

St Hilda's Moorland Federation
Egton CE (VA) School and Danby CE (VA) School

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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| Effective Date: | May 2025 |
| Date Due for Review: | Summer Term 2028 (3 years) |
| Approved By: | St Hilda's Moorland Federation Governing Body |
| Approval Date: | 13th May 2025 |
| Signed by Chair of Governors | Matthew White |

Our vision, as Church of England primary schools deeply rooted in a strong Christian tradition, is to 'inspire learning and develop children's potential as individuals within a caring, happy, and distinctively Christian family'.

The Bible verse that underpins our vision statement, aspirations and ethos is taken from the Bible verse:

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10.

We wish to enable our children to flourish in their spiritual, physical, emotional, social, cultural and academic development enabling them to live their lives to the full.

Egton and Danby Schools are small, distinctively Christian, family based learning communities. We learn and grow together. Our key values underpin everything we strive for in our schools:

TRUST

Trust in the Lord and do good. *Psalms 37.3*

FRIENDSHIP

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity *Psalms 135.1*

RESPECT

In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. *Matthew 7.12*

We live these core values out through our excellent relationships with our children, parents, governors, staff, communities and churches.

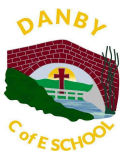


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1. Introduction

At St Hilda's Moorland Federation, comprising small, distinctively Christian, family-based learning communities, Religious Education (RE) holds a central and unique place in our curriculum. Rooted in our Federation's Christian vision, our RE curriculum is a practical expression of our commitment to enabling children to flourish both academically and spiritually. It reflects our core values of friendship, respect, and trust, and plays a vital role in the holistic development of every child.

The teaching of RE is given significant importance and is designed to be rich and varied, equipping children with a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. Strong links with our school vision and our commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE provision and have a lasting impact on learners and their families.

RE in our Voluntary Aided schools is determined by the York Diocesan syllabus, in line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement (2019), which guarantees pupils access to a high-quality RE curriculum. Within the Diocese of York, the Archbishop is recognised as the interpreter of the denominational aspects of our Instrument of Government, thereby authorising the use of the Diocesan Guidelines in Church Aided schools to meet legal requirements. We are also guided by the Education Reform Act 1988, which acknowledges RE as "a valid discipline in its own right, which acknowledges the spiritual nature of human beings."

Through this policy and our practice, we aim to nurture a caring school community where sound friendships flourish, built on mutual respect and trust.

2. Intent

Our RE curriculum aims to:

- **Develop Knowledge and Understanding:** Enable 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.
- **Foster Skills and Dispositions:** Encourage pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity, and change within the religions and worldviews studied.
- **Promote Personal Development:** Provide opportunities for pupils to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- **Enhance Cultural and Societal Awareness:** Help pupils 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.
- **Encourage Spiritual Exploration:** Support pupils in exploring their own religious, spiritual, and philosophical ways of living, believing, and thinking.

Our RE curriculum is underpinned by a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice. We aim to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their background, ability, or belief, are able to access and engage with the curriculum in a way that values and celebrates diversity, challenges stereotypes, and encourages respectful dialogue about the world's religions and worldviews.

3. Implementation

Curriculum Structure

Religious Education (RE) holds a prominent place in our curriculum, with at least 5% of overall curriculum time allocated, in line with the Statement of Entitlement. Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group, making up at least 50% of the RE curriculum, ensuring that pupils gain a deep understanding of Christian beliefs and practices. This is complemented by the study of other world religions and worldviews, offering pupils a well-rounded perspective on faith and belief. The curriculum encourages inquiry-based learning, where pupils engage with 'big' questions, explore texts, and interact with diverse media and experiences, helping develop their religious literacy.

Curriculum Design

We use the York Diocesan Understanding Christianity resource, which provides a coherent framework for teaching Christian beliefs and practices. RE lessons are enriched by cross-curricular links, visits, and visitors, which broaden the learning experience. The curriculum is delivered in an objective, critical, and pluralistic manner, ensuring pupils are challenged and engaged through the integration of theology, philosophy, and human sciences.

Key Features of Our RE Curriculum

- **Christianity Focus:** Christianity constitutes at least 50% of the RE curriculum, ensuring pupils develop a deep knowledge of Christian belief and practice, including engagement with biblical texts.
- **Engagement with a Range of Beliefs:** Pupils are introduced to a variety of faiths and worldviews, fostering understanding of different religious beliefs and practices.
- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** The curriculum encourages independent thinking and critical engagement through 'big' questions and text analysis.
- **Religious Literacy:** Pupils develop the skills to hold informed and balanced conversations about religion and belief.
- **Personal and Societal Development:** RE encourages pupils to reflect on meaning and purpose, contributing to their personal development and societal understanding.
- **Inclusive and Differentiated:** RE lessons are accessible and challenging for all pupils, offering differentiated support as needed.

Long-Term Plan

Our [long-term RE plan](#) ensures a progressive, inclusive approach, enabling pupils to explore, understand, and value a range of beliefs throughout their time at St Hilda's Moorland Federation. Medium-term plans guide structured, meaningful progression in RE learning.

Teaching and Learning Approaches

We prioritise teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, and inclusive way. The curriculum balances theology, philosophy, and human/social sciences, engaging pupils with core concepts and meaningful questions.

