Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

Date First Published	**September 2024**
Version	**3**
Last approved	**October 2026**
Review Cycle	**Annual**
Review Date	**October 2027**

An academy within:

"Learning together, to be the best we can be"

1. Introduction

1.1. At **North Ridge Community School** (NRCS), Religious Education (RE) is delivered within the LIFE curriculum alongside SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education), including British Values, Citizenship and History.

1.2. All pupils at North Ridge from 3 to age 19 receive Religious Education and have opportunities to participate in Collective Worship, unless parents have exercised their right to withdraw their child. Pupils in the sixth form may also exercise their own right to withdraw from collective worship where applicable. The curriculum recognises that the religious traditions of Great Britain are predominantly Christian while also providing opportunities for pupils to encounter and learn about other religions and worldviews represented in Britain.

2. Intent

2.1. At NRCS, our RE curriculum aims to provide every pupil with meaningful opportunities to explore religion, belief and worldviews in ways that are accessible and appropriate to their individual needs.

2.2. Through RE, pupils are supported to develop an understanding of themselves, their experiences, what they think and believe and their place within the wider world and different communities.

2.3. Pupils learn about Christianity alongside a range of other religions and worldviews. Learning includes opportunities to explore religious beliefs, stories, celebrations, festivals, symbols, artefacts, places of worship, significant people and traditions.

2.4. Where appropriate, pupils also encounter non-religious worldviews and different ways in which people understand and respond to the world around them.

2.5. RE encourages curiosity and provides opportunities for pupils to ask questions about religion, belief, meaning and the world around them. Pupils are supported to express their own thoughts, feelings, preferences and responses using communication methods appropriate to their individual needs.

2.6. These may include spoken language, signing, symbols, photographs, objects of reference, gestures, AAC, eye gaze, sensory responses or other personalised communication systems.

2.7. We aim to develop pupils' understanding and respect for the beliefs, practices and worldviews of others. Pupils encounter similarities and differences between people and communities and are supported to recognise that individuals may hold different beliefs and ways of understanding the world.

2.8. This contributes to pupils' wider understanding of diversity and supports their ability to participate positively within their communities.

2.9. The Doncaster SACRE Agreed Syllabus for RE 2018 has been considered when setting objectives and targets within the RE curriculum. The curriculum makes appropriate space for pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions alongside those of others.

2.10. Learning is adapted so that pupils with severe learning difficulties can access key knowledge, concepts and experiences at an appropriate level.

2.11. The RE curriculum is designed around the individual pupils who make up the North Ridge community. Pupils have a wide range of strengths, needs, communication styles and prior experiences. RE is therefore carefully differentiated and personalised so that every pupil can participate, experience success and develop their understanding.

2.12. Repetition, familiar routines, concrete experiences, visual supports and appropriate sensory approaches are used to support pupils in retaining and applying their learning.

2.13. RE aims to ensure that every pupil, regardless of level of need or ability, as the opportunity to encounter, explore and respond to religion and worldviews. Pupils are supported to develop curiosity, understanding and respect while communicating their own responses and recognising the diverse beliefs and experiences of those around them.

3. Curriculum Implementation

'In special schools the legal requirement to provide Religious Education is varied by section 71(7) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998: special schools should provide RE 'so far as is practicable', with all children taking part unless withdrawn by their parents.' – Nexus Multi Academy Trust 'Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy'.

3.1. The LIFE curriculum uses six transferable skills, three linked to History and three linked to RE, SMSC and Citizenship.

History:

1. Understanding the past
2. Researching the past
3. Historical people, places and events

RE/SMSC/Citizenship:

4. Understanding religion and worldviews
5. Knowing right from wrong and respecting rules and the law
6. Respecting others, different beliefs and ways of life

These skills are developed progressively throughout the curriculum and revisited regularly so that pupils can build, retain and apply their knowledge and understanding. The transferable skills also provide meaningful links with Wellbeing and RSHE.

