



Sleights Church of England  
(Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

# Religious Education Policy

June 2024

\*This policy was reviewed in June 2024, following the introduction of the new locally agreed syllabus, careful consideration of the Religious Education curriculum review, Covid-19 and its implication on the curriculum delivery.

*Working together to be happy; to flourish; to succeed*  
through our Christian values  
**perseverance, respect and trust.**

**“The principal aim of Religious Education is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.”**

The North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, 2019

The teaching of Religious Education at Sleights is underpinned by the ongoing development and acquisition of knowledge and skills. This development and acquisition occurs as a result of our own school's curriculum sequence and progression, which maps out the core knowledge and skills children need to be highly effective artists.

### About this policy

This policy intends to outline the policy and procedure for teaching and learning in Religious Education at Sleights Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School.

In our Church school, our vision is to “work together to be happy; to flourish; to succeed”. This policy intends to outline how our whole school community lives this out in relation to curriculum planning and learning in Religious Education. Our Christian Values are firmly rooted in this policy.

Christian Value	How is this value lived out in our Religious Education policy?
Perseverance	<i>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me</i> (Philippians 4:13) Religious Education is highly quality and challenging for children. Often, children will be challenged to explore ideas, values and stories, deeply rooted in the teaching of faiths. It is through perseverance that children build resilience and strength to grapple with these challenges.
Respect	<i>So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you</i> (Matthew 7:12) As a proud Church of England school, we are committed to the teachings of the Bible and Jesus. However, we also teach a deep respect to our children in relation to other religions, traditions and faiths.
Trust	<i>My God is my strength in whom I trust</i> (Psalm 18:2) Trust is an essential aspect of highly effective RE teaching. In conjunction with respectful and caring consideration for a range of faiths and beliefs, effective trust at Sleights ensures that families, children and staff can work together, in line with our school vision to deliver a highly inclusive, engaging and effective curriculum to children with all and no faith.

Religious education in our Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.

*Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Church of England Vision for Education)*

## Religious Education at Sleights

### Religious Education at Sleights involves:

Dedicated curriculum time to engage in range of purposeful learning experiences related to religions and world views.

Sequenced learning experiences, which build on prior knowledge and understanding.

Developing a secure understanding of substantive knowledge related to a range of religions and traditions.

Acquisition of skills and knowledge about how to know about religion and non-religion (disciplinary knowledge)

### Intent of our Religious Education curriculum

The children at Sleights will be provided with a curriculum offer for Religious Education designed to:

- identify crucial learning, which is placed in context and connected to other knowledge.
- support children in knowing and understanding about a range of religions and worldviews.
- allow children to express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.
- support children in gaining and deploying the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.
- gain a secure understanding of a range of religions and traditions.
- support children's acquisition and progressive understanding of substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- build on and develop knowledge and skills related to Religious Education in a well sequenced and structured progression across their time at Sleights.
- enable children to understand a range of religions, traditions and vocabulary, which can be used widely across the planned curriculum and beyond.

### Implementation of our Religious Education curriculum

Religious Education is implemented at Sleights through:

- timetabled, high-quality lessons, which enable children with the time and opportunities to develop their Religious Education understanding and skills over time.
- the use of a progressive long term plan, which is organised so that children can build an increasing knowledge base of Religious Education knowledge and skills.
- a termly, or half termly focus on an enquiry question, related to Religious Education, which supports and enables children to develop a secure understanding of a range of religions and views. These questions become harder to explore and answer as children move through the school.
- ongoing opportunities to acquire and apply knowledge and skills relating to Religious Education to support children build 'ways to know' about religion and non-religion.

Learning in Religious Education is recorded in a variety of ways. Children enjoy a range of focused tasks, practical activities and discussions, which may be recorded in class big books or individual work books.

### Implementation: The long term plan for Religious Education

Due to mixed aged classes, the long term plan for Religious Education varies year to year, to ensure that content for cohorts is progressively sequenced and crucial learning is not missed. Each year, the long term plan is reviewed with the Religious Education leader accordingly.

### Implementation: The content of the Religious Education curriculum at Sleights

The content of the Religious Education curriculum at Sleights is based on the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2024). This syllabus includes materials from the Understanding Christianity publications. The planned curriculum at Sleights combines both programmes of work (see long term plan) and carefully identifies the related knowledge and skills associated with Religious Education teaching and learning.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. In line with the national expectation that Religious Education teaching “reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian”, at Sleights, the curriculum predominantly focuses on Christianity, but also includes study relating to Muslims, Hindus and Jewish people.

