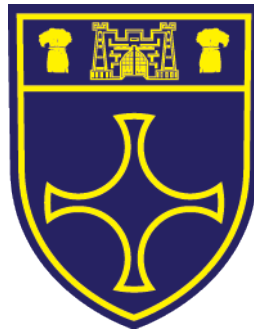




**Northern Lights**  
LEARNING TRUST



**Ian Ramsey CE Academy**  
**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Policy**

**Review Date: Spring Term 2024**

**Next Review Due: Summer Term 2025**

**Person in Charge: Headteacher**

The quality of relationships between all members of school staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers, is the area that is most associated with the ethos of the schools in our Trust. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. In the Church schools in our Trust, we follow the teachings of:

**‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.**

**‘This is my commandment: love each other’ - John 15:17.**

In our schools we believe every pupil is an individual who is valued for who they are.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks including in our Church schools in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that both Christian and spiritual love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environments are created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the schools are organised and the policies are written and implemented.

## Introduction

In Church of England schools, where pupils and staff come from all faiths and none, Religious Education is a highly valued academic subject that enables understanding of how religion and beliefs affect our lives. At the heart of Religious Education in church schools is the teaching of Christianity and pupils also learn about other faiths and world views. The syllabus that we follow is set within the context of the Church of England Vision for Education: **Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good**, (2016).

At Ian Ramsey CE Academy, our vision **‘Together to learn, to grow, to serve’**, is at the heart of everything that we do and theologically rooted in the words of 1 Peter 4:10: **‘Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace’**. The teaching of Religious Education is crucial in supporting the delivery of this vision and connecting with other aspects of academy life and curriculum, such as: Collective Worship, SMSC and PSHE.

This policy is written considering the Education Act (1944) and Education Reform Act (1988) which states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.’ The policy also considers [Religious Education in Church of England Schools: A Statement of Entitlement](#) (2019) and [SIAMs Evaluation Schedule](#) (2023).

## Aims of Religious Education

The aims of Religious Education at Ian Ramsey are informed by the Church of England’s Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education.

- 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.

The outcomes for pupils at the end of their education at Ian Ramsey are that they can:

- Think theologically and reflect critically on ultimate questions.
- Reflect critically on the truth claims within religions and beliefs.
- Develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply sacred texts.
- Recognise that faith is commitment to a particular way of understanding and responding to God and the world.
- Analyse and explain the varied nature and traditions of the Christian community.
- Make a well-informed response to Christianity and other faiths.
- Respect those of all religions and beliefs in their search for meaning.
- Reflect critically on areas of diverse and shared beliefs and practices between different faiths and worldviews.

## **The importance of Religious Education**

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions, and other worldviews that offer answers to the ultimate questions. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices, and forms of expression, as well as of the influence and impact of religion on individuals, families, communities, and cultures.

Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values, and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. Through Religious Education, pupils are encouraged to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community, recognising their part and the impact of faith locally, nationally, and globally. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret, and evaluate issues of faith, truth, belief, and ethics and to communicate their responses.

## **Religious Education at Ian Ramsey CE Academy**

At Ian Ramsey CE Academy, Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment, and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, particularly those whose faith and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

Religious Education is central to Ian Ramsey CE Academy's deeply Christian character. It is a key approach in the academy works towards '**life in all its fullness**' (John 10:10) delivered through a high-quality Religious Education curriculum that is rich and varied; enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. The purpose of Religious Education is to enable pupils to engage with an academic and rigorous programme of study. It enables them to develop knowledge and understanding of religion and belief and to analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence. We also wish for pupils can learn about God, reflecting and expressing the distinct Christian character of our academy. This may be expressed as:

### Develop knowledge and understanding of religion and belief:

We learn about:

- The God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets.
- The God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us.
- The God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition, and reason, and expressed through service.

### Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

We learn from:

- An empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it.
- Responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

- Exploring the reality of the spiritual realm.
- Understanding ourselves and others, celebrating our shared humanity and the breadth of human achievement.
- Examples of Christian living which give priority to the claims of justice, mercy, holiness, and love.

### **Religious Education in an Academy Context**

In recognition of our distinctive context, Religious Education has high profile in the school, we emphasise:

- A key department in the academy with its own distinct faculty area.
- Religious Education is a core subject.
- A Christian ethos which permeates the whole curriculum but finds particular emphasis in this subject.
- The Christian Foundation of the school.

