

Ingleton C of E Primary School



Durham &
Newcastle
Diocesan
Learning
Trust

Religious Education Policy

Our vision: 'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven'

Matthew 5:16

January 2025

Policy for Religious Education

Vision and Values

***'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'* Matthew 5:16**

This underpins all we undertake at our school. We have high expectations (academic, personal, social, moral and spiritual) and we aspire for all our pupils to aim high and succeed in all they do.

For each individual to 'shine', by instilling a legacy of life-long learning, inspiring and empowering each individual to a world of possibilities.

- Through our Christian values, we ensure that every child shines in their own unique way.
- As a family, we welcome all into our safe, learning environment where we respect and celebrate each other's achievements.
- We want all our children to be confident, independent, resilient learners, with a sense of belonging, a feeling of being loved and ready to make their mark on the world.

At Ingleton C of E Primary we aim to do this through....

- Fostering a school community where every member feels valued and respected and everyone is treated equally and fairly.
- Ensuring Christian values are embedded in the daily life of our school through Collective Worships, modelling exemplary behaviour at all times, School Buddies, the development of friendships and social skills, displays and classroom reflection areas.
- Supporting the wider community by having strong links with parents, the church and the local community.
- Developing 'pupil voice' and pupil participation through the School Council and Buddy systems.
- Encouraging all staff to be forward thinking and be determined to be the best that they can be.
- Driving the ethos of everyone as a learner. Having 'open classrooms as a basis for sharing'.
- To advocate best practice and secure excellent achievement for all pupils ensuring every child experiences an exciting, enriching and engaging curriculum design which is underpinned by Christian values and beliefs.
- Working together with strong governance.

Aim: Each child is recognised as a unique individual who is inspired to grow as a responsible citizen and realise their potential within an enriched Christian family underpinned by our core beliefs of: **Love, Kindness, Honesty and Respect.**

Our Intent

“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 educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together” (The Church of England Statement of Entitlement (2019)

At Ingleton C of E Primary School our RE curriculum is underpinned by Christian values and aims to nurture happy and inspired lifelong learners. Through an enquiry approach, children will develop their religious literacy through a balanced RE curriculum that draws on theology, philosophy and social and human sciences. We aim to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions, which religion and worldviews address so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Through Religious Education we aim to ensure that children know about and develop an understanding of a range of religions so that they can describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals. Through this subject, we also enable children to express ideas and gain insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews to enable them to express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value including ethical issues.

In addition, teaching this subject at Ingleton C of E Primary School will allow children to gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can articulate beliefs, find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth by responding creatively, thus developing their confidence and resilience.

Purpose of Study

The principal aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.

Aims and Purposes of Religious Education in the Church School

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church schools:

- 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 non-religious worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils’ own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, 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 non-religious worldviews 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.'

Rationale

At Ingleton C of E Primary School, RE is regarded as a core subject, and 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.

We teach according to the Durham Locally Agreed Syllabus supported by the Understanding Christianity and Durham Diocesan teaching resources. Understanding Christianity bases Christianity within a framework called "God's Big Story," which develops an understanding of the Old Testament and the New Testament and supports children in sequencing the timeline of the Bible.

Links with our school vision, 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 and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with Biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for our senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy*

**Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)*

- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Personal Development and Well-Being

RE 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.

Community Cohesion

RE provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

Effective RE will promote community cohesion through:

- **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 school 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 beliefs 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 beliefs and their impact on world issues. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, to challenge stereotypes and to build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. These contribute to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

In summary, Religious Education for children and young people:

- **provokes challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- **enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teaches pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompts pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves** and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

Provision of RE in the Curriculum

Our school ensures that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education in order to meet statutory requirements. Enough time is given to cover the programmes of study or specifications at each key stage.

Using the Durham Locally Agreed RE Syllabus we teach RE on a weekly basis or through other ways when appropriate, for example:

- for a whole morning (2 ½ - 3 hours) every two weeks
- a suspended timetable day for Religious Education to enable exploration of a theme or question a suspended timetable day to visit places of religious significance.

