# Chester-le-Street CE Primary School

## Religious Education (RE)

## INTENT

Our Vision for Religious Education

At Chester-le-Street CE Primary School, our vision is rooted in our commitment to the flourishing of every child. We believe that every child is uniquely valued and has the capacity to grow academically, spiritually, socially, morally and emotionally. As a Church of England school, we seek to provide an education that enables children to flourish and to live well together, rooted in Christian values and serving the common good.

Our Religious Education curriculum is an important expression of this vision. We recognise RE as a high-profile academic subject, distinct from collective worship, which enables pupils to make sense of the multi-religious and multi-secular world in which they live. Through high-quality, carefully sequenced learning, pupils develop the knowledge, vocabulary, skills and understanding needed to engage thoughtfully and critically with religion and belief. The Church of England's 2026 Statement of Entitlement identifies RE as essential to the flourishing of every child and expects pupils to develop a rich and well-informed understanding of Christianity alongside knowledge of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Our Christian foundation is expressed through the words of Micah 6:8:

> "Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and take God seriously."

This inspires our approach to RE. We want children to become thoughtful, respectful and curious learners who can ask challenging questions, listen carefully to different perspectives, reflect on their own developing worldviews and respond to others with dignity and compassion.

What we want our children to experience through RE

We want every child to develop a rich and well-informed understanding of Christianity as a diverse, global and living faith. Children encounter biblical texts and other sources of authority and explore how Christian beliefs are expressed through theology, worship, traditions, practices and the lives of individuals and communities.

Alongside Christianity, pupils encounter a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, developing an understanding of the complexity, diversity, continuity and change that exists within and between them. We recognise that no religious or non-religious worldview is simply represented by a single belief or way of living. Pupils therefore learn to avoid stereotypes and to appreciate the diversity of lived experience within traditions.

Through RE, pupils explore significant questions of meaning, purpose, identity, belonging, truth and values. They are encouraged to think deeply about human experience and to consider how different people respond to life's big questions.

We want pupils to develop their own personal worldviews – their developing religious, non-religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking. RE does not seek to impose belief. Instead, it provides a safe and supportive environment in which children can explore ideas, ask questions, articulate their own thinking and engage respectfully with views that may differ from their own.

Our RE curriculum

Our curriculum is planned in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Durham 2020, alongside the Church of England's Understanding Christianity resource and the expectations of the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement 2026.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced so that knowledge and understanding build progressively from Reception to Year 6. Pupils revisit important concepts, vocabulary and disciplinary approaches with increasing depth and sophistication.

In line with the 2026 Statement of Entitlement, Christianity is the main religious worldview studied through RE and forms at least 50% of curriculum time. Alongside Christianity, pupils study a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, enabling them to understand both the diversity of belief within our local community and the wider national and global contexts in which religion and belief are lived.

Our RE curriculum enables pupils to learn through a range of disciplinary lenses, including:

- Theology – exploring beliefs, concepts, sacred texts and questions about God and faith.
- Philosophy – asking and exploring questions about meaning, truth, values, existence and purpose.
- Human and social sciences – considering how religion and belief are lived, expressed and experienced by individuals and communities.

Pupils develop the disciplinary skills of enquiry, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and reflection. They learn to use evidence and religious vocabulary accurately, recognise different perspectives and construct increasingly informed responses.

Religious literacy and dialogue

A central aim of our RE curriculum is to develop religious literacy. Pupils learn the specialist vocabulary, knowledge and concepts required to speak confidently and accurately about religion and belief.

We want our children to be able to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief. They learn to listen to others, ask respectful questions, identify similarities and differences, challenge misconceptions and recognise diversity within religious and non-religious worldviews.

Our classrooms are safe and supportive spaces where pupils can explore religious, spiritual and philosophical ideas without fear of ridicule or judgement. We encourage curiosity, respectful disagreement and thoughtful dialogue.

Inclusion, diversity and equality

RE at Chester-le-Street CE Primary School is for every child, irrespective of background, belief, attainment or additional need. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils can achieve highly in RE and that teaching is adapted appropriately to meet individual needs.

We recognise and value the religious and non-religious diversity of our pupils, families and wider community. We teach about traditions accurately, sensitively and objectively, avoiding stereotypes and recognising the diversity that exists within each worldview.

Through RE, pupils develop respect for the religious freedom and integrity of others and gain a deeper understanding of the contribution religion and belief make to individuals, communities, culture and society.

Enrichment and lived experience

Wherever possible, learning is enriched through first-hand experiences. Pupils may encounter visitors, artefacts, sacred texts, places of worship, art, music, stories and accounts of lived religious experience.

