



RE Handbook and Policy

Name of school	Rickleton Primary School
Date of policy	September 2025
Review date	September 2026

Review Date	Changes made
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent, implementation and impact statements have been changed to reflect the new curriculum narrative document.
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of RE – this should say ‘New Agreed Syllabus’ and not Discovery RE. • The name of the subject lead needs to change from C. Meredith to T. Conway. • Changes to how planning and resources are stored and how the subject is delivered.
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school assembly – music is no longer used at the beginning of an assembly. • References to Reverend Nick and Andrew Kanyangu (House of Destiny) have been altered.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Collective Worship part of the policy states that we use classical music at the beginning of the assembly. We no longer do this.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External contributors section – staff now have a detailed visits and visitors plan that links to areas of study within the RE curriculum. They are encouraged to use one of these visits or visitors at least once in the academic year.
September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Collective Worship part of the policy states that we use classical music at the beginning of the assembly. We no longer do this. • Rev. Nick is mentioned in the policy as a contact at St. George’s but is no longer there. • There are changes to the overall structure of ‘Collective Worship’ that would need to go in the policy. Please see attached document.

Introduction

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but 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’.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

“a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world”. (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

This fits with our school ethos and mission statement. We are committed to providing a high quality education which promotes and sustains high standards and the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, intellectual and physical development of every child in our care.

Rickleton Primary School is a Community school. We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2021-2026).

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
- RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential)
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)
- The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for Sunderland (2021-2026)

Vision Statement for RE important at Rickleton

Our vision is that every child at Rickleton Primary School feels happy and has a passion for learning. This is the result of a rich and varied curriculum driven by excellent teaching and access to a wealth of exciting, challenging and motivating opportunities including trips to places of worship and holding religious festivals and celebrations, enhancing the curriculum. All children will come to a safe and inclusive school, where everyone is celebrated for who they are.

In partnership with parents and the community we will strive to develop a secure, caring, welcoming environment in which each individual will feel happy, valued and respected and work towards personal success.

Religion and beliefs inform our values at Rickleton and are reflected in what we say and how we behave.

RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society.

The teaching of Religious education at Rickleton follows The Sunderland Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026. This curriculum aims to deepen pupil's knowledge about religions and develops their religious literacy. It provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

Children study one religion at a time and 'thematic units' encourage children to build upon learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied. This ensures that pupils apply their knowledge that they have accumulated in a skilful way to allow for higher level thinking and more sophisticated application of skill as opposed to a build-up of knowledge. The curriculum is taught through a spiral curriculum approach, where children revisit and build on prior learning in a progressive manner. This focuses upon 'lingering-longer and digging-deeper', allowing children to study a religion for

longer in order to develop a deeper understanding rather than compartmentalised knowledge.

RE at Rickleton will also contribute to pupils' personal development and well-being and will provide community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. RE can also make important contributions to other parts of the school curriculum such as citizenship, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE education), the humanities, education for sustainable development and others. The curriculum at Rickleton will offer opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally and cross-culturally.

Intent

What are we trying to achieve?

The Rickleton curriculum is designed to deepen pupils' knowledge about religions and develops their 'religious literacy'. We use The Sunderland New Agreed Syllabus, which builds upon learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied, relevant to local and world-wide contexts. The teaching and learning approach has three core elements: making sense of beliefs, making connections and understanding the impact. These elements are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, whilst ensuring that children are aware of equality and celebrate difference and uniqueness. Our curriculum is inclusive and we intend for children to be curious and passionate about diverse religious traditions alongside non-religious worldviews. This allows them to develop a thirst for knowledge and to find out what matters most to people. We aim to develop life-long learners that identify what is of value to themselves as they develop their own ideas and ways of living. Children will develop a more coherent understanding of different religions. The spiral curriculum allows pupils to encounter and engage with the core concepts, taking account of individual starting points before revisiting on a number of occasions, therefore embedding their learning. We intend for children to develop an understanding and appreciation for the expression of beliefs, cultural practices and influence of principle religions and worldviews in the local, national and wider global community. We aim that all our pupils are respectful, supportive and tolerant of others.

