

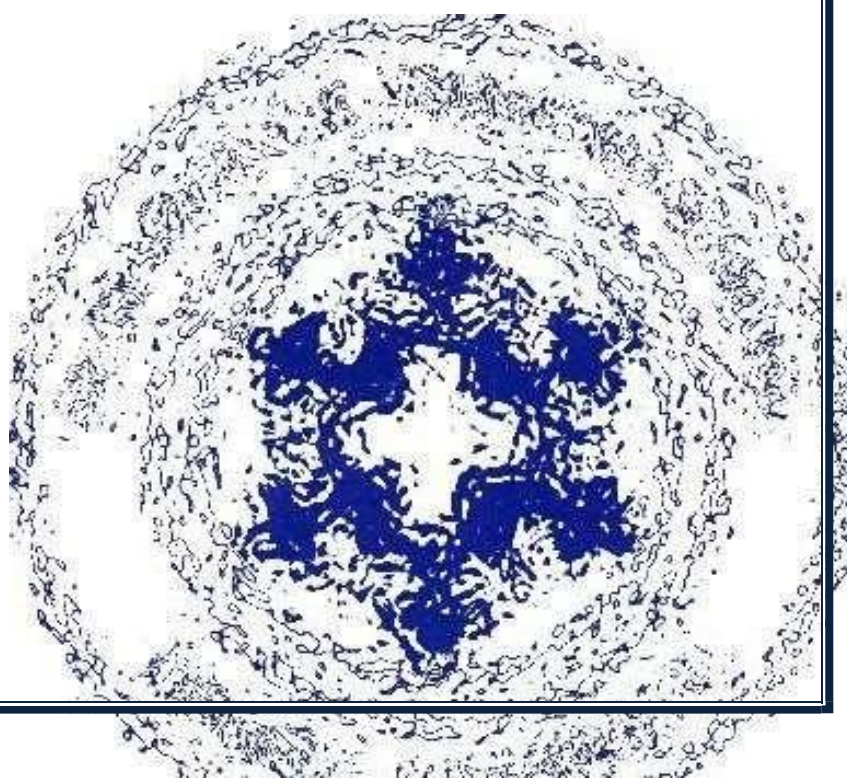
# Religious Education Policy

## Our Vision:



Approved: Dec 2025  
Amended: Sept 2025

Review: Sept 2028



# St Mary's Church of England School

## Introduction

Our vision states that we want our children and community to flourish together. To do this, we ensure Religious Education at St Mary's explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the major religions of the world. It enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life.

R.E. is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own beliefs and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. It is not the practice of this school to preach to or seek to convert children. Values education permeates the RE curriculum. One key principle of our teaching pedagogy and this is exemplified in Religious Education is to **wait, watch and wonder**. Through this, we provide children with the space to pause, observe and explore, reflect and question in learning and develop a sense of curiosity.

## Aims of the RE Curriculum

At this school, RE supports and strengthens the vision, ethos and values which are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the [RE curriculum](#).

The overall aims are:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and practices so that they understand the importance of the Bible, the role of the church and recognise that for Christians their faith provides a way of interpreting life and its meaning.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of some of the other principal religions in Britain.
- Understand how belief may impact on culture, relationships, values and lifestyle.
- Understand how belief can be expressed in a variety of ways including art, dance, music, ritual celebration and in different cultural settings.
- Develop spiritually, morally, culturally and socially by helping them to reflect upon personal feelings, responses and relationships.
- Explore ways in which religious values and teaching have an impact on actions and decisions for people of faith
- Be supported in their own search for meaning and purpose in life.
- Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Explore concepts of love, forgiveness and sacrifice.
- Develop skills of reflection, empathy, communication, analysis, investigation, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis.
- Develop attitudes of respect, sensitivity, open-mindedness and self-esteem.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Every child is entitled to be taught RE regardless of their age, culture, gender, background or special need or disability. RE develops a balanced view of the multi-cultural society which we live in without compromising the faith, non-faith or cultural background of any pupil.

The teaching of RE is approached sympathetically to all religious beliefs and teachers must remain mindful of the [PREVENT](#) and [British Values Policy](#) throughout their planned approach to teaching RE.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons, but as RE is central to the life and identity of St Mary's School, we would ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

## **Health, Safety and Well-Being**

Visits to places of worship and other RE related venues are encouraged as an important part of developing a child's understanding of the role religion plays in communities. Prior to all visits, staff will carry out a formal risk assessment, if necessary, visiting the venue prior to creating the risk assessment. Staff will ensure that the context of the learning that will take place during the visit, will not undermine a child's own faith or challenge their belief and will only be presenting a knowledge base about a faith. Permission will be sought from parents/carers for each child to attend the visit. We acknowledge the sensitivity that some families may have with regard to their child visiting another place of worship, staff must ensure that they do all they can to assure parents and encourage pupil participation.