3.2. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity alongside a range of other religions and worldviews. Learning may include religious stories, beliefs, celebrations, festivals, symbols, artefacts, places of worship, significant people and religious practices.

3.3. Where appropriate, pupils also encounter non-religious worldviews and different ways of understanding and responding to the world.

3.4. RE is taught through practical, sensory, visual and experiential approaches. Teachers may use stories, drama, role play, art, food, artefacts, photograph, videos, objects of reference, visits and visitors to make learning meaningful and accessible.

3.5. Where appropriate, pupils are given opportunities to experience aspects of religious practice and celebration rather than simply learning about them.

3.6. Communication is integral to RE. Pupils are supported to communicate their understanding, preferences, thoughts, feelings and responses using their individual communication methods. Staff recognise and value meaningful responses, including speech, signing, symbols, photographs, objects of reference, gestures, AAC, eye gaze, movement, facial expressions and sensory responses.

3.7. Learning is differentiated and personalised according to individual need. Pupils may explore the same religious theme or concept at different levels of cognitive demand, enabling them to participate in a shared curriculum while working towards appropriately challenging outcomes.

3.8. Understanding may be demonstrated through attention, anticipation, recognition, choice-making, physical or sensory responses, communication, questioning, discussion or practical activity.

3.9. RE provides regular opportunities for pupils to develop curiosity and explore questions about religion, belief, meaning and the world around them. Questions are adapted to individual needs and may range from recognising and identifying objects, people and celebrations to expressing opinions, making comparisons and considering different perspectives.

3.10. RE is delivered through a carefully sequenced curriculum that builds on pupils' prior learning. Key knowledge, vocabulary, concepts. Stories, symbols and experiences are revisited regularly.

3.11. Repetition, familiar routines, visual supports and practical experiences are used to support pupils in developing and retaining knowledge.

3.12. RE makes meaningful links with other areas of the curriculum, including Communication, English, History, Geography, RSHE, Citizenship, Art, Music and Personal Development. These links enable pupils to apply their learning in different contexts while maintaining the distinctive knowledge and skills of RE.

3.13. Assessment focuses on the knowledge, understanding, skills and responses that pupils develop over time. Teachers use observation, questioning, communication, practical responses, pupil work and participation to assess progress from individual starting points.

Planning

3.14. The RE transferable skills provide a consistent framework for planning, teaching and assessing RE. Teachers identify the appropriate step for individual pupils and plan learning that builds on their existing knowledge, experiences and communication skills.

3.15. Each transferable skill has four steps covering the range of abilities represented across North Ridge.

3.16. The RE curriculum is planned through a sequence of topics and themes that provide opportunities to encounter Christianity and a range of other religions and worldviews.

3.17. Topics are selected to provide breadth of experience while making meaningful connections with pupils' own lives and experiences.

3.18. The 5 Keys Into RE approach developed by Anne Krisman is used as a basis for planning RE topics and themes.

3.19. The Five Keys provide a consistent structure for teachers when planning each RE topic:

1. **Connection** – What links can we make with our pupils' lives?
   Teachers consider pupils' own experiences, families, communities, celebrations and prior learning.
2. **Knowledge** – What is at the burning core of faith?
   Teachers identify the essential knowledge and concepts that pupils need to encounter and understand, including key beliefs, stories, practices and ideas.
3. **Senses** – What sensory elements are in the religion?
   Teachers identify appropriate opportunities to experience learning through the senses, including music, sounds, smells, tastes, textures, movement, clothing, food and objects.
4. **Symbols** – What are the symbols that are most accessible?
   Teachers identify significant religious symbols, objects, images and artefacts that cam support pupils' understanding.
5. **Values** – What are the values in the religion that speak to us?

3.20. Teachers identify values and principles within the religion or worldview and consider how these can be explored at an appropriate level through stories, discussion, practical activities and links to pupils' own experiences.

3.21. The Five Keys support teachers to plan learning experiences that are accessible, meaningful and experiential for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Th transferable skills and their four steps provide the progression and intended learning outcomes.