### **Leadership and Management**

The Curriculum Leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure Religious Education provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know 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.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in Religious Education and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in Religious Education.
- Monitor, analyse and question Religious Education assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the Headteacher and Local Governing Body to feedback on the monitoring and impact of Religious Education across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.

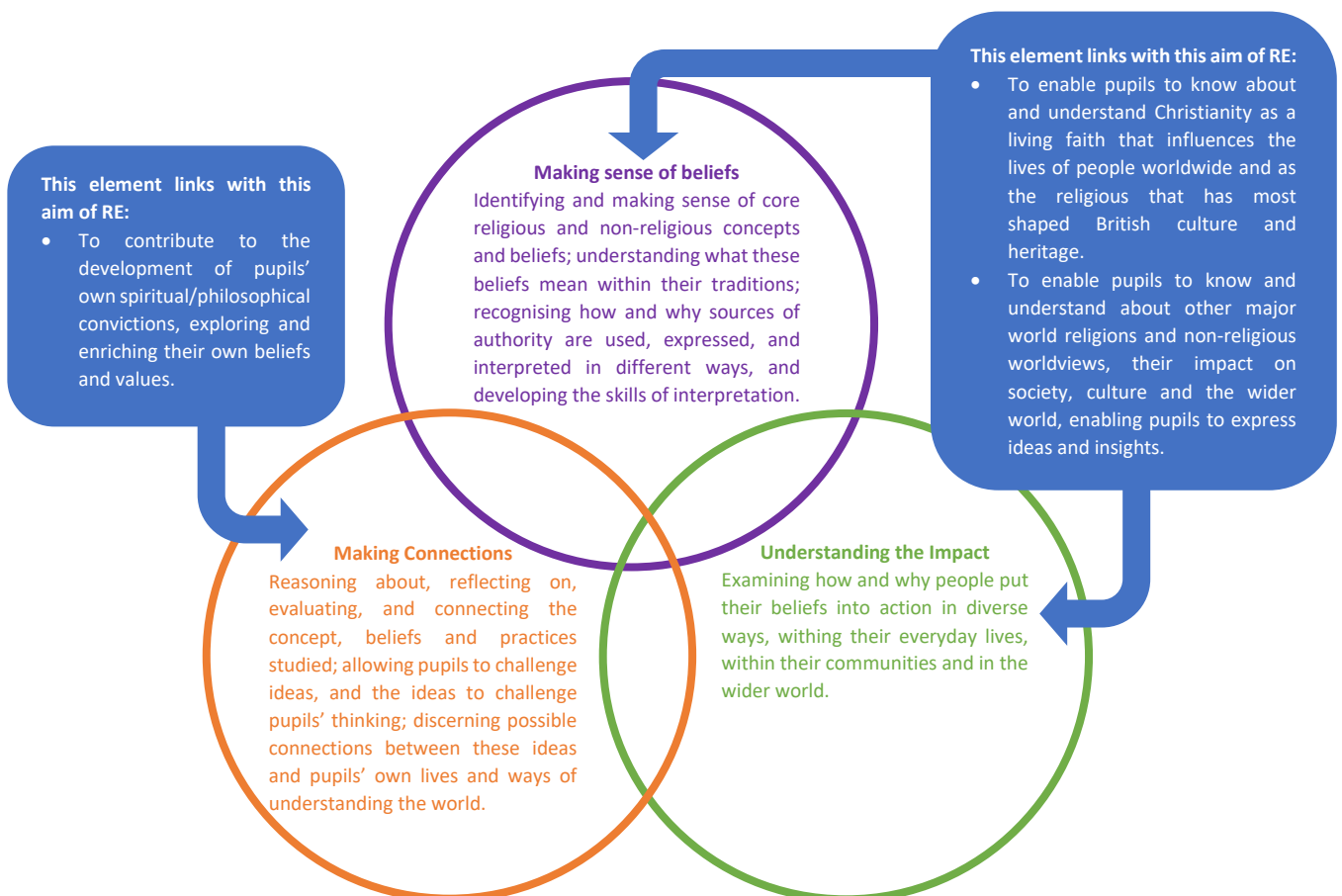
### **Curriculum**

In Religious Education at Ian Ramsey CE Academy, the intent of our curriculum is set out in the Statement of Entitlement (for Church schools and Academies); it aims to enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today. Religious Education enables pupils to learn about other major religions and non-religious worldviews, their impact on culture and politics, art, and history, and on the lives of their adherents, enabling them to express ideas and insights. We promote young people's interest in, and aim to contribute, to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith, beliefs, and values.