These experiences enable pupils to connect classroom learning with the real lives of people within our local, national and global communities. We seek to make learning memorable, purposeful and relevant, encouraging children to become curious about God's world and the many ways in which people understand and experience it.

Our intended outcome

By the time pupils leave Chester-le-Street CE Primary School, we want them to have developed:

- a secure and well-informed understanding of Christianity as a diverse, global and living faith;
- knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews;
- an appreciation of diversity within and between religious and non-religious traditions;
- a strong and developing religious vocabulary;
- the ability to use theological, philosophical and human/social scientific approaches to explore religion and belief;
- the skills to enquire, interpret, analyse, evaluate and reflect;
- the confidence to ask meaningful questions about life, faith, meaning and purpose;
- an understanding of how religion and belief have influenced individuals, communities, cultures and society;
- the ability to recognise and challenge misconceptions and stereotypes;
- the confidence to articulate and develop their own personal worldview;
- the ability to listen to and engage respectfully with people whose beliefs and worldviews differ from their own.

Ultimately, we want RE to help our children become religiously literate, thoughtful, curious and compassionate young people, equipped to live well together in a diverse world. Through RE, we seek to nurture children who can “do what is fair and just,” show compassion and love towards their neighbours, and approach the world with humility, wisdom and wonder.

RE at Chester-le-Street CE Primary School enables every child to flourish by helping them understand what people believe, why those beliefs matter, how beliefs are lived, and how we can live well together.

## IMPLEMENTATION

## CURRICULUM

Curriculum Implementation

Our RE curriculum enables pupils to explore challenging questions about meaning, purpose, belief, values and what it means to be human. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other

religions and non-religious worldviews, while having opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and developing worldview. Through RE, pupils learn to analyse, interpret, evaluate and communicate their ideas about faith, belief, truth and ethics.

Typical Lesson Structure

- Retrieve prior knowledge and key vocabulary.
- Explore new learning through texts, artefacts, images and lived experiences.
- Enquire through questioning, discussion and comparison.
- Reflect and apply learning to the key question.

Key Pedagogical Approaches

- Retrieval and regular revisiting of learning.
- Explicit teaching, modelling and scaffolding.
- Questioning and discussion to develop thinking.
- Opportunities for independent reflection and respectful dialogue.

Progression and Challenge

- Knowledge, vocabulary and concepts are progressively developed and revisited.
- Questions and tasks increase in depth and challenge across the school.
- Pupils progress from describing and explaining to analysing, evaluating and reflecting.

Frequency and Teaching Time

- RE is taught weekly throughout the school.
- Curriculum time is protected to ensure consistent, high-quality provision.
- At least 50% of RE teaching focuses on Christianity, alongside other religious and non-religious worldviews.

## CURRICULUM COVERAGE

Chester-le-Street CE Primary School Long Term Plan for RE

Understanding Christianity WorldViews Thematic

| Year Group | Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
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| Nursery | Let's find out about Harvest.<br><br>Let's find out about Divali. | Let's find out about the Christmas story. | Let's hear some stories about Jesus (Jesus and Zacchaeus, Jesus calming the storm). | Let's find out about the Easter story. | Let's find out about Christian baptism. | Let's find out about Raksha Bandhan. |

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| Reception | Why is the word God so important to Christians?<br><br>(God) | Why do Christians perform Nativity Plays at Christmas?<br><br>(Incarnation) | Being Special: Where do we belong?<br><br>(Christianity, Islam, Judaism) | Why do Christians put a cross in their Easter Garden?<br><br>(Salvation) | Which places are special and why?<br><br>(Christianity, Islam, Judaism) | Which stories are special and why?<br><br>(Christianity, Islam, Judaism) |
| Year One | Who do Christians say made the world?<br><br>(Creation) | Why does Christmas matter to Christians?<br><br>(Incarnation) | Who is Jewish and how do they live?<br><br>(Judaism) | What do Christians believe God is like?<br><br>(God) | What does it mean to belong to a faith community?<br><br>(Christianity, Islam, Judaism) | How should we care for others and the world and why does it matter?<br>*Christianity, Judaism* |
| Year Two | What is the good news that Jesus brings? (Part 1)<br><br>(Gospel) | What is the good news that Jesus brings? (Part 2)<br><br>(Gospel) | Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Part 1)<br><br>(Islam) | Why does Easter matter to Christians?<br><br>(Salvation) | Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Part 2)<br><br>(Islam) | What makes some places special to believers?<br><br>(Christianity, Islam, Judaism) |
| Year Three | What do Christians learn from the creation story? (Creation/Fall) | How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim? (Islam) | What is it like for someone to follow God?<br><br>(People of God) | How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people? (Judaism) | What is the Trinity and why is it important for Christians? (Incarnation / God) | How and why do people try to make the world a better place?<br><br>(Thematic - Christianity, Judaism) |
| Year Four | What kind of world did Jesus want?<br><br>(Gospel) | What do Hindus believe God is like?<br><br>(Hindus) | What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?<br><br>(Hindus) | Why do Christians call the day that Jesus died 'Good Friday'?<br><br>(Salvation) | When Jesus left; what was the impact of Pentecost?<br><br>(Kingdom of God) | How and why do people mark the significant events of life?<br><br>(Thematic - Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism) |
| Year Five | What does it mean if Christians believe God is Holy and loving?<br><br>(God) | What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?<br><br>(Islam) | Creation and science, conflicting or complementary?<br><br>(Creation/Fall) | Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?<br><br>(Judaism) | How can following God bring freedom and justice?<br><br>(People of God) | What matters most to Humanists and Christians?<br><br>(Thematic - Christianity, Humanism) |
| Year Six | What would Jesus do?<br><br>(Gospel) | Was Jesus the Messiah?<br><br>(Incarnation) | Why do Hindus want to be good? | What difference does the resurrection make to Christians? | Why do some people believe in God and some not? How does faith help | So, what do we know about Christianity? |