Implementation

How is RE being delivered?

RE is inclusive at Rickleton, giving all our children the tools necessary to become well-rounded individuals. Opportunities enable them to develop a sense of equality. Whilst maintaining an understanding of individual starting points, each year group studies one religion at a time, before bringing together and comparing different traditions during a thematic study. This

allows them to draw together their learning and retrieve and recall prior learning, whilst making connections with their wider experiences of the world. Termly plans start with a key question, which introduces the topic to the children, giving them the opportunity to ask questions to help guide their learning. Lessons then begin with the children making sense of the religions and non-religious worldviews. They then develop their understanding of the impact of these beliefs in people's lives and consider how beliefs are put into action in diverse ways. Children will grow a passion for RE, meaning they can discuss and debate their views in a thoughtful and considerate manner. Connections are found in their own learning and with their wider experiences of the world. Children will be able to develop an understanding of the world around them, looking at spiritual, moral, social and cultural observations that they make. As children move through school, they become more independent in leading their own discussion and debate, demonstrating how to be respectful communicators. RE is generally timetabled weekly, however, some year groups opt to teach topics as a block. We ensure that there are many opportunities for cross-curricular links, and the principles of the New Agreed Syllabus can be applied in other subject areas, giving the children the opportunity to develop transferable skills. Such links include; speaking and listening skills used for discussion and debate, geographical skills used to deepen understanding of where in the world religious groups belong and developing an awareness of others in PSHE. Our over-arching theme is to 'linger for longer and dig deeper', ensuring that all children who leave Rickleton Primary School are well rounded individuals, who are good citizens. Assemblies and RE lessons will link in some way to a celebration of diversity and the cultural differences that exist within the local community and the wider world. Children are given the opportunity to share their own experiences of family events that link to different religions.

Impact

What difference is it making?

We believe the impact of our RE curriculum will allow our pupils to have a better understanding of the principle religions represented in the UK, including non-religious worldviews to support community cohesion. There are clear links between our curriculum and religion in the local area of Sunderland. As Rickleton's demographic is not culturally diverse, children generally have a limited starting point with regards to their knowledge of other religious views. Therefore, it will be evident that children make clear progress from EYFS to Year 6. Pupils will start to develop their own, personal worldviews and understanding of the world and their position within it. Pupils will be able to talk confidently about their well-being and moral and cultural development for the society in which they live. Our curriculum aids the pupils to formulate their own opinions in a supportive environment, being able to confidently articulate their personal views. Pupils will not be afraid to ask questions and deepen their knowledge or clarify their thinking. Pupils will feel valued and included as part of the whole school community, regardless of their views and beliefs and pupil voice feedback will show this. Books will showcase a coherent understanding of many religions in the world. Through this, the pupils demonstrate a huge thirst for knowledge and a desire to learn more. Identifying core concepts of religions and beliefs support pupils in understanding how beliefs and practices connect, so they can build upon their prior learning effectively. Visits and visitors will enable pupils to experience religion and develop a relevant understanding to the religious buildings in the local and wider community. As a result of our well-thought-out curriculum, pupils will make links with their learning to experiences outside of school and

share them when back in school. Pupils will demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of RE and why we learn about the wider world, preparing them to become life-long learners. The evidence will be seen through use of correct vocabulary, explanations and respectful opinions, as well as crosscurricular evidence, where possible. Through observations, drop ins and conversations with pupils, there will be clear progress in the responses. Pupils will use the correct subject-specific vocabulary, providing a more detailed and balanced view. Collaborative Learning PowerPoints will evidence deep knowledge and skills from the same group of children over a series of topics. The work in books evidences deep knowledge and progress, showing how learning is built upon allowing pupils to 'dig deeper and linger longer'. Teachers will consider pupils individual starting points and this will be evident through the use of subject knowledge webs. These will demonstrate the impact of the curriculum, showing pupils prior knowledge at the start of a topic and then again at the end.

Aims of our RE

The purpose of RE is captured in the principle aim:

The principle aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and believe, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. make sense of a range religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary.
- explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities.
- recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation.

2. understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways.
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

3. make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts and practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses.
- challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response.
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding.

The wider context for RE

The UK has a rich heritage of culture and diversity. This is continuing today in an era of globalisation and an increasingly interdependent world. Religion and belief for many people forms a crucial part of their culture and identity. Religion and beliefs have become more visible in public life locally, nationally and internationally. The impact of religion on society and public life is constantly brought to public attention through extensive media coverage. The rapid pace of development in scientific and medical technologies and the environmental debate continue to present new issues which raise religious, moral and social questions. The internet enables learning and encourages participation in public discussion of issues in a new and revolutionary way.

Link to the School Rules

- ♣ Show respect and good manners to everyone and everything
- ♣ Be kind and honest at all times
- ♣ Follow instructions with care

Government Guidance

Religious Education is not a statutory part of the National Curriculum but state-funded, local authority schools must provide a basic curriculum. The curriculum for a maintained school must be a balanced and broadly based one which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society. It prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.' (Section 179(1) Schools Standards and Framework Act.

Breadth and depth can be achieved in RE, if the following are taken into account:

- Opportunities for pupils to develop positive attitudes and values and to reflect and relate their learning in RE to their own experience.
- Wide range study of religion and beliefs across the key stages as a whole. There should be an appropriate balance between and within Christianity, other core religions with appropriate links being made in a cross-curricular way.
- Religions studied are coherent and promote progression.
- Opportunities for children to learn that there are those who do not hold religious beliefs and have their own philosophical perspectives.
- The subject should facilitate integration and promote shared values.

How is RE organised at Rickleton Primary School?

The New Agreed Syllabus brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

The subject is led by T. Conway. Training was led when introducing the new scheme to all staff. All resources and planning are available electronically to all staff. Staff take the planning and adapt to suit the needs of the children that they teach. Planning is then annotated by the subject lead to note changes. RE is taught discretely in either weekly sessions or blocked sessions. RE is generally taught by class teachers, however, it is also taught in some year groups during PPA and is taught by the PPA cover teacher and a HLTA. Resource boxes have been put together to ensure children have first-hand quality experiences in Rickleton Primary School.

Collective Worship

There is a statutory duty on schools to carry out 'daily collective worship for all registered pupils' in the Education Reform Act 1998. School collective worship should recognise that the school community is a collection of people. The gathering together of a school group or groups for worship; does not in any way suggest an act of worship which involves a group meeting to subscribe to any particular faith or denomination of a faith.

Collective worship at Rickleton encompasses all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every pupil feels involved. It both reflects and nurtures the whole ethos of the school. In particular, assembly (the usual context for collective worship) develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

Whole school assembly introduces the week. There is a time for notices and celebration. Separate from this is a themed presentation. Presentation themes

include SEAL (social emotional aspects of learning), response to what's in the news, seasons, curriculum links such as enterprise, love of reading and social skill – teamwork, cooperation and collaboration, care for one another.

The theme assembly on Monday is usually accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation which is then used during follow up in class reflection. There is also an opportunity to review a piece of classical music from famous composers, using Charanga. This is usually played at the start of an assembly. Senior Leadership staff are on a rotate to deliver the assemblies during the year. This adds variation and provides an opportunity for leadership activity.

We have links with Reverend Nick from St George's and Andrew Kangyangu from House of Destiny who support Rickleton at key points throughout the year. Other visitors have included – salvation Army, Lifestyle and Fitness team, Charity reps such as LEPR, NSPCC, Children in Need, Secondary School head teachers and pupils etc.

Class based acts of worship are the mainstay of our school. These are taken at any suitable time during the school day when the teacher judges it will not interrupt formal learning time but will be given importance and time. In the EYFS almost all gatherings of pupils for class and group time is used to enable the children to share thoughts and reflect on their lives. This is so much a part of the curriculum in EYFS that the need for a separate 'special' time is not required. In other year groups collective reflection throughout the week. It should be a time for pupils to think about, reflect, be still and contemplate (worship in the widest sense of the word). It should follow up and reflect on the week's theme using the PowerPoints, if necessary. However, it can also be reactive to issues that are current in the year phase, year group or class. There is a strong emphasis on moral teaching with links to personal and group responsibility. Some teachers use music to create an atmosphere prayers are often used to aid reflection and we have a carefully constructed non-denominational school prayer that is often used.

