

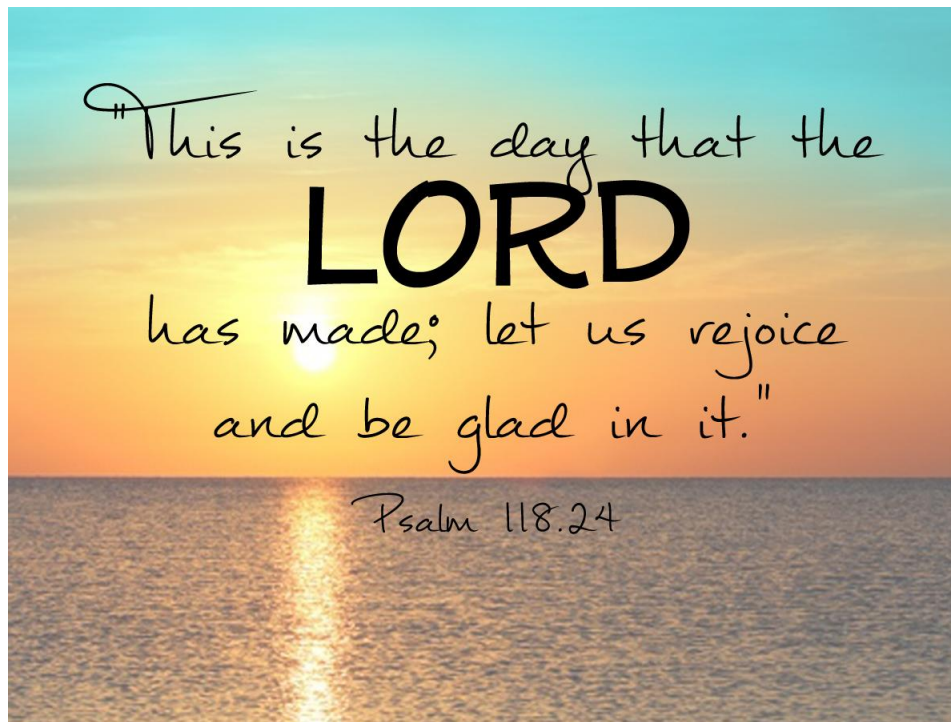


Flourishing children
Flourishing schools
Flourishing communities



Sherborne Abbey
CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy



Reviewed January 2026

Next Review due April 2028



Sherborne Abbey CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy

This policy has been written with the underlying principles of a Church of England school.

This policy is underpinned by our school motto: ***"This is the day"***

And our theological roots:

'This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it' (Psalm 118:24)

RE is an opportunity to ask big questions about belief, rituals, actions and faith. RE offers a key to children to help them understand and accept similarities and differences in belief globally. RE provides space to express and discuss their own and others' opinions and allows for agreeable disagreement.

RE is a statutory part of the curriculum and a core subject. We follow the locally agreed syllabus, using Understanding Christianity and The Emmanuel Project. The principal aim of RE in Dorset is to engage pupils in enquiring into big questions arising from the study of religion, belief, philosophy and ethics. In so doing Religious Education will support pupils' own personal moral, philosophical, ethical and spiritual development and promote respect for others.

By addressing big questions, Understanding Christianity encourages pupils to explore core Bible texts, examine the impact for Christians and consider possible implications. Each unit incorporates the three elements:

- Making sense of the text – Developing skills of reading and interpretation; understanding how Christians interpret, handle and use biblical texts; making sense of the meanings of texts for Christians
- Understanding the impact – Examining ways in which Christians respond to biblical texts and teachings, and how they put their beliefs into action in diverse ways within the Christian community and in the world
- Making connections – Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the texts and concepts studied, and discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

RE provides pupils with an opportunity to study global religions and worldviews. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that acceptance and respect are central in our lessons. RE facilitates children's understanding not only of how belonging to a faith can shape the daily lives of believers; it also encourages our pupils to understand their own world view and how this has been shaped by their experience. In RE we positively encourage 'Big Questions' to develop a deep understanding.

Legal Requirements

Sherborne Abbey CE Primary School is a Church of England school, therefore Religious Education must be taught in accordance with the Trust Deed and should reflect the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The governing body is responsible for the subject in the school. This is delegated to the Headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader/coordinator on a daily basis.