### Implementation: The organisation of the Religious Education curriculum at Sleights

The teaching sequence of Religious Education at Sleights is organised into termly or half termly units, each posing a question related to religion and religious beliefs. These units are organised in our school long term plan and are focused on one of three areas related to Religious Education. These are:

- **Believing:** Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth
- **Expressing:** Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity
- **Living:** Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments

Units selected in our long term plan are sequenced and placed to support children in building an increasing knowledge and skill base of religions, traditions and world views. Throughout their time at Sleights, children learn and revisit key elements and ideas of religions, in order to build their understanding. For example, Easter is revisited throughout year groups in school, after being introduced in Reception. Knowledge and understanding about Muslims is also developed, as children revisit and build on content first introduced in Key Stage One again during their time in Key Stage Two.

### Implementation: Knowledge taught in our Religious Education curriculum

Religious Education at Sleights focuses on the acquisition of new knowledge and building on prior learning relating to three pillars. These pillars are interconnected and sequenced across the curriculum, so that children can build connections and links. The three pillars of Religious Education knowledge are:

- **substantive knowledge** – which focuses on knowledge about various religions and non-religious traditions
- **disciplinary knowledge (ways of knowing)** – which helps children learn ‘how to know’ about religion and non-religion
- **personal knowledge** – which focuses on building an awareness of children’s own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions

Further information about teaching and learning relating to the three knowledge pillars can be found in this policy. However, staff work carefully to identify the knowledge and skills required for all activities, so that children are supported to approach Religious Education activities effectively.

As a result of children’s scholarship understanding of religion and non-religion (acquired from our long term plan), pupils are supported to challenge and tackle any misconceptions. These focus on claims and assertions that have or could be made in regards to religion.

As children move between classes and Key Stages, staff carefully identify the knowledge and understanding children have of Religious Education. Before introducing or developing understanding of knowledge or a skill, children complete ongoing low stakes assessment opportunities, which are built into sessions to ensure a secure understanding.

### Implementation: Substantive Knowledge

In our Sleights' curriculum, substantive knowledge (sometimes referred to as 'sticky learning') is mapped out on our progression and planning documents. Substantive knowledge refers to religious and non-religious traditions and includes:

- different ways people express their beliefs.
- the artefacts and rituals associated with religious and non-religious traditions.
- concepts which relate to religious and non-religious traditions.

Concepts are developed across school focused on:

- concepts which are common to religious and non-religious experience e.g. interpretation
- concepts that are common to multiple forms of religious experience e.g. sacrifice
- concepts that are specific to a religious tradition e.g. the Christian notion of 'incarnation'.

This knowledge, concepts and content is organised and sequenced into building blocks, so that children gain new knowledge and build on prior learning over time. Within our curriculum planning, units of work, taught across school from Reception to the end of Key Stage Two, set out the substantive knowledge relating to Religious Education. This includes the knowledge components and the connections between these components, so children are able to establish links.

### Implementation: Disciplinary Knowledge (ways of knowing)

At Sleights, children develop **disciplinary knowledge (ways of knowing)** through skill progression plans, which carefully set out how children will develop skills relating to 'how to know' about religion. These skills can be used across the curriculum in multiple ways. Children are taught how to understand how the substantive knowledge came to be, how to interpret the accuracy and validity of claims being made, the differences between conceptions and misconceptions, and the types of methods used in enquiries, including the suitability of these methods.

Our own school progression documents for disciplinary knowledge identify the sequence and content relating to ways of knowing across school.

### Implementation: Personal Knowledge

Developing children's **personal knowledge** ensures that children gain an growing knowledge of their own values and beliefs related to religious and non-religious traditions. At Sleights, children will build this knowledge through planned reflection of how their own viewpoints relate to the religious and non-religious traditions. These planned opportunities are carefully identified and place activities into purposeful contexts. Our own school values and visions supports respect of other's opinions and beliefs. The curriculum for Religious Education at Sleights promotes ongoing opportunities for this.



## Implementation in Early Years

At Sleights, Religious Education begins in Early Years, where children are supported in developing their understanding of Christianity and other faiths. Children will develop their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. In Early Years, children will explore key questions and gain an understanding of belonging and special places. These units of work will enable children to secure knowledge and skills to support them in accessing high quality Religious Education in Key Stage One and Two.

## Implementation in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two

Building on firm foundations of religions, views and customs, gained in Early Years, children across Key Stage One and Two develop an increasing knowledge and skill set. This is developed as children engage in a range of sequenced units of study, focused on improving knowledge and understanding of identified religions, traditions or concepts. This information is set out in our long term plan. In all aspects of Religious Education, opportunities to explore precise and accurate representation of religious and non-religious traditions is included.

