



# High Bickington C of E Academy

## Religious Education Policy





At High Bickington Academy, we aim to build the foundations of “life in all its fullness”, underpinned by our Christian values, where we understand what it means to be loved and to love others within our school and our local, national and global community.

High Bickington Academy is part of the TEAM academy trust, therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the academy. The school has adopted the locally agreed syllabus for Devon, which is supplemented by material from Understanding Christianity, and elsewhere.

### Rationale/Aims for teaching RE

The 2019 Statement of entitlement, authored by Derek Holloway opens thus:

*‘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.’*

RE is a very powerful tool. It can open up children’s awareness of the global community as well as helping them to understand their neighbours and the diversity of belief, and opinions that exist in their locality. Good inclusive RE should enable them to explore that diversity as well as challenge preconceptions, explore spirituality and consider the impact that religion and belief has on the world. It contributes very well to the school’s vision of building communities and self-esteem. It prepares children well for life in modern Britain and should, if taught well, allow them to see through hateful narratives about division.

Therefore, the subject aims to:

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional, and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity, and compassion.
- **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.
- **enable pupils to know and understand about** other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture, and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- **contribute to the development of pupils’ own spiritual/philosophical** convictions, exploring, and enriching their own beliefs and values.

### Approaches to teaching:

RE is given at least 5% of curriculum time. Special RE days and visits enhance this provision when possible.

It is taught through a variety of pedagogies: drama, writing, ICT, discussion, interrogating text, visit and visitors, use of artefacts, art, music, thinking skills and reflection. It is an academic subject and is assessed accordingly.

Knowledge of religious traditions and beliefs are taught alongside the implications of lived faith and what can be learnt from a personal standpoint, regardless of religion.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus and diocesan guidance we have agreed that across the Key Stage, children will learn about Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Humanism.

It is taught as a discrete subject although sometimes, links across the curriculum can be found without diluting its integrity.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is on Curriculum Maestro and monitored by the coordinator. Teachers indicate whether children are working towards, at expected or exceeding age related expectations.

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set.

The data gathered will be used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging.

### **Monitoring**

The co-ordinator for RE will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data.

Children's books are monitored each term, along with pupil conferencing. This is overseen by the coordinator who feeds back to the staff and the governors.

The co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the Church school self-evaluation process.

The Trustee responsible for RE meets with coordinator once a year.

### **INSET and support**

Ongoing coaching support and planning is provided by the coordinator as well as model lessons where needed.

The RE coordinator attends regular training and keeps up to date with changes to the subject.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the academy members and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject 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 have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and combat extremism.
- 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 on RE and pupils can make good progress

### **The right of Withdrawal from RE**

At High Blckington Academy we are an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as History or English.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

**Date of policy review: March 2021**