## **Teaching and Learning**

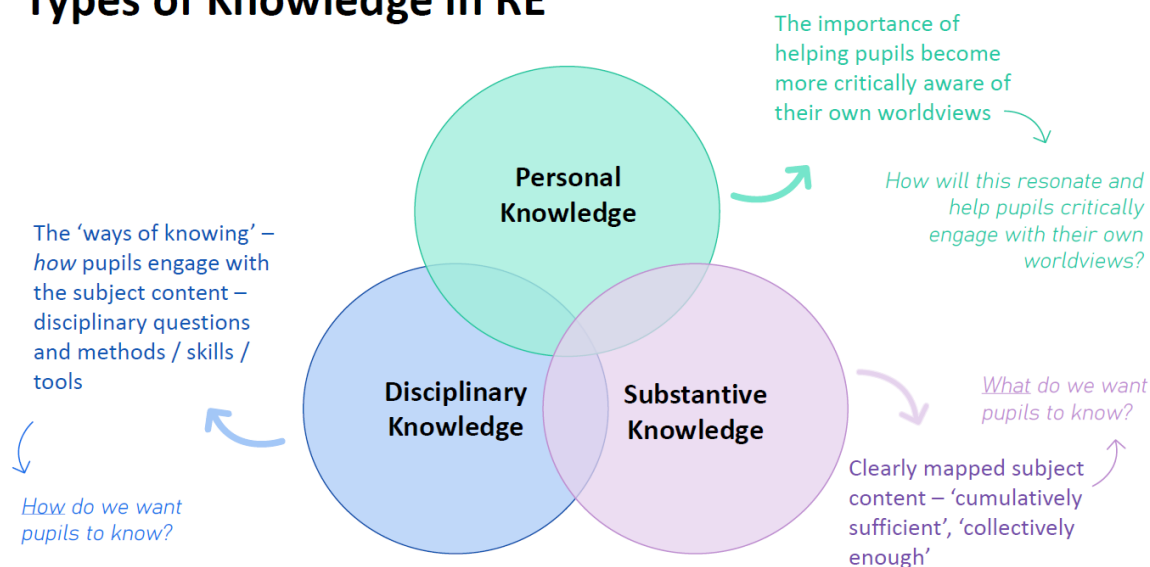
A variety of teaching methods should be used to teach RE, such as role play/drama, stories, virtual reality and music. Visitors to school should also be encouraged to give children the opportunity to listen to and ask questions about another person's experiences of living/celebrating through different faiths.

We use the [Blackburn Diocese's Scheme of Work](#) which is supplemented by the '[Understanding Christianity](#)' resources and enhanced with our additional experience faith days. EYFS – KS2 follow this scheme of work.

- There will be clear learning outcomes for all units of work, based on the appropriate expectations/levels as set out in the Blackburn Diocese (recommendation by Carlisle Diocese).

We take a Worldviews approach in which we start with people and help our children to make sense of the world

## Types of Knowledge in RE

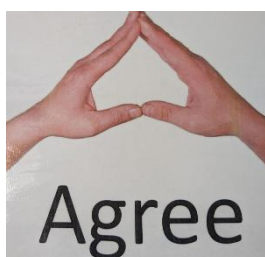


### Ways of Knowing:

Theology	Human / Social Sciences	Philosophy
The study of things that people believe	A range of academic disciplines that explore the ways in which people live their lives	Interested in what we know and how we know it
Exploring where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how different beliefs/concepts connect to each other within an overarching worldview and how different people understand and engage with their beliefs differently.	Asking questions about how people live and why they live in the ways that they do. Interested in how context affects ways of living.	Asking questions about how people think or reason about the world around them, and how we can know what is true or real.
A key method used by theologians is <b>hermeneutics</b> (textual interpretation).	Key methods used by human and social scientists include <b>surveys, interviews, ethnographic study and analysis of data</b> .	Key methods used by philosophers include <b>thought experiments, debate, critical thinking and processes of reasoning</b> .

How do we know that people are flourishing in RE?

We want children to engage meaningfully in dialogue and we also have a scaffold within our school to support this, we **agree, build on and challenge on another**.





- The scheme of work will ensure that there is continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment in both attainment targets.
- A range of teaching and learning activities will ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest.
- Pupil progress and attainment in RE will be tracked and recorded at the end of units and the school will keep an up to date portfolio of evidence to support assessment data
- Progress in RE will form part of pupils' annual report to parents.
- RE will be taught either as a discrete subject or as part of a cross curricular approach where appropriate.
- A range of visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship.
- In this school the faiths taught are Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.
- RE will be given at least 5% of curriculum time i.e. 1 hour per week in the foundation stage and key stage 1 and 75 minutes per week in key stage 2