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| | | | (Hindus) | (What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people?)<br><br>(Salvation) | people when life gets hard?<br><br>(Thematic) | (Statutory Bridging Unit) |

## SKILLS PROGRESSION

Investigation and Enquiry

• asking relevant questions

• knowing how to use different types of sources as a way of gathering information

• knowing what may constitute evidence for understanding religion(s)

• ascertaining facts Interpretation

• drawing meaning from artefacts, art, poetry and symbolism

• interpreting religious language

• suggesting meanings of religious texts

• explaining why people belong to faith communities

Application

• making the association between religions and individual, community, national and international life

• identifying key religious values and their interplay with secular ones

Expression (learning to communicate)

• pursuing a line of enquiry or argument

• identifying and giving expression to matters of deep concern and responding to religious and moral issues through a variety of media

• giving an informed opinion and expressing a personal viewpoint

Analysis

• exercising critical and appreciative judgement in order to distinguish between belief, prejudice, superstition, viewpoint, opinion and fact in connection with issues of conviction and faith

• distinguishing between the features of different religions

Evaluation

• debating issues of religious significance, with reference to evidence, factual information and argument

• weighing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience

Reflection and Response

• thinking reflectively about feelings, relationships, experience, ultimate questions, moral issues, beliefs and practices

• developing a personal interest and curiosity in puzzling, searching and challenging questions

Empathy

• considering the thoughts, feelings, experiences, beliefs, attitudes and values of others

• developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow

• seeing the world through the eyes of others and issues arising from their point of view

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

For our youngest pupils, RE is guided by the Early Learning Goals outlined within the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We recognize the importance of Religious Education (RE) in fostering a well-rounded, inclusive, and respectful learning environment. Our RE curriculum is designed to support the holistic development of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, aligning with the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) to ensure a comprehensive educational experience.

Aims:

- To nurture children's natural curiosity about the world and different cultures.
- To promote understanding and respect for diverse religious and non-religious beliefs.
- To support the development of personal, social, and emotional skills through exploration of religious themes and values.

Implementation: RE in the EYFS is integrated into the broader curriculum and delivered through play-based, child-centred approaches. Activities are designed to be engaging and developmentally appropriate, encouraging children to explore and reflect on their own experiences and those of others.

Key Areas of Learning: RE contributes to several areas of learning within the EYFS framework, particularly:

1. Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED):
    - Encouraging children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others.
    - Promoting the formation of positive and respectful relationships.
    - Supporting children in understanding and managing their feelings and behaviour.
2. Understanding the World:
    - Helping children to make sense of their physical world and their community.
    - Exploring similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities, and traditions.
3. Communication and Language:
    - Enhancing children's ability to listen attentively and respond to stories and discussions about religious and cultural events.
    - Expanding vocabulary through the introduction of terms related to different religions and cultures.

Early Learning Goals (ELGs): RE activities are designed to support children in achieving the following ELGs:

- Self-Regulation: Children will learn to show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Building Relationships: Children will work and play cooperatively, taking turns with others and forming positive attachments.

- People, Culture, and Communities: Children will know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)

The RE curriculum at CLS is inclusive: children with SEND can access the curriculum. Teachers will adapt teaching to meet the individual needs of children with SEND as outlined in their Support Plan or EHCP, in which learning needs and individualised targets are set in conjunction with the SENDCo and parents. Adaptations may include modified or scaffolded tasks, the effective use of resources or appropriate deployment of support staff / teacher time.