From Year 1 to Year 6 this amounts to approximately 5% of curriculum time.

- Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year (minimum)
- Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year (minimum)

We enhance and support the curriculum with the use of the Understanding Christianity and Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus resources.

While the statutory requirement for RE does not extend to children under compulsory school age, it forms a valuable part of the educational experience of children in the Early Years.

The staff ensure RE contributes to:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Religious Education may be taught as part of whole class topics or themes. At Ingleton C of E Primary, we use the following themes to explore religion: Special and Belonging. Children explore this through 3 key units – Being Special: *Where do we belong?* Stories – *Which stories are special and why?* Places – *Which places are special and why?* Pupils also learn about key Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter.

Key Stage 1

Pupils are taught about:

- **Christianity - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.**
Example of Unit Question – *Why does Easter matter to Christians?*
- **Buddhism – introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact.**
Example of Unit Question – *What can we find out about Buddha? How do Buddhists show their beliefs?*
- **Judaism – introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.**
Example of Unit Question – *Who is Jewish and how do they live?*

- **Islam - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.**

Example of Unit Question - *Who is Muslim and how do they live?*

Key Stage 2:

Pupils are taught about:

- **Christianity – beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.**
Examples of Unit Question – *Why do Christians call the day Jesus died ‘Good Friday’? What difference does the resurrection make for Christians?*
- **Hinduism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities**
Example of Unit Question - *What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?*
- **Judaism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities**
Example of Unit Question – *What does it mean for a Jewish person to follow God?*
- **Sikhism - some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities**
Example of Unit Question – *What does it mean to be a Sikh in Britain today?*
- **Secular / non-religious worldviews – Why do some people believe in God and some people not?**
- **Similarities and differences within and between religious and non-religious worldviews through thematic studies** e.g. *What are the deeper meanings of festivals? How and why do people try to make the world a better place? How and why do people mark the significant events of life? Why is pilgrimage important to some religious believers?*

Teaching and Learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing ‘big’ and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts, stories and symbols.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits, visitors and events.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and worldviews 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.

Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables 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.

Cross-curricular links

Cross-curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. 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' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, Art, Drama, History, Geography, Computing, Votes for Schools and Music as well as PSHE & RSHE.

Inclusion

R.E. is provided for all children at Ingleton and makes a valuable contribution to their education. Teachers plan work which takes into account the differences in the abilities and experiences of their pupils in order to maximise their potential and extend their abilities and to allow all children access to the R.E. curriculum. R.E. has a large part to play in helping to remove prejudice and misunderstanding and in combating stereotyping, discrimination, sexism and racism.

All pupils, irrespective of ability, age, gender or race are entitled to equal opportunity in the development of their religious education knowledge.

Assessment

Assessment of children's progress in RE is ongoing. As a piece of work is completed, it is marked and teachers give written feedback to pupils, often with an opportunity to respond and improve or extend their knowledge or critical analysis. If an opportunity for personal reflection is given, this is not marked.

The school has developed unit assessment sheets denoting the success criteria for all the RE units taught from Year 1 to Year 6. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the unit. Teachers use these to inform their planning and end of unit assessments. Knowledge and skills are assessed in a variety of ways, and the children are given appropriate feedback in order to make progress.

Continued Professional Development

Teachers have attended training in the use of the Understanding Christianity and the Durham Diocesan resources. The training was then cascaded to others in school at staff meetings and joint planning events.

Members of the Durham and Newcastle Joint Education Team (JET) have also advised on the enhancements to the school curriculum. Teachers are actively given the opportunity to share good practices.

The Legal Basis of RE

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. 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 importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, the subject leader will monitor and evaluate the impact of this policy in practice. Our RE Subject Leader is Mrs. W. Togher.

Policy Review

This policy has been adopted by the Academy Councillors in consultation with the Headteacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff.

It was approved by Academy Councillors in January 2025 and will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required.