Big Sing is a gathering of pupils to join together in song. There is very often a hymn included however it is not an overtly religious session. At Rickleton, we use 'song', as a means of creating atmosphere, which unifies and uplifts pupils spirits.

** Under certain circumstances, such as a global pandemic (COVID-19), collective worship and big sing is unable to take place, due to social distancing regulations and hygiene concerns.*

Differentiation/SEN

The New Agreed Syllabus provides a curriculum provision for all children. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this adaptive practice, teachers will use adapted questioning and creative learning activities in order for all children to reach their full potential. Greater depth children will be expected to provide deeper explanations and to be more solid in the skills outlined on the RE knowledge progression map.

Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Before starting a topic, the children's prior knowledge is assessed using a 'knowledge map'. Due to the spiral nature of the curriculum, this therefore provides an opportunity for teachers to assess children's prior knowledge or knowledge retained from previous topics and address any potential misconceptions or gaps in learning. This is then added to at the end of every lesson in green pen to assess children's progress throughout the topic.

Each unit's key question also has learning outcomes in relation to the three elements of teaching and learning (making sense of beliefs, understanding the impact, making connections). This allows teachers to assess children's knowledge, understanding and skills within each unit of work. Using a range of evidence, such as the children's books, records of discussions and annotations from lessons within the enquiry, the teacher formally assesses whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it.

These are tracked throughout the planning stage so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly. In line with non-statutory guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 (cited on page 1) descriptors of these aspects utilise age-related expectations of working towards, working at the expected attainment and working beyond.

To be read in conjunction with the assessment policy.

Recording and tracking progress

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, an assessment grid is completed on a termly basis to record the progress of the whole class. This involves identifying whether individual children understand and can complete a learning outcome independently, demonstrate some understanding but needs a small amount of support or does not demonstrate an understanding and therefore requires further intervention and teaching of that learning outcome. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers. The learning outcomes for each unit's key question give teachers meaningful evidence to cite in end of year reports at Rickleton Primary School. Religious events held in school also support the parents in understanding what the children have been learning such as the Carol Service, Christingle events as well as the Harvest Festival.

** Under certain circumstances, such as a global pandemic (COVID-19), we are unable to invite parents into school to hold large gatherings.*

Monitoring and evaluation

Regular book scrutinies are completed to ensure high expectations and a broad coverage of religions is being taught. Planning may also be looked at as part of this to ensure teachers are adapting it to suit the needs of the children they teach. Individual evidence is kept in RE books in which children are able to demonstrate their personal reflection. Collaborative learning

PowerPoints are also used to collect evidence that has not been recorded in books, including pupil voice, pictures and videos.

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

External contributors

RE gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. The British Values agenda is intrinsic to the New Agreed Syllabus.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme. Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

** External visits are currently not permitted due to COVID-19 restrictions*

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

Involving parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- * Response to RE comments on reports
- * Curriculum newsletters
- * Displays
- * RE is integrated through topic-based homework as appropriate.

- * Parents contribute donations for the Harvest Festival
- * Religious Events shared with parents as and when relevant.
- * Parents invited to a nativity in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 2.
- * Christingle
- * Christmas Carol Service.

Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are requested to write a letter to the headteacher and then may be invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. 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 will be made aware of the 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. 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. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Whilst the child is out of the RE lesson the school does not have any responsibility to provide additional materials to support any other curriculum area.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Collective Worship where appropriate
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SMSC Policy
- LGBT Policy/ Rainbow Flag Award
- British Values
- Prevent Strategy

Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided. In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

Policy Review

This policy and handbook is reviewed annually.

Rickleton Primary School - RE Progression Map



Multi- Christianit Thematic



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