- **Inclusive Pedagogy:** RE is taught critically and objectively, allowing pupils to explore their own beliefs and discuss challenging questions.
- **Diverse Strategies:** A variety of strategies, including group work, artefacts, music, drama, and outdoor learning, support engagement and reflection.
- **Balanced Disciplines:** The integration of theology, philosophy, and social sciences develops pupils' skills in enquiry, interpretation, and reflection.
- **Challenging Stereotypes:** Lessons address misconceptions about race, gender, and religion, promoting respect for diverse worldviews.
- **Personal and Societal Application:** RE encourages pupils to apply insights to their own lives and develop respect for others.
- **Cross-Curricular Links:** RE supports the development of literacy, empathy, and self-expression while contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development. It links with subjects such as English, art, history, geography, music, and citizenship.

Assessment

RE assessments are both formative and summative, carried out termly and recorded alongside core subjects. We use a variety of strategies, including personal responses through art, poetry, drama, self-assessment, and peer discussion.

Progress Tracking: Assessments are measured against 'I Can' statements in the Diocesan Syllabus, ensuring progression. The RE Subject Leader analyses progress across different ability levels and monitors the effectiveness of teaching.

Assessment Process:

- Assessments take place in planned and spontaneous learning opportunities.
- A variety of strategies are used, such as art, poetry, dance, drama, peer discussions, and audio-visual presentations.
- Pupil self-assessment is included, and assessments support effective reporting to parents.

To support the assessment of knowledge and understanding in RE, we use subject knowledge organisers for each unit. These organisers highlight the key vocabulary, core knowledge, and big questions children are expected to learn. They serve as reference tools for both children and staff, supporting clarity and consistency in subject delivery.

In addition, every two weeks, children complete a subject knowledge mind map. These are done collaboratively and act as both a formative assessment and a retrieval practice tool. Mind maps give insight into what knowledge has been retained, highlight any misconceptions, and inform future teaching. They also serve to reinforce key concepts and support long-term memory of the content taught.

Professional Development

Staff receive regular CPD opportunities through diocesan training, RE networks, and in-school INSET, focusing on enhancing subject knowledge and confidence in using

theological texts. Protected time is provided for staff to familiarise themselves with new materials to ensure effective curriculum delivery.

We recognise the importance of creating a classroom environment where all pupils feel valued and respected. Our approach to RE ensures that diverse perspectives are explored, stereotypes are challenged, and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs while developing respect for those of others. This inclusive approach aligns with our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice, which is central to our teaching and learning practice.

5. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice in RE

At St Hilda's Moorland Federation, our approach to Religious Education actively promotes equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice, fully reflecting the inclusive and loving ethos of our Christian vision. RE provides a unique and vital opportunity for all children to explore a wide range of beliefs, traditions, and worldviews with fairness and integrity.

Through our RE curriculum:

- **Equity** is promoted by ensuring all children, regardless of background, ability, or belief, can access, participate in, and succeed in RE. Teaching is adapted to meet diverse needs and ensure every child's voice is valued and heard.
- **Diversity** is celebrated through respectful exploration of different religious and non-religious worldviews, acknowledging the varied beliefs held within our school, local community, the UK, and globally. Children learn about the lived experiences of people of faith, ensuring that stereotypes are challenged and plurality is understood.
- **Inclusion** is central to our curriculum design. Lessons are structured to be inclusive of all children and sensitive to the personal beliefs they may hold. Opportunities are created for children to engage with a wide range of faiths, including those that may be less familiar in our rural context, ensuring everyone feels represented.
- **Justice** is modelled and taught through the RE curriculum by encouraging children to think critically about fairness, equality, and moral responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to consider how religious teachings call individuals to act justly and serve others, linking theological ideas to real-world issues such as human rights, stewardship, and reconciliation.

We believe that high-quality RE contributes to social cohesion and interfaith understanding by developing pupils' capacity to engage in meaningful dialogue, appreciate difference, and respond to complex questions with compassion and curiosity. In doing so, RE supports our wider school commitment to building a fairer, kinder, and more respectful world—starting within our classrooms.

6. Monitoring and Review

Policy Review: This policy will operate for the next three years and will be fully reviewed by all staff and governors to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

Subject Leadership: The RE Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy, analysing assessments, and identifying areas for development in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

7. Legal Requirements

Religious Education (RE) must be provided for all registered pupils in full-time education, except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over), in accordance with DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010, page 28.

The law relating to RE for pupils in reception classes differs from that of National Curriculum subjects, as RE must be taught to all registered pupils in the school, including those in reception, but not those in nursery classes or playgroups. While parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE, the school hopes that all pupils will fully engage with RE, given its importance as a core subject in a church school.

We aim to provide an open curriculum that can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers should refer any questions from parents regarding withdrawals to the Headteacher. We ask that anyone considering withdrawal discusses this decision with the Headteacher beforehand. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the Headteacher, and a record of such requests will be kept.

8. Resources and Health and Safety

Resource Management:

A wide range of resources is available to support RE teaching, including guidance materials produced by SACRE/Diocese. These resources are regularly reviewed and updated through audits conducted by the RE Subject Leader. Funding allows for continued development, including visits, visitors, and staff training as appropriate. All resources are listed, stored, easily accessible, and maintained in good condition. Resource banks are available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and worldviews, as appropriate. Staff are given protected time to familiarise themselves with new materials.

Health and Safety:

Health and safety considerations in RE may arise during activities such as handling artefacts, consuming food, and visiting places of worship. Teachers will adhere to the guidelines outlined in the school's health and safety policy for these activities to ensure pupils' safety.