



Religious Education Policy July 2025

Our School Vision

Woodborough Woods is a school with a Christian foundation, which seeks to express its Christian character by serving families in the local community and by providing a Christian ethos where children and their families can feel valued. There is an opportunity to experience the meaning of the Christian faith in the welcome that is offered to all and in the relationships of love and respect that characterise the shared life of the school. Designed to be sequential, this curriculum enables pupils to build knowledge and skills by making links with previous learning; this is shown in our progression documents. By fostering an enjoyment of learning, our children are given the opportunity to develop as independent, resilient pupils who are equipped with the ability to use their knowledge and skills to make wise choices as they take their place in the world.

The school's direction stems from its Vision Statement: 'Grow Together' following Jesus' example to 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39) because through love for one another, we can build a strong learning community ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to flourish. It recognises the importance of the community it serves, and seeks to build relationships based on kindness and respect. It will strive to be a place where Christian priorities and values inform every subject in the curriculum and are reflected in the day to day life of the school.

We believe that the children are the centre of all our work here and we strive to ensure our school is one with a happy and caring environment. We take pride in promoting the highest standards of conduct and achievement allowing children the security and confidence to reach their full potential.

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, our aim is to provide this secure environment, firmly rooted in Christian values. We believe that the education of children is a partnership, one between parents, teachers and governors all working together to provide the best interests for the children in our care.

Our RE Vision

At Woods we 'grow together' following Jesus' example to *'Love your neighbour as you love yourself'* (Matthew 22:37-39) because through love for one another, we can build a strong learning community ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

Religious Education has an important part to play in helping pupils to do this by promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development. It also helps them to gain a greater understanding of themselves and an awareness of the needs of others. This enables pupils to be better equipped to cope with the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

With this in mind, we believe that the teaching of R.E. should be a child centred, exciting journey. Children will learn to understand the world and their place in it, know that all members of the school community show respect and tolerance for others, and develop a better cultural awareness.

Intent

Through our provision we aim that children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and develop a personal response to fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;

Monitoring:

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Teaching and Learning Style:

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children. Children carry out research into religious topics. They study different religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss and research religious and moral issues, working individually and in groups. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities by adapting the task to support the ability of the child.

At Woods Foundation, we believe these features demonstrate best practice in the teaching and learning of RE:

Pupils are able to describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognizing the diversity which exists within and between communities.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and attend regular training where necessary.

Learning helps pupils to identify, investigate and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.

Pupils appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Explanations and reflections about how pupils' beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.

Construct and value their own personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value.

An appreciation, understanding and appraisal for the varied dimensions of religion.

Investigations into key concepts such as questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and responding creatively and considerately to these key themes.

Enquiry into what enabled different communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
Teaching and learning links with British Values and School Values.
Reflection of the impact of religion and worldviews on contemporary life locally, nationally and globally.
Pupils use their skills to interpret and evaluate evidence, texts and sources of wisdom or authority.

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Assessment:

Assessment in RE at our school is formative and ongoing, enabling teachers to build a rich picture of each child's progress in line with the 'Three Thinkers' model. This approach supports pupils in developing a balanced understanding of religion and worldviews by exploring three key aspects of learning:

1. The Theologian (Substantive Knowledge)

Pupils explore religious beliefs, practices, texts, and traditions. As theologians, they are encouraged to learn **what people believe and why**, and how those beliefs are expressed in faith communities.

Teachers assess pupils' ability to:

- Recall and describe religious content (stories, symbols, rituals, festivals)
- Use appropriate vocabulary related to different faiths
- Make links between beliefs and practices within a tradition

2. The Philosopher (Disciplinary Knowledge)

Pupils think critically about the big questions of life, meaning, truth, and values. As philosophers, they are taught to ask "**How do we know?**", to reason well, and to evaluate different arguments.

Teachers assess pupils' ability to:

- Engage with challenging questions and explore possible answers
- Compare differing viewpoints, including secular and religious responses
- Use reasoning to support their ideas or challenge assumptions

3. The Human/Social Scientist (Personal/Worldview Knowledge)

Pupils reflect on how people live out their beliefs and how religion influences culture, identity, and community. As social scientists, they consider the **lived experience** of people of faith and how religion shapes (and is shaped by) the

world.

Teachers assess pupils' ability to:

- Recognise diversity within and between religions and worldviews
- Understand how beliefs impact personal and collective behaviour
- Reflect on how these ideas relate to their own views and experiences

Teachers use the assessment opportunities as suggested by the diocese for the end of each of the Understanding Christianity in Autumn 2 and Spring 2. At the end of Summer 2, we assess their learning from one of the other faiths using suggested material from the diocese. We are currently working on developing end of topic assessments for each unit.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's books each year which demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year of the school.

SEND:

Religious education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our religious education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the locally agreed syllabus allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, adapting the task - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, to visit a place of worship, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Health and Safety:

Health and safety issues may arise in RE on different occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to the guidelines set out in the Health and Safety Policy in these circumstances.

Legal Framework

At Woods, Religious Education (RE) is a statutory part of the curriculum and plays a central role in the life and Christian character of our school. However, in accordance with the Education Reform Act (1988), parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE. Should parents wish to exercise this right, they may notify the school in writing or by speaking with a member of staff. Alternative arrangements will then be made for their child. As a church school, we are committed to delivering high-quality RE that supports pupils' understanding, personal development, and appreciation of diverse beliefs.