3.22. This ensures that sensory, practical and experiential activities have a clear RE purpose and contribute to pupils' developing knowledge and understanding.

3.23. Teachers plan differentiated learning around the same RE theme wherever possible, enabling pupils to share experiences while working towards individualised outcomes.

3.24. Expectations are matched to pupils' communication, cognitive and sensory needs. For example, pupils may progress from recognising a religious object or symbol, to identifying it, describing its significance or explaining its importance.

3.25. Planning includes opportunities for pupils to encounter, explore and respond to religious beliefs and practices through stories, artefacts, photographs, drama, music, role play, art, food, visits, visitors and practical experiences.

3.26. These approaches are selected because they support the intended RE learning.

3.27. Teachers plan for pupils' individual communication needs and identify how pupils will demonstrate their learning. Appropriate methods may include speech, signing, symbols, photographs, objects of reference, AAC, eye gaze, gestures, physical responses and other personalised communication systems.

3.28. Key learning is revisited and reinforced throughout topics and across the curriculum. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to recognise, recall and apply important vocabulary, symbols, stories, beliefs and concepts in different contexts.

3.29. Planning is responsive to the individual pupils within each class. Teachers adapt resources, language, questioning, sensory experiences and expected outcomes to ensure that all pupils can participate meaningfully and experience success.

3.30. Pupils' interests and motivators are considered, and cross-curricular links are used to reinforce and apply learning.

3.31. Here is a sample of planning using the 5 keys template:

5 KEYS INTO RE
LIGHT: What does Christmas mean to Christians?

KEY	FOCUS	ACTIVITIES
Connection **What links we can make with our pupils' lives?**	**What happens at Christmas** **What do they do?** **Decorations; lights and Star**	Pictures of objects associated with Christmas – matching / writing words underneath the pictures or writing captions Activities linked with Christmas – Carol singing, putting a tree up and decorating it, making and sending cards.
Knowledge **What is at the burning core of the religion/belief?**	**Jesus as the Light of the World** **God sending Jesus to show us how to love and give**	Read through nativity story and then sequence it using pictures; caption the pictures
Senses **What sensory elements are in the religion/belief?**	**LIGHT and DARK** **Experience both and compare feelings** **Idea that Jesus brings light and love**	Experience how it feels in a dark room and then the room of lights Decorate a Christmas tree taking photographs at each stage; the last stage being putting and turning the lights on The lights make it special – put pictures of lights around photographs of each pupil showing how they are made special by Jesus light
Symbols **What are the symbols that are the most accessible?**	**Star, lights, characters from the nativity story**	Make a collage from pictures from the nativity, pictures of lights maybe taken in the light room, Christmas trees with lights and stars on them Allow pupils to make their own choices of what to put on their collage and where
Values **What are the values in the religion/belief that speak to us?**	**Love, wonder, excitement and giving to others**	Watch a nativity film Experience the light room Receiving gifts from Father Christmas A party celebrating Christmas together

Delivery

3.32. RE is delivered within a positive, supportive and secure learning environment where pupils feel safe to explore, communicate and respond.

3.33. Positive relationships, appropriate sensory resources and regulation strategies support pupils' readiness to learn and enable them to engage with RE activities.

3.34. Teaching approaches reflect the individual needs and learning styles of pupils with severe learning difficulties. Teachers may use stories, music, drama, role play, art, practical activities, religious artefacts, photographs, videos, objects of reference and sensory experiences.

3.35. The interests, experiences and preferences of pupils are used to promote engagement and to make meaningful connections between RE content and pupils' own lives.

3.36. Language and communication are carefully considered in every RE lesson. Teachers use clear, consistent and appropriately paced language supported by visual and concrete resources.

3.37. Key vocabulary, symbols and concepts are introduced and reinforced through repetition and a range of communication approaches.

3.38. Teachers maintain high expectations while providing appropriate levels of support and scaffolding. Pupils are given sufficient time and repeated opportunities to engage with learning before support is reduced where appropriate.