Following the Diocese of Salisbury advice about Religious Education, and the Statement of Entitlement 2016, teaching about the Christian faith will take up 60% of RE curriculum time and will use materials that will encourage theological literacy such as "Understanding Christianity". For the teaching and learning about other World Faiths the school will follow the locally agreed syllabus. Religious Education will be allocated not less than 5% of the timetable.

Using the Dorset Agreed Syllabus, we learn about other religions and world views, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian values and vision, and support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

RE offers a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences, understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Listening to the teacher and each other.
- Asking and discussing 'big' questions
- Reading of texts.

- Seeking information for themselves in books and on computers.
- Taking part in discussion with the teacher and other pupils.
- Pair and group work.
- Using a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Visitors.
- Artwork.
- Outdoor learning.
- Time for reflection.

Planning

Our planning includes long, medium- and short-term planning:

- Our long-term planning is designed to ensure continuity and progression of children's skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the school. It maps out curriculum coverage across each year group
- Our medium-term planning is based upon The Dorset Agreed Syllabus, Understanding Christianity, Emmanuel Project and supporting documents. These plans identify learning intentions and ensure an appropriate balance of experiences within the curriculum area
- Our short-term plans are completed by each class teacher for each session taught. They make links, where appropriate with other curriculum areas. Our reception classes are part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the Religious aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELG'S) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Assessment

At Sherborne Abbey CE Primary School, we believe that formative assessment focuses on how children learn and promotes their learning. We encourage the active involvement of children in their own learning and teachers assess children's learning in different ways. Teachers make assessments as part of each session to help them adjust their lesson plans.

They match these short-term assessments closely to the learning intentions. Verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress and broaden their perspective.

Teachers use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each child in relation to age related expectations and records the children's attainment.

This information is used to assess the progress of each child and class, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the curriculum leader and the next teacher at the end of the year.

Understanding Christianity materials provide progression in each year groups for each concept, by allowing pupils to move from surface learning to deep learning across key stages.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the standards of children's learning and of the quality of teaching in Religious Education is the responsibility of the Religious Education curriculum leader and the senior leadership team. The work of the curriculum leader also involves supporting colleagues in teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the curriculum area in the school. The curriculum leader liaises with other agencies and provides a strategic lead and direction for the curriculum area in the school.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of the children's work and assessments which evidences the achievement in Religious Education for each class in the school.

Resources

Resources are stored in the RE resource boxes or in classrooms. All World religions studied have a storage box containing artefacts and topic materials. Understanding Christianity and Emmanuel Project schemes are on the Google Drive, hence all teachers can access it at any time. Resources are updated and replenished as required and budgetary restraints allow. External visitors and visits are planned for as appropriate to ensure breadth and balance.

Although work on Christianity will predominate, there will be in-depth work on the major world religions and on other world views as appropriate. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes and develop respect for diversity.

Equal Opportunities

Religious education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. It seeks 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. All questions, views, and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.

Relevance

Teachers will establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching will enable 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. This will be done through engaging pupils in an enquiry-based style of learning and by posing challenging questions to and by pupils.

Cross-curricular links

Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, drama and history, geography, computing and music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Religious Education and Inclusion

We enable all children to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Religious Education, which provides a broad and balanced education for all the children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those who are vulnerable, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. To

optimise inclusion, the children's differing needs for learning (including children with special educational needs) will be addressed through differentiated activities.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a few occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education. (Statement of Entitlement June 2016 the Church of England Education Office)
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date
- Ensure all teachers are aware of what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Support colleagues and help develop their subject expertise.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy, schemes of work, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of RE, pupils' progress and standards.
- Liaise periodically with the HT and Governors.
- Seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff.
- Order resources.
- Monitor end of term assessments.

- Observe the teaching of RE in school, providing support and guidance for teachers.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Rights of Withdrawal

At our school we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, this school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the head, followed by written confirmation of withdrawal.

The school has a system of suitable supervision for students withdrawn from Religious Education. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time.

From September 2026 there will be a new Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, and a copy of this will be found on our website.