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SOUTH HAMS FEDERATION

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Malborough with South Huish C of E Primary School

Religious Education Policy

‘The roots to grow, the wings to fly.

All within the love of God.’

Approved by:	Tessa Coulthard	Date: November 2025
Last reviewed on:	November 2024	
Next review due by:	November 2026	

Rationale

This policy has been created to ensure consistency and progression in the school's approach to Religious Education, enabling children to develop their understanding of Christianity, non-religious worldviews and the other major world religions in order that they develop tolerance and understanding of the local, national and global communities in which they live. Religious Education is unique in the church school curriculum in that it is a core subject but is not part of the National Curriculum; the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils. Malborough with South Huish C of E Primary School provides RE in accordance with the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus. Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. This is the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

Vision and Aims

In our school, our Christian vision was formed considering our rural and social context- it shapes all we do. Our distinct Christian Vision: ***"The roots to grow, the wings to fly, all within the love of God"*** is underpinned by Psalm 1:3 ***'He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers'*** It was also developed around the following elements:

- Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills: enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talent in all areas of life.
- Education for hope and aspiration: enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.
- Educating for community and living well together: a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.
- Educating for dignity and respect: the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

At Malborough with South Huish Church of England Primary School, we aim to provide children with a safe, caring environment where every pupil is encouraged to reach their full potential in all aspects of school life. Our strong Christian vision based on strong leadership enables us to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters all elements of children's growth as learners. Our theology has been carefully considered for our needs, and we live out our vision through an embedded set of Christian values, which have been carefully considered and selected by the children, their families, the staff and other adults within our church community.

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 life well together.' RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office (Feb 2019)

Policy Statement

Religious Education (RE) has a very high profile within Malborough with South Huish's curriculum and makes a significant contribution to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all learners. Pupils will be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection, to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and beliefs on the world. Christianity is taught as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teachings of Jesus and the Church, alongside a range of other religious and non-religious worldviews. Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while creating a safe space for them to explore their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

Aims of RE

- 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 about and understand diverse religious and non-religious

worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, and to appreciate the diversity, continuity and change within them

- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values
- To provoke challenging questions about the purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.
- To enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- To teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and to help challenge prejudice.
- To prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to the communities and to wider society.
- To develop a sense of awe and wonder in the world in which our children live.

Teaching and Learning

In line with the Church of England RE Statement of Entitlement [2019] at Malborough with South Huish Primary School we aim to provide:

- A curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religious and non-religious worldviews as lived by believers
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry take place
- Engaging and varied learning activities that provide for the needs of all learners, supported by high quality resources
- The opportunity for pupils to develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development and to pupils' understanding of British values
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts

Implementation

At Malborough with South Huish Primary School, we believe that RE should take a multidisciplinary approach. By the end of their time at school, all of our children will have the opportunity to study RE through different 'lenses' such as psychology, philosophy, sociology and theology to find out about people's differing worldviews. This will enable our children to find out about what different people believe and how this makes a difference to how they live.

Key features of RE. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Experiencing variety of teaching and learning approaches
- Engaging with teacher presentations, role play, drama and story telling
- Making their own presentations
- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts
- Interpreting information from different sources
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- 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 and visitors to connect with diverse faith and belief communities
- Taking part in outdoor learning
- Taking time for listening, reflection and dialogue
- Curriculum balance and time

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way 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.

The Contribution RE makes to other areas of the curriculum

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. RE gives children the opportunities to discuss and reflect upon the big questions of meaning and purpose such as the origins of the universe, life after death and beliefs about God. At Malborough with South Huish Primary School we aim to ensure that our curriculum intent offers children the opportunities to find out about these areas with respect to different faiths and non-religious worldviews so that they are able to enter the world with a level of understanding of 'what makes me, me and you, you'.

Visits and Visitors

At Malbrough with South Huish CofE Primary School, we recognise the importance of visitors and visits in RE lessons. These visits and visitors enable children to see the diversity within religious and non-religious worldviews and find out about lived experience. These visitors have included Devon Culture Champions representing a variety of faiths, our Chaplain and members of our Church community and visits to different places of worship. Where appropriate, children may also take part in virtual visits to places of worship so that diversity between different denominations of the same religion can be researched.

Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the school's policy for assessment, record keeping and reporting, each teacher is expected to take responsibility for the regular assessment of RE; this is done through teacher marking against specific learning intentions as well as through pupil reflection. Each term, teachers begin with an elicitation task to elicit what children already know and have remembered before introducing new concepts. Teachers are expected to provide the RE Leader with end of unit assessment data for each child's RE attainment; this is then fed into the school's main data system and is used by the RE Leader to track specific children/cohorts as well as overall school attainment in RE. An annual over all judgement is made by the class teacher as to whether the child is below the expected standard, at the expected standards or whether they are working at greater depth. The annual report to parents indicates the effort, progress and attainment made by pupils over the course of the year.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment, Recording, Reporting

- Governors have responsibility for monitoring how the RE in the school reflects its Christian vision
- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation
- The RE subject leader will assist the headteacher by monitoring long term and medium-term plans
- The RE subject leader will assist the Headteacher by monitoring RE through focused work scrutiny
- The subject leader will keep a file of examples of work to demonstrate continuity and progression
- The subject leader will manage resources
- The subject leader will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in religious education and disseminate this as appropriate
- The subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice
- The subject leader will be responsible for drawing up an action plan for religious education
- Generally, this will be an annual plan and should be informed by this policy

- The subject leader will liaise with the Diocesan adviser with responsibility for Religious Education

Ethos Group

An ethos group comprising of members from the Church community and Governors support the RE Coordinator to review and monitor developments within the subject. The group will meet once every half term and visit the school to talk to the children about their learning in RE and sometimes deliver RE lessons to the children. A representative from the ethos group will also interview groups of children once every half term using the RE Quality Mark questionnaire. The children's responses will then be fed back to the rest of the ethos group.

Staff training and development

The school is committed to supporting staff by providing high-quality RE content endorsed by NATRE, ensuring access to well-designed resources and sustained professional development that strengthens subject knowledge and underpins high-quality teaching. This takes place through staff meetings, INSET and planned CPD opportunities. The school has bought into the Service Level Agreement with Exeter Diocese where we receive support and training from the Diocesan Education Team. The school subscribes to NATRE and attends the Devon and Torbay Learn Teach Lead RE Hub meetings (LITRE). The R.E. co-ordinator oversees the R.E. provision throughout the school and feeds back any new information to the rest of the staff.

Manging the right to withdraw from RE

At Malborough with South Huish Primary School, RE is taught as an engaging, inclusive and enquiry-led subject, open to all and at the centre of the curriculum, and we would hope that all parents would understand the value of this for all children. However, parents do have a right by law to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons. In this event, we will undertake responsibility for their supervision with regard to health and safety. The school follows the guidance offered by the Diocese of Exeter and we always encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have about the RE curriculum with the headteacher before making a final decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal need to be made to the headteacher in writing.