3.39. Teachers identify opportunities to extend learning through questioning, choice-making, comparison, problem-solving, communication and independent responses.

3.40. RE learning is made practical and experiential wherever this supports the intended learning. Pupils may encounter religious artefacts, music, food, clothing, stories, symbols and celebrations.

3.41. Sensory experiences are selected carefully so that they support understanding of the religion or worldview being explored and are not used in isolation from the intended RE learning.

3.42. Teachers use a range of questioning approaches appropriate to individual pupils. Questions may involve recognition, matching, choosing, identifying, recalling, describing, comparing or explaining.

3.43. Pupils are given opportunities to express their own responses and, where appropriate, consider different beliefs and perspectives.

3.44. Learning is regularly revisited within and between lessons. Key vocabulary, concepts, symbols, stories and experiences are reinforced through repetition and presented in different contexts to support pupils' memory, understanding and ability to make connections.

3.45. RE is delivered through a balance of whole-class, small-group and individual learning opportunities. Where appropriate, pupils work collaboratively,

enabling them to share experiences, observe the responses of others and develop their understanding of different beliefs and worldviews.

3.46. Teachers continually assess pupils' engagement, understanding and responses during lessons and adapt teaching accordingly. Observation, questioning, communication and practical responses are used to identify when pupils are ready for further challenge, additional support or a different approach.

Collective Worship

3.47. Collective worship at North Ridge Community School provides opportunities for pupils and staff to come together as a community. It enables pupils to be still, reflect, celebrate, express feelings and responses, consider important questions and experiences, and develop their understanding of themselves and others.

3.48. Collective worship has a Christian character and provides opportunities to encounter Christian stories, teachings, values and traditions.

3.49. Collective worship may provide opportunities to:

- engage in an act of community;
- express praise and thanksgiving to God;
- be still and reflect;
- explore significant questions about life;
- respond to national and school events;
- foster respect and spiritual awareness;
- reflect on Christian teachings and values;
- share one another's joys and challenges;
- celebrate significant times in the Christian calendar.

3.50. At North Ridge, collective worship is adapted to meet the needs of pupils with severe learning difficulties. Staff use accessible language, visual resources, objects, music, sensory experiences, stories, symbols and practical activities to enable meaningful participation.

Pupils may respond through speech, signing, symbols, AAC, eye gaze, gestures, facial expressions, movement, sensory responses, stillness or other individual forms of communication.

All meaningful responses are valued and recognised.

3.51. The school provides regular, daily opportunities for reflection throughout the school day. These may include quiet reflection, music, sensory experiences, prayer or other appropriate forms of response.

Pupils may be given opportunities to express gratitude and reflect on their experiences. Lunchtime prayer may also be offered as an opportunity for pupils to give thanks for food.

3.52. Weekly assemblies provide opportunities for pupils from different phases to come together as a school community. Assemblies may be used to celebrate achievements, recognise individual and group successes, share important messages and reflect on themes relevant to the school community.

3.53. Throughout the school year, the whole school or individual phases may participate in shared experiences linked to religious festivals, Christian celebrations, significant events and themes from the wider curriculum.

3.54. These may include experiencing the sights, sounds, food, stories and symbols associated with religious celebrations and traditions. Examples may include exploring Diwali through sensory experiences or responding practically to biblical stories such as the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

3.55. Collective worship also provides opportunities to celebrate significant events within the Christian calendar, alongside appropriate national and school events. These may include Christmas, Easter and other Christian festivals, as well as events promoting community, diversity, remembrance and shared experiences.

4. Impact

4.1. The impact of the Religious Education curriculum is measured through the progress pupils make from their individual starting points. Assessment is adapted according to pupils' age, ability, communication needs and learning profile.

4.2. Progress may be demonstrated through small but significant changes in engagement, communication, recognition, understanding and response.

4.3. Evidence of progress may include:

- EYFS observations and photographs;
- engagement profile observations;
- progress towards specific targets, supported by photographs where appropriate;
- evidence in workbooks;
- observations of spontaneous responses;
- evidence of communication and participation in practical experiences.

