



TEMPLE SOWERBY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

2024/2026

Approved by¹	
Name:	Mr K Laithwaite - Headteacher
Signed:	
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Review date²:	19 th November 2026

Living for learning; learning for life.

Our Vision

At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, 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).

Statement of Intent for Religious Education

As a Voluntary Controlled School, Temple Sowerby CE Primary School is required in law (unless parents request otherwise) to provide RE in accordance with our Locally Agreed Syllabus (in our case the *Cumbria Agreed Syllabus 2023*). Religious Education in a Church School makes a vital contribution to the ethos, Christian values and spiritual dimension of school life. It should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

Aims

- 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.

Church of England RE Statement of Entitlement 2019

Our Curriculum

Intent

Religious Education in a Church School lies at the very heart of the curriculum. At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, we believe that it is important for all our children to learn from religion and about religion, so that they can understand the world around them. RE expresses and strengthens our school vision, ethos and values that 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 our RE curriculum.

The aim of Religious Education in our school is to help children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions, whilst also encouraging children to appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and behaviour of individuals around the world.

We encourage our pupils to ask questions about the world and to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences. Our curriculum is designed to encourage creativity, imagination, enquiry, debate, discussion and independence.

Implementation

As a Voluntary Controlled school, we follow the current Cumbria Agreed Syllabus; in line with this, RE is taught for 1 hour per week in Key Stages 1 and 2 to all registered pupils, including those with SEND (unless withdrawn, see section below). This is supplemented by themed events or visits, such as Experience Christmas and Experience Easter. Of the RE units taught, over 80% focus predominantly on Christianity and these are taken from the Questful RE Syllabus. Other discrete units are used to teach other religions (Christianity and Islam at Key Stage 1, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism at Key Stage 2). However, all units provide opportunities to explore links between different world faiths.

To ensure progression of knowledge and skills, we have selected core units from the Questful syllabus which allow for key themes, such as Christmas and Easter, to be revisited each year. These key themes are highlighted in our long-term planning document, shown in Appendix 2.

Children visit local churches to further develop their understanding of Christianity, as well as going further afield on whole school RE trips. Our collective worship also benefits from these links – we visit St James' Church for collective worship once per month and regularly welcome visitors into our school to lead Collective Worship. We encourage children to play an active role in acts of worship and use this as a means to explore a different school value each half-term. Note: although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, they are managed separately.

Impact

The children at Temple Sowerby C of E Primary School enjoy learning about other religions and why people choose or choose not to follow a religion. Through their learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wide world, developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life. Our curriculum inspires children to also explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values, whilst having respect for the faith, belief and values of others.

Our teachers use a range of formative assessment throughout their lessons, as well as a summative assessment at the end of each unit of work, typically using learning maps to allow children the opportunity to respond to key questions and themes.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development/ British Values

- Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. We invite children to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider those of others, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.
- We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society as well as their own experiences
- RE makes an important contribution to the school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides key context to develop pupil's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

Leadership & Management

The governors and headteacher will ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the school's RE curriculum.
- The teaching of RE is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD).
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact in promoting community cohesion.
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion.
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.

RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations regarding RE and pupils can make good progress.

The RE subject leader:

- Will support and regularly monitor the subject across the school, along with the designated RE governor.
- Provide resources when and where appropriate.
- Ensure that relevant and regular CPD is in place to keep his/her subject knowledge and expertise up to date and that staff receive appropriate training for the teaching and assessment of RE.
- Report regularly to the RE governor so that everyone has an overview about progress and attainment in RE.
- Ensure RE provision reflects diocesan advice and recommendations

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 or Headteacher.

Karl Laithwaite, Headteacher and RE Co-ordinator, November 2024

Appendix 1:

Religious Education in Church of England Schools

A Statement of Entitlement

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.¹

A high-quality sequential religious education² (RE) 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 worldviews³ 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.

1 The Church of England Education Office, Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. (The Church of England Education Office, 2016), available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/vision-education>

2 Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. The term religious education (RE) is therefore used throughout this document as it is connected to the Section 48 SIAMS inspection and, if and until the law changes we will need to continue to use the term. This does not stop individual schools, MATs or dioceses using other names including Religion and Worldviews for the subject.

3 The term worldviews is used throughout the document to refer to a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. It could refer to an 'institutional' worldview to describe organised worldviews including religions as well as Humanism, Secularism and Atheism or a 'personal' worldview for an individual's way of understanding and living in the world which may be drawn from one or many institutionalised worldviews. Based on Commission on Religious Education, Religion and worldviews: The way forward A national plan for RE (Religious Education Council for England and Wales 2018) p4.

The Entitlement: provision, profile and priority

In a Church school the pupils and their families can expect an 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 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 schools, 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 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 a 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 knowing how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigour 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 which 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 through 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.

