St. Peter's Church of England (VC) Primary School

Religious Education Policy

February 2026

OUR SCHOOL VISION

As part of a church school family that grows together in compassion and kindness, we aspire to be the best that we can be.
We flourish through the connections and relationships we nurture, guided by our Christian values.
Our uniqueness is embraced; our faith and beliefs guide us to be courageous enough to stand up for what is right; and bold enough to evoke change in our world, just as Jesus did.

James 2:18: "I will show you my faith by my actions."

In line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement we believe that:

'A high quality religious education (RE) curriculum is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all maintained schools to teach a broad and balanced curriculum. At the heart of RE in church schools is the teaching of Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools encourage learning about other religions and world views fostering respect for them'.

Our Values

ACE – Aspire, Care and Empower

We believe that the whole school community should enable and encourage all of its members to have a sense of value and self -worth that will enable them to have academic and personal ambitions in school and in life. We expect that all members of the school community will care, respect and support each other, their learning and the wider environment. We believe that an enjoyment of learning at school will promote life -long learning, which results in higher outcomes and a greater contribution to society as a whole.
This vision is underpinned by our Christian values of Courage, Forgiveness and Responsibility, explored through our understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and stories from the Bible.

Aims

- Religious Education will enable all children to explore religious beliefs and practices, some of which are located in the local community.
- The children will be encouraged to explore the fundamental questions of life and death raised by human experiences.
- The children will be given the opportunity to explore philosophy, theology and social science in this context
- The teaching of RE will give the children the opportunity to extend their thinking questioning and analytical skills and their creative, imaginative and emotional development.
- Religious Education will foster mutual understanding between students of differing religious and cultural backgrounds.
- The children will be encouraged to develop a reflective approach to life in an atmosphere of openness, exploration and enquiry and relate their discussions to their own life experiences

- The children will be encouraged to respect differences and help in the promotion of a harmonious society.
- The children will have the opportunities to learn about religion from a variety of resources.
- The children will have opportunities to explore their own response to profound human experiences and universal symbols,
- The children will be encouraged to respond freely to experiences and questions which have a profound or puzzling quality and to use a range of different forms of expression to convey their responses.

Curriculum

We teach out pupils using the "lenses" approach: this means each unit of work is primarily delivered and experienced through either the lens of theology, philosophy or social science. Each unit is driven by a core question at its heart. High quality, purposeful learning outcomes for each enquiry are produced.
We use several high-quality schemes and resources as the basis of our long-term plan (Understanding Christianity and The Saffron Trust). Children will study Christianity as a principle religion alongside other major world faiths (Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, with some elements of Buddhism and Sikhism) as well as non-religious worldviews (Humanism).

Teaching and leaning

Teaching methods are stimulating and engaging, providing all students with access to religious education. Consideration is paid to different learning styles and the differing abilities of students so that all students make progress in their learning. A range of teaching and learning strategies which are effective for inclusive teaching of religious education include:

- The use of representatives from religious traditions as visitors to the class
- The use of artefacts, big books, posters, IT, multi –media and artwork
- The use of art and craft to enable students to express their ideas
- The use of drama, role play, gesture or dance
- The use of music to create an atmosphere or for expression of ideas and emotions
- Visits and visitors linked to the learning

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as PSHE and our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the range and variation of answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious education also helps to reinforce the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

Planning

RE is planned by members of the year group teams in which they teach. Planning follows the Understanding Christianity and Cornerstones resource/scheme of work. The RE Co-ordinator and HT monitor the planning regularly to ensure the required objectives and coverage are being met.

Inclusion

RE can be an emotionally and intellectually challenging subject for many children. Teachers at St Peter's frequently make a number of adaptations to maximise participation and progress for children of all abilities. We may make use of certain tools to assist to help children access the curriculum content including: the use of AI to simplify or summarise key religious stories and texts to a particular cognitive level, use of cloze procedures and sentence stems, pictoral aids and models etc) The principles of Quality First Teaching are always employed.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Children begin each unit, with a self-assessment about what they already know about key questions/concepts/vocabulary in the unit of work. They then complete the assessment again at the end of the unit to gauge their progress. Teachers will also conduct an assessment based on their observations and work in books, to gauge progress. They will record children who are below the expectation, at the expectation (the majority) and above the expectation. There is not a numerical summative/norm referenced style assessment for this subject.

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Monitoring

The SLT and RE leader have a plan for regular monitoring which includes book scrutiny and pupil perception interviews. The Governor with responsibility for RE meets with the RE leader and conducts learning walks in line with the actions on the School Development Plan. The RE governor reports back to the FGB in committee and FGB meetings. The Diocesan advisor linked to the school also meets the RE Co-ordinator and HT termly to discuss progress and monitoring.

Links

We are affiliated with the Chelmsford Diocese. We have developed links with local churches and ministers; in particular, St Peter's Church and its clergy.

British Values

At St Peter's Church of England Primary School we ensure that through our school vision, values, rules, curriculum and teaching we promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. We have a duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe. We value the importance of the current Ofsted guidance:

…should ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain

As a school we value the diverse ethnic backgrounds of all pupils and families and undertake a variety of events and lessons to celebrate these. We have found this approach to be enriching for all parties as it teaches tolerance and respect for the differences in our community and the wider world. Underpinning all this, are a range of curriculum topics which have strong links to British History.

Withdrawal from RE

Parents have the right to withdraw their pupils from religious education. Parents who choose to withdraw their children from Religious education lessons are required to state this in writing annually to the Head teacher.

Vanessa Sullivan February 2026