Our curriculum aims to equip pupils with the skills to analyse and evaluate religious and ethical issues in depth. We seek to inspire pupils to deepen their understanding of God and the impact of religion upon their own lives and those of others so that they are prepared for life in a multi-faith global society. As an academy within Durham Diocese, the provision and delivery of Religious Education is consistent with the recommendations of the Diocese as outlined in the Diocesan Syllabus.

The curriculum offered at each key stage is predominantly Christian, but aspects of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism, as well as non-religious worldviews, are studied. Through the spiral curriculum, pupils are challenged to be enquiring, respectful and tolerant to gain new knowledge and extend and consolidate previous learning. It is our aim that pupils, because of challenging schemes of learning, will attain a greater understanding of the beliefs and views of others, which will not only promote religious respect and harmony within society, but also help them to gain a greater understanding and insight into their own beliefs and views.

Religious Education at Ian Ramsey CE Academy is taught using a bespoke curriculum, which is developed in accordance with the Joint Education Team of Durham and Newcastle’s Diocesan syllabus and the Blackburn Diocese programme of study for KS3, ‘Illuminating Pathways’, a programme co-written by the Head of Religious Education. These documents and the subsequent curriculum reflect the distinctive and inclusive ethos of our Anglican foundation. At GCSE, all pupils will study AQA GCSE Religious Studies, building on the foundations of the learning from Years 7-9.



The Curriculum Progression Model for [Religious Education](#) is available on the Academy website. This provides detail of the 5-year curriculum in place at Ian Ramsey CE Academy for the teaching of Religious Education.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education within Religious Education**

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural development. Spiritual development within Religious Education enriches and encourages pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. The use of the in, out, up approach helps articulate what spirituality means for our academy and supports staff to reflect on how these opportunities are fundamental to our choices. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

### **Assessment and Recording within Religious Education**

Within the Religious Education department pupils are assessed in accordance with the whole school assessment policy. Assessment is rigorous and pupil work is regularly moderated and standardised. The department adheres to the whole school marking and feedback policy, meaning that pupil work is regularly reviewed, with feedback given and pupils given opportunity to improve their work.

Religious Education is monitored through regular work scrutiny, learning walks, and observations following the academy quality assurance schedule.

### **Links and Partnerships**

- Religious Education is supported by the advisory team at the Joint Diocese of Durham and Newcastle including attendance/contribution to network meetings and training events.
- Religious Education is supported by Northern Lights Learning Trust through collaborative opportunities with schools within the trust and opportunities for training and support from nationally recognised advisors.
- Religious Education seeks to make meaningful links with local primary schools through joint projects, worship, and enrichment opportunities.
- Religious Education seeks to make links with other secondary providers, in particular other Church of England schools and academies.
- Religious Education forges links with local churches and faith communities in Stockton and beyond.

### **Parents' right to withdraw from Religious Education**

At Ian Ramsey CE Academy, we expect that all families choosing the academy will be in sympathy with the Christian ethos of our inclusive academy community. The academy's website and information shared with parents clearly sets out our position in relation to Religious Education and Collective Worship. Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Diocesan Agreed Syllabus and is, therefore, educational.

However, we recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. This is set out in section 71(1) of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#). This is explained in [non-statutory guidance on RE in English schools](#) (pages 27 to

29). The right to withdraw does not extend to other areas of the curriculum, this includes for example when spontaneous questions of a religious nature may be raised and discussed in other subjects such as science or history.

Any parent considering withdrawing their child(ren) from Religious Education should contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns about the policy, provision, and practice of Religious Education at Ian Ramsey CE Academy. Following this meeting, if parents still wish to withdraw their child(ren), they should inform the Headteacher in writing.

If pupils are withdrawn from Religious Education, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will remain on the premises.