



Inspire Education Trust

Together we achieve, individually we grow

RE Policy

Blue Coat CE Secondary School

Policy Date: March 2023

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Document History

Version	Status		Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1			March 2022	S.Clemo	Updated Department Ethos Updated CHRIST Values Updated Content, Assessment and Monitoring Updated Appendix 1
V2			March 2023	S.Clemo/ G Hathaway	Page 5; last line; additional of Head of Department

Ethos and Values

School Vision: Living Life in All Its Fullness

School Vision Statement: To equip our students to live life in all its fullness by providing excellent education which is distinctively Christian and inclusive of all.

The Department Ethos:

It is our intent for the Religious Education element of our school curriculum to engage, inspire, challenge and encourage pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to answer challenging questions. We aim to engage pupils in systematic enquiry with the significant human questions that religion and worldviews address. Pupils will subsequently develop the understanding and skills needed to appraise others' responses to these questions as well as developing thoughtful responses of their own.

Religious Education contributes significantly to the Christian character of the school and enables pupils to ask deep and often searching questions about their own faiths and beliefs, and opinions of others regarding pertinent contemporary moral issues. Pupils will be able to deepen their understanding of God and develop skills that allow them to articulate with confidence their views and experiences. The curriculum will help to develop responsibility and respect for all aspects of diversity, whether social, cultural and religious, and prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Excellence within Religious Education would mean each pupil leaving Blue Coat with a sound grasp of world religions and other worldviews and significant skills in empathy and respect for difference and diversity. Pupils should be enabled to use the knowledge, skills and understanding beyond school and apply them confidently fostering an attitude to be kind and tolerant of others regardless of the context they are approached with.

Care: The RE department displays a strong, caring ethos through the topics and schemes of work delivered, and also through their dialogue with students. For example, every student is encouraged to succeed through the use of positive and motivational language. Difficult topics in RE are delivered with sensitivity and tolerance to ensure all students feel valued and engaged. Great care is taken by staff when exploring issues such as prejudice, social justice, and discrimination.

Hard work: The RE department has a strong work ethic and has high expectations for all students regardless of ability or need. This is reflected in consistently strong outcomes in data and in student voice. Students are given every opportunity to make progress and feedback is effective in demonstrating clear targets.

Respect: The Golden Rule is often referred to in lessons as a universal message of respect, and then lived out in the varied learning environments including debating and educational trips. Students are equipped with understanding that diversity should be celebrated and respected and are encouraged to consider the important role they play in being catalysts for changing the world to be better by living their life with equality and respect at the centre of their hearts.

Servanthood: The RE department encourages students to develop skills of generosity and kindness to our global community. This can be illustrated in topics such as Langar and Seva in Sikhi and Zakah in Islam. Teachers model the belief in serving others by ensuring students have every possible chance of success at all levels by giving up our time to spend lunchtime at extra-curricular, after-school revision sessions, and holiday sessions revising for exams.

Togetherness: The RE department encourages togetherness as a whole school community and recognises that togetherness is not just a value that is important in all religions but should be encouraged in every human being. Togetherness is embedded into all lessons, but especially those

that look at ethical issues such as same-sex marriage, war, and genetic engineering. They offer a platform for students to positively understand, discuss, and embrace the differences in our school and society. Our vision for the school community is rooted in a deep respect for our human, social, and cultural values, expressed in a caring Christian ethos. We aim to provide high academic standards and a wide range of experiences and opportunities. In doing so, we encourage all children to flourish by giving them the skills they need to become good citizens and to discover life in all its fullness (John 10:10). The department also has strong links with other faith schools in the city such as Eden girls' school and Seva school. Students take part in interfaith activities with Eden and Seva, such as writing Interfaith Week postcards and celebrating religious festivals such as Ramadan, Vaisakhi, and Easter. This strengthens our school's value of togetherness and provides a platform for our students to engage in important interfaith work.

Policy

It is a requirement of the Trust Deeds of this school and The Education Reform Act of 1988 that Religious Education is taught as part of the basic curriculum. Blue Coat provides Religious Education for all pupils registered at the school. Religious Education is part of the basic curriculum but not part of the National Curriculum because it is taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus (Coventry & Warwickshire) We must stress that Religious Education has the same status and importance as any other subject and the same high standards are applied to Religious Education as to all other subjects.

We teach Religious Education according to the aims of the locally agreed Syllabus and it is clearly stated that Religious Education should not attempt to alter a child's own beliefs but to provide a knowledge of their own and other's beliefs.

Aims

- To provide children with an insight into the nature of religion and what it means to belong to a religion.
- To develop an understanding of Christianity as a living world faith.
- To help children towards an understanding of major world faiths and cultures.
- To encourage attitudes of openness and sensitivity towards people whose religious beliefs and customs may be different from their own.
- Together with other areas of the curriculum, to contribute towards the child's moral and social development, encouraging responsible caring attitudes.
- To develop an awareness and understanding of self and others.
- To develop their own spirituality, personal reflection and a sense of awe and wonder at the

world around them.

- To encourage curiosity, asking and suggesting answers for challenging questions.
- To help children as they grow and mature, to have sufficient confidence in their own beliefs to form personal opinions and judgements about right and wrong.
- To help children understand religion in the context of art, music, history, geography and other curriculum areas.