### Assessment

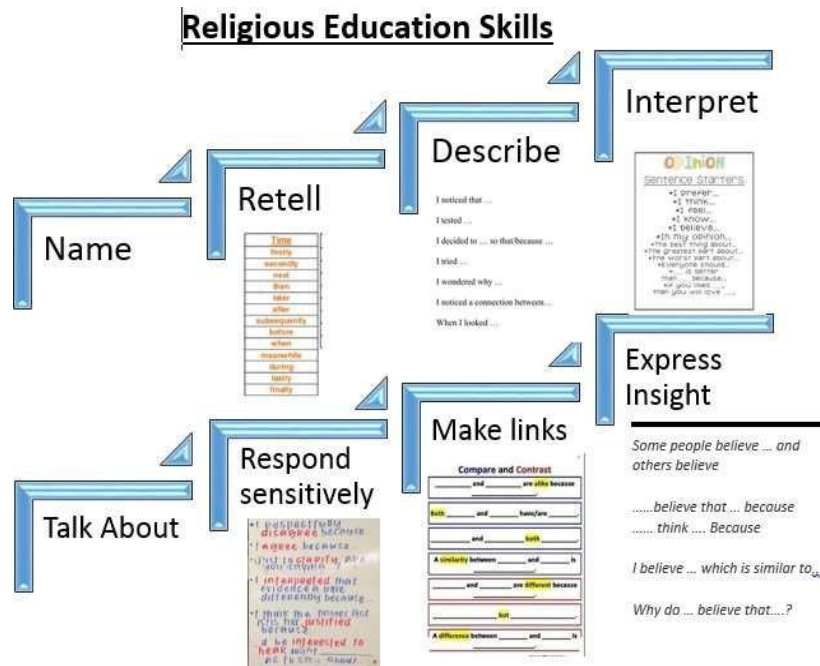
As RE involves a process of personal development and emerging/changing views, it is difficult to formally assess all but the ability of children to recall facts and to be able to express a view about religions.

“Often the effectiveness or importance of an experience cannot be measured; experiences in RE should not be limited to what can be objectively assessed or measured.”

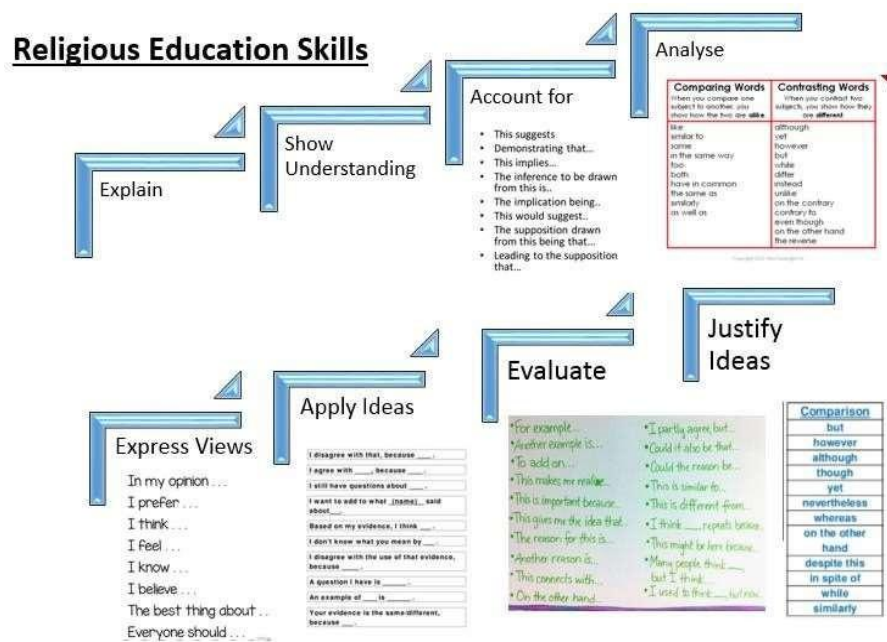
We have established an assessment system which is skills based and assesses the skills progression developed in association with support from the Carlisle Diocese.

The Subject Leader along with teachers, will collate assessment information and provide an annual report to support staff in their teaching of Religious Education.

### Key Stage 1:



## Key Stage 2



Planning should be part of a child-initiated process, beginning with children's' current levels of understanding and following areas that children would wish to explore further.

Examples of work produced, videos, photographic experiences should also be kept as an evidence base for making evaluations about the teaching of RE and the successful stages of learning that have been achieved. This should be straightforward and manageable

### **Home-Learning**

As the home may be the greatest source of a child's knowledge and understanding of RE, it is appropriate to set home-learning tasks related to developing and sharing their understanding.

### **Subject Leader Role:**

Their role is to:

- Provide inspiration, enthusiasm, support, advice and resources to members of staff
- Monitor the teaching of RE and outcomes for all children, revising policies and supporting staff with planning of RE where necessary.
  - Monitor the teaching of RE across the school highlighting the continuity and progression of the areas taught across the school
  - Attend relevant training and support staff through relevant INSET sessions
  - Monitor the use and need of resources throughout the school.

### **Monitoring:**

In order to ensure continuity and progression, it will be necessary to monitor the teaching of RE across the school. This should be done through liaison with staff to be able to observe lessons, through INSET sessions, monitoring planning and coverage, carrying out pupil interviews.

## Appendix

### How are Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction implemented in R.E.?

Thematic concepts to enhance prototype acquisition and create schema



Rich, first hand experiences for consolidation



## THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

HOW TO  
www.howtoteach.com

### 01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

### 02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

### 03 ASK QUESTIONS



The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

### 04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modeling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

### 05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rehearse, elaborate and summarize new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

### 06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

### 07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

### 08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

### 09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces "overlearning" — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.

### 10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.

Thinking Maps to make connections and links and extend thinking.