4.4. The school's assessment system, SOLAR, is used to record and evidence pupils' progress across curriculum areas. RE is recorded within the SMSC strand alongside related areas such as Citizenship.

4.5. Teachers use evidence gathered through RE lessons and experiences to demonstrate pupils' progress against relevant curriculum expectations and transferable skills.

4.6. Assessment considers pupils' developing knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews, their ability to explore and respond to religious beliefs and practices, and their developing understanding and respect for different beliefs and ways of life.

4.7. Progress may be demonstrated through recognising a religious symbol, recalling a story, identifying a place of worship, responding to an artefact, communicating a preference, making a connection with previous learning or beginning to explain a belief or practice.

4.8. The impact of RE can also be seen in pupils' increasing ability to communicate their own thoughts, feelings and responses. Pupils are supported to express what they notice, what they think, what they prefer and how they respond to different religious and worldview experiences.

4.9. As pupils progress, they develop an increasingly secure understanding that people may have different beliefs, traditions and ways of understanding the world. Pupils are supported to recognise similarities and differences and to develop respectful attitudes towards people whose beliefs and experiences may differ from their own.

4.10. The impact of RE can be seen in pupils' increasing curiosity and willingness to engage with questions about religion, belief, meaning and the world around them. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions, make choices, share responses and develop their own ideas at a level appropriate to their individual abilities.

4.11. RE contributes to pupils' wider personal and spiritual development by providing opportunities for wonder, reflection, celebration, stillness, gratitude and connection with others.

4.12. Pupils are supported, where appropriate, to recognise and communicate their own beliefs, values and perspectives.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. The Trust and/or local governors should:

- ensure that the school meets its statutory duties in relation to RE and Collective Worship;
- ensure that appropriate provision is made for pupils to access RE and Collective Worship, taking account of the needs of pupils with severe learning difficulties;
- seek appropriate assurance that RE is being delivered effectively;
- seek assurance that pupils are making progress from their individual starting points;
- ensure that Collective Worship is accessible and meaningful for pupils.

5.2. The Headteacher should:

- ensure that an appropriate, accessible and suitably challenging RE curriculum is in place for all pupils;
- ensure that suitable provision is made for Collective Worship;
- ensure that RE is appropriately represented within the school's curriculum and that sufficient time, resources and staffing are available;
- ensure that required information about the RE curriculum is published;
- ensure that parents and carers are informed of their legal rights regarding withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship;
- ensure that the RE subject leader has appropriate time, resources and access to high-quality CPD to support effective leadership of RE across the school.

5.3. The RE subject leader should:

- ensure that the agreed RE curriculum is consistently implemented and reflects the needs of pupils with severe learning difficulties;
- monitor the quality of RE teaching and learning, including planning, delivery, assessment and pupil progress;
- support teachers in understanding the RE curriculum, Transferable Skills and the use of the 5 Keys Into RE;
- provide advice, guidance and appropriate resources to ensure RE is accessible to all pupils;
- support staff in addressing communication, sensory, differentiation and assessment needs;
- monitor and support the quality of Collective Worship;
- provide advice and support to staff delivering RE and Collective Worship;
- identify and access appropriate CPD where required.

5.4. Class teachers should:

- deliver high-quality RE lessons that reflect the school's agreed curriculum and meet individual pupil needs;
- plan and adapt RE learning so that pupils can access the intended knowledge and skills;
- use the RE Transferable Skills to plan appropriately challenging learning;
- gather evidence of pupils' progress using a range of assessment approaches;
- provide opportunities for pupils to communicate their responses using their individual communication methods;
- contribute to Collective Worship and support pupils to participate in meaningful and appropriate ways;
- communicate appropriately with parents and carers about their child's engagement and progress in RE;
- ensure they understand the school's arrangements and relevant statutory requirements concerning RE and Collective Worship;
- seek advice from the RE subject leader or Headteacher where they are unsure about the provision for pupils in their class.