Objectives

- Children will learn attitudes of tolerance to others of different faiths and customs.
- Children will develop their understanding about how religious beliefs can inspire and influence the lives of themselves and others.
- Children will be able to relate religious beliefs, values and practices to their own and others' experiences of life.
- Children will develop a sensitive and informed understanding of Christianity and the other major world faiths as having distinct traditions.
- Children will develop, through a variety of experiences and activities, the necessary concepts, skills and attitudes for continuing exploration of religion.

Content, assessment and monitoring

We draw upon the Coventry Diocese RE planning documents, NATRE, and RE Today resources to support our planning and teaching. Students are taught with appropriate scaffolding and adjustment, taking into consideration any needs to ensure they succeed in their learning. Students' progress will be assessed using carefully planned STAR assessments which provide opportunity for students to practice each assessment objective skill. The KS3 assessment objectives have been developed using the NATRE assessment in RE document to ensure students' progress is assessed appropriately and consistently. We also enhance classroom teaching and students' cultural capital through a wide range of local and global links, visits and visitors. For example, students in year 9 have the opportunity to have a virtual or in person session with a speaker from Humanists UK.

Withdrawal

In accordance with the Education Acts 1996 and 2002 and DfE 'Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010', parents have the right to wholly or partly withdraw their child from Religious Education at school. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns with the Class teacher, Head of Department or Headteacher.

Appendix 1:

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. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.

A high-quality sequential religious education programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews fostering respect for others. In voluntary aided schools, RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed: this document will help schools interpret that legal requirement. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus for RE unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school. In academies and free schools RE must be taught in accordance with the funding agreement.

The effectiveness of denominational education in Church schools is evaluated during the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) section 48 inspection. That subsequent judgement will reflect the expectations set out in this document. The SIAMS evaluation schedule assesses the way RE contributes to the outworking of church school's Christian vision. It highlights the responsibility of Church school leaders to ensure that pupils flourish academically through the provision of high-quality RE. In addition, in voluntary aided schools, a judgement on standards in teaching and learning in RE is included in the SIAMS report.

The Entitlement: provision, profile and priority

- In a Church school the pupils and their families can expect a RE curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, this should include the ways in which it is unique and diverse.
- Parents can expect the use of high-quality resources, for example, the Understanding Christianity resource.
- Pupils can expect that teaching and learning in Church schools will use an approach that engages with biblical text and theological ideas.
- Pupils can expect that a Church school RE curriculum will engage and challenge them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. They can expect Church schools to provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews. There should be opportunities for them to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form an identity in a range of religions and worldviews.

- Pupils should explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. RE will go beyond a sociological study of religious phenomena and will introduce pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.
- In all Church schools progress in RE should be significant and attainment high enabling pupils to develop confident religious literacy.
- Parents and pupils can expect that in a Church school RE will have a high profile within the curriculum and will be a priority for senior leaders. The RE curriculum is intrinsic to the outworking of a Church school's Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual, moral social and cultural development Learning activities must provide fully for the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils should develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and reflection.
- Pupils should have a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual, and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They should have opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

Curriculum statement: challenging, accurate and diverse

- In all Church school's religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner.
- Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. It should be a coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning developing both knowledge and skills.
- There should be a clear curriculum vision and intent, a structure for implementation and provision and a process for evaluating impact.

Aims and objectives

- 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 living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum balance and time: sufficient, appropriate and balanced

- Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of the RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4.
- All pupils in Church schools should follow a recognised and appropriate qualification or course in RE or Religious Studies at KS 4. This includes pupils who have SEND. The study of Christianity will be a significant part of any Religious Studies qualification offered.
- The school must make it possible for those students who achieve suitable grades at GCSE or equivalent to follow appropriate A level courses. This should be in addition to the provision of core RE entitlement for all students at KS5 which should continue to develop student's understanding of Christianity and other religions and worldviews.
- Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

Developing staff expertise and knowledge: confidence specialism professionalism

Pupils in Church schools are entitled to be taught by teachers who have secure subject knowledge and are confident in helping them navigate and challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice, and extremism. It should be a priority in Church schools to build up staff expertise in RE specifically, but not exclusively, working towards:

- At least one member of staff having RE qualifications or receiving specialist training.
- Secondary schools employing specialist RE teachers and deploying them effectively to ensure pupils receive specialist teaching.
- All staff teaching RE having access to subject-specific professional development.
- All staff teaching RE know how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigor is balanced with respect for different personal beliefs and identities.
- All teaching staff and governors' understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- A governing body that is monitoring standards in RE effectively.

The role of the Diocesan Boards of Education

One function of Diocesan Boards of Education (DBEs) is to promote, or assist in the promotion of, religious education in schools in the diocese. This should be fulfilled by monitoring the quality of religious education in Church schools by taking note of SIAMS inspection reports and by securing high-quality training for all schools throughout the diocese. This will help ensure that the provision for religious education is effective and is able to fulfil the expectations of this statement.

Support for effective and excellent RE

Teachers in Church schools belong to a wider educational and church community. They are entitled to expect positive support in providing effective and excellent religious education from:

- A named member of staff responsible for religious education and where that person is the headteacher someone who shadows the role
- Their senior management team and their governing body, especially foundation governors or academy equivalents
- Their local Diocesan Board of Education, including a school's adviser with an appropriate religious education background
- The Church of England Education Office
- Local clergy and other ministers and Christian communities.

Reviewed by:

Shannon Clemo
/G Hathaway

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Next Review Date:

March 2025

Approved by Directors:

22 March 2023

Signed:



Lois Whitehouse
CEO



Mark Gore
Chair of Trust Standards