Derek Holloway
School Character and SIAMS Development Manager
February 2019

Appendix 2:

		Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Values		Kindness	Responsibility	Resilience	Hope	Community	Courage
EYFS		EYFS1 - I am special Why are we all different and special?	EYFS4 – Christmas How do Christians Celebrate Jesus’ birthday?	EYFS11 - Special Times - How do you celebrate special times?	EYFS7 - Easter Why do Christians believe that Easter is all about love?	EYFS10 – Prayer What is prayer?	EYFS9 - Special Places What makes a place Holy?
KS1	A	1.2 Creation What are your favourite things in Creation?	1.3 Christmas Why do we give and receive gifts?	1.4 Jesus What made Jesus special?	1.5 Easter What is the most important part of the Easter story?	Islam Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (RE Today 1.2)	2.5 The Church Why is the church a special place for Christians?
	B	1.1 Harvest How can we help those who don’t have a good harvest?	2.2 Christmas Why was the birth of Jesus such good news?	2.3 Jesus Why did <u>Jesus</u> welcome everyone?	2. 4 Easter How do symbols help us to understand the Easter story?	1.7 Baptism Why is Baptism special?	2.1 The Bible Why is the Bible such a special book?
LKS2	A	3.6 Harvest How do people of faith say thank you to God for the harvest?	3.2 Christmas How does the presence of Jesus impact on people’s lives?	4.6 Prayer What is prayer?	3.4 Easter Is the cross a symbol of sadness or joy?	Islam What do different people believe about God? (RE Today L2.1)	S5 Christian Art How do Christians express their faith through art? <i>Link to Spirited Arts competition – closing date 31st July</i>
	B	4.3 Jesus How did/does <u>Jesus</u> change lives?	4.2 Christmas Why is Jesus described as the light of the world?	3.5 Rules for Living Which rules should we follow?	4.4 Easter A story of Betrayal or Trust?	Buddhism Buddhist Festivals	4.5 The Church Are all Churches the same?
UKS2	A	6.1 Life as a Journey Is every person’s journey the same?	5.2 Christmas How is Christmas celebrated around the world?	6.6 God What is the nature and character of God?	5.4 Easter Why do Christians believe that Easter is a celebration of victory?	Islam What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (RE Today U2.6)	S5 Christian Art How do Christians express their faith through art? <i>Link to Spirited Arts competition</i>
	B	5.1 The Bible How and why do Christians read the Bible?	6.2 Advent How do Christians prepare for Christmas?	6.7 People of faith How does having a faith affect people’s lives?	5.6 Loss Death and Christian Hope Is death an ending or a beginning?	Buddhism Buddhist Worship and Beliefs	S7 Change the world How can I make a difference?

Appendix 3 – Questful RE Progression of Skills

Skill	Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Investigate/Enquire	Pupils are beginning to ask good questions about their own and others' experiences.	Pupils can ask important and relevant questions about religion and belief.	Pupils are asking and suggesting answers to quality questions about values, meaning, commitments, truth and belonging.
Express	Pupils can retell religious stories.	Pupils are beginning to identify the impact of religion on believers' lives.	Pupils ask ultimate questions and can express their own and others' views.
Interpret	Pupils can use religious words to identify features of religious life and practice suggesting meanings for actions and symbols.	Pupils can describe forms of religious expression.	Pupils can use religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of religious texts, actions and beliefs.
Reflect	Pupils are recognising their own values and the values of others.	Pupils can identify what influences them and the connections between values, commitments, attitudes and behaviour.	Pupils are beginning to apply their own ideas to the experiences of others and describe what inspires and influences them.
Skill	Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Empathise	Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings, what is of value to themselves and others and what they find interesting and puzzling.	Pupils can use religious words to identify features of religious life and practice suggesting meanings for actions and symbols.	Pupils can describe the impact of religion of people's lives.
Apply	Pupils can identify different ways in which religion is expressed noticing similarities in religion.	Pupils can recognise similarities and differences between key features of religions and use religious vocabulary to describe them.	Pupils can recognise similarities and differences within and between religions and make links between them.
Analyse	Pupils can use religious words to identify features of religious life and practice suggesting meanings for actions and symbols.	Pupils can make links between sacred texts/stories and beliefs.	Pupils can suggest possible reasons for distinctive beliefs within and between religions.
Synthesise	Pupils can identify different ways in which religion is expressed noticing similarities in religion.	Pupils can make links between sacred texts/stories and beliefs.	Pupils can use religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of religious texts, actions and beliefs.
Skill	Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Evaluate	Pupils can use religious words to identify features of religious life and practice suggesting meanings for actions and symbols.	Pupils are asking and suggesting answers to quality questions about values, meaning, commitments, truth and belonging.	Pupils can explain how religious texts are used to answer the big questions in life. Pupils can describe why people belong to religions and the challenges they face.