Douglas is to enable all children to develop an understanding of, and respect for, world religions, faiths and worldviews. This enables them to develop religious literacy – the ability to participate in balanced, well-informed and respectful conversations about religion and belief.

As a Church of England school with a deeply Christian vision, our RE curriculum enables our pupils to develop an in-depth, mature understanding of Christianity and its relevance to their own lives.

By the end of Year 6, our pupils will:

- 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.
- Know and understand about other major world religions and worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Have developed their own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.



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The Church of England *Statement of Entitlement* states that at least 5% of curriculum time should be devoted to RE (with the goal being 10%). We aim to commit 10% of our curriculum time to RE (see 'Extending Religious Education' below).

## **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. This will contribute to the mental health and well-being of all of our pupils.

## **Respect for all and celebrating difference**

Religious Education makes an important contribution to our Academy's duty to promote respect for all and to celebrate difference. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge all acts of discrimination or harassment (including racism and HBT bullying).

*The school community* – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

*The community within which the Academy is located* – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

*The UK community* – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

*The global community* – RE involves the study of matters of global significance, recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE 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 ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

## **Our Religious Education curriculum**

Our strong RE curriculum is highly influential in the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and emotional development of pupils, making a significant contribution in preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. It strengthens our understanding of Christian values, empowering pupils make positive choices.

Teaching our core syllabus 'Questful RE' (developed by Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education), we aim to equip our children with the skills and knowledge to hold their own, informed conversations about faith and religion. Through this syllabus, we ensure the opportunity to develop a wide range of higher level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection, thus deepening children's understanding of the impact of religion on the world and enabling them to express personal views with consideration and confidence. We supplement Questful RE with Understanding Christianity, a resource developed by the Church of England



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Education Office. The key purpose of the Understanding Christianity project is to help all teachers support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. Units in Questful RE are paired with units from Understanding Christianity (see curriculum overviews below) to ensure our children receive a deep, rich RE education.

All classes have an RE lesson on a weekly which constitutes an hour of curriculum time. Wider opportunities for RE beyond the classroom include visits to church at least three times a year, visitors to school, themed days and visits to places of religious interest.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

80% of RE curriculum time is dedicated to learning about Christianity and a minimum of 20% to other faiths, as recommended by the Diocese of Blackburn.

### **Learning about non-Christian faiths**

Christianity is central to the teaching of RE, taking up 80% of the available time. Appropriate teaching about other faiths and worldviews constructs the other 20%.

We believe it essential that children develop an understanding of, and respect for, world religions, faiths, and worldviews, enabling them to develop a deeper understanding of the world and its people.

Many units in Questful RE begin with an exploration of an aspect of Christianity before moving on to look at similar aspect of a different faith. As an example, when children in Year 1 learn about the Christian festival of Harvest, they also explore the Jewish festival of Sukkot. In the Year 1 unit 'Why is Baptism special?', children will also learn about special ways in which families of no faith might welcome a baby into the world. In the Year 5 unit 'Loss, death and Christian hope', we explore how humanists cope with loss and death. This ensures our pupils grow up to respect a range of worldviews and perspectives.

### **Religious education in the Early Years**

In Reception, we follow the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Chatterbox units. These begin with the children opening a 'chatterbox' filled with objects and artefacts that prompt discussion, or 'chatter'.

At the start of the unit, the children will open the chatterbox together and discover what is inside. They take turns looking at and handling the objects. The conversation and questions will generate ideas for the learning activities. The children's ideas, comments, questions, work, pictures, writing and photos are recorded by the teacher.

Throughout the unit, learning activities are recorded in the class worship book. Everyone contributes either directly onto the pages or by sticking in paper, objects, photos or post-its. This book is the record of the RE that has taken place and, alongside observation, forms the basis of assessment in the Early Years.



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### **Extending Religious Education (Good Works)**

As a Church school, one of our core goals is to embed the wonderful, life-giving story of Jesus within the minds of our children. To help us achieve this goal, we developed 'Good Works' (a scheme of work that combines RE teaching with the national curriculum for English).

The Good Works scheme is at the heart of our school English curriculum. Each term, in each year group, a Good Works unit is delivered as one of the units of learning in morning English lessons. Units typically last 3 weeks. Each Good Works unit supports children in achieving the goals set out in the Questul RE 'Ladder of expectation' document (produced by Blackburn Diocese). By extending our RE curriculum with Good Works, we seek to commit 10% of class time to RE over the course of a school year.

### **Assessment of Religious Education**

Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects. At the end of their time with us, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, 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.

We assess pupil achievement in RE to ensure we are able to meet individual needs. The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education's '*Ladder of expectation*' guides us in making assessment judgements.

The ladder uses symbols to indicate levels of achievement. The ladder is intended primarily to contribute to planning excellent tasks at the right level appropriate for the pupils' experience, knowledge and ability. However, the ladder can be used to make judgements about the level of individual pupils' achievement. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to be achieving at rung 2 of the ladder. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to be achieving at rung 4 of the ladder. Therefore, teachers can set appropriate tasks and make judgements as to whether or not pupils in their class are working at, towards or exceeding expectations of achievement.

Every half-term, at the end of units, teachers assess each pupil's overall achievement.

We use the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education's 'end of key stage expectations map' to set out the knowledge and understanding that pupils should have at the end of each key stage.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education**

The head teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. The head teacher, leadership team and governors ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives 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



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- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for professional development
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the Academy can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The RE leader will:

- monitor RE within the Academy through reflective professional discussions, assessment data and pupil conferences
- be responsible for contributing to the self-evaluation process
- manage resources
- keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in Religious Education and disseminate this as appropriate
- be aware of staff development needs and facilitate professional development
- facilitate the sharing of good practice

## **Resources**

Resources for the teaching of Religious Education are situated in the Key Stage 1 corridor (first cupboard on the left when approaching from the offices). These include:

- Blackburn Diocesan Materials
- Artefacts, posters and objects
- Chatter box resources for Early Years

Some books, schemes and magazines can be found in the staff professional development library in the PPA room (e.g. *Understanding Christianity* and *Cracking RE*).

The school libraries also have reference books easily accessible for children's own use and each class has their own reference materials.

The church is also one of our resources. We also have human resources where we have the parish clergy and various speakers.

A healthy supply of digital resources can be found on the 'staff share' drive.

## **Staff professional development**

The RE subject leader and the staff team have the opportunity to attend relevant professional development, often provided by Blackburn Diocese. Materials and relevant ideas are then disseminated amongst other staff members.

Building staff expertise in RE is of paramount importance. We aim to ensure that:

- At least one member of staff has specialist RE training or qualifications.
- All staff teaching RE having access to appropriate professional development.



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- All teaching staff and governors having an understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- Our governing body remains active and skilled in monitoring standards in RE effectively.

## **The right of withdrawal from Religious Education**

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their child from all or part of collective worship and R.E. although this cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school. The Head teacher should be notified in writing if parents wish to exercise this right.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education.

## **Policy evaluation and review**

The policy is reviewed every 3 years.

**Date of last review:** November 2021

**Date of next review:** November 2024