For each unit of work across Key Stage One and Two, clearly identified learning outcomes have been identified, including emerging and exceeding statements. Our progression documents identify key milestones in relation to intended acquisition of knowledge and skills for each identified religion. These milestones are grouped into Key Stage One, Lower Key Stage Two and Upper Key Stage Two. Staff use the progression documents to support lesson planning and delivery.

Key prior learning is also included in planning documents, to support teachers in identifying retrieval opportunities.

## Implementation: Breadth and Depth of the Religious Education curriculum

Our school Religious Education curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities to learn about a wide range of religions and traditions. The curriculum is designed to support children to learn in-depth content to support them in understanding the bigger picture of religion and non-religion.

The units of work included in our own long term plan focus on supporting children to explore themes and the complex ideas related to Religious Education over time. For example, units focus on exploring 'why' something or happened or 'what' something means. This enables children to investigate and explore, whilst building comparisons and depth of knowledge across the range of religions being studied.

## Implementation: Supporting pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disability

Ensuring access to the curriculum for all children, regardless of background, special educational need and/or disability is an essential aspect of teaching and learning at Sleights. Our approach to the curriculum for children with special educational need(s) and/or disabilities aims to ensure that children with differences are able to learn about a subject, remain focused, manage and complete tasks with a sense of achievement, whilst also being challenged.

### Key Question: 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Strand / Questions / Religions	Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Suggested content for learning:
<b>Strand: Believing</b> <b>Recommended Y2</b> <b>Questions in this strand:</b> 1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? 1.2.1 Why do different people believe about God? 1.2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? 3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence? <b>Religions and worldviews:</b> Muslims	Teachers will enable pupils to be able to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage. <b>Emerging:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk about the fact that Muslims believe in God (Allah) and follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad identify some ways Muslims mark Ramadan and celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr (A1).</li><li>• Recognise that Muslims do not draw Allah or the Prophet, but use calligraphy to say what God is like (A3).</li></ul> <b>Expected:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk about some simple ideas about Muslim beliefs about God, making links with some of the 99 Names of Allah (A1).</li><li>• Retell a story about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (A2).</li><li>• Recognise some objects used by Muslims and suggest why they are important (A2).</li><li>• Identify some ways Muslims mark Ramadan and celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr and how this might make them feel (A1).</li></ul> <b>Exceeding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make links between what the Holy Qur'an says and how Muslims behave (A2).</li><li>• Ask some questions about God that are hard to answer and offer some ideas of their own (C1).</li></ul>	Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share stories that help to show how Muslims think of God (Allah) and how following God shows them ways to behave e.g. 'Muhammad and the cat', 'The story of the two brothers - The crying camel'.</li><li>• Look at calligraphy and listen to nasheeds that express ideas about God and the Prophet Muhammad e.g. calligraphy showing some of the 99 names of Allah, I am a Muslim by Zain Bilkhu, share the words of the Shahadah, listen to the Call to Prayer.</li><li>• Give children a way to respond to their own big questions e.g. writing a class big questions poem or a 'Where is God?' poem.</li><li>• Describe one of the beliefs that Muslims hold about God e.g. tawhid.</li><li>• Share the story of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an – how the Angel Jibril revealed it to Prophet Muhammad on Mount Hira, how Muslims learn Arabic to be able to read and remember it; some teachings from the Holy Qur'an.</li><li>• Talk to Muslims about what they believe about God.</li><li>• Explore what the concept of God means for the children themselves.</li><li>• Identify the objects that are most precious to them. Why are they precious? How does it show?</li><li>• Identify objects that are significant to Muslims; if possible, see them being used by a believer, e.g. prayer beads, prayer mat, Qur'an and stand, compass, headscarf. Why are these important?</li><li>• Share the experiences of a Muslim during the fast of Ramadan and the celebrating of Eid-ul-Fitr. Why do Muslims celebrate?</li></ul>

This will be supported and achieved through a range of ways, including:

- Additional repetition of learning to support embedding the knowledge (to help the children to remember the knowledge).
- Repetition tasks take the form of retrieval tasks and activities, in addition to learning the same information in different ways over several lessons.
- A wider range of practical activities in the curriculum to support children's individual needs, including a range of recording methods.
- Reading differentiated to support lower-level readers.
- A range of practical resources and support tools to enable access to the curriculum.

### **Impact: how do we ensure that children are making progress and learning?**

Assessment for learning is fundamental to raising standards and enabling children to reach their potential. Assessment in Religious Education takes place during and after each taught session, using a range of strategies such as marking and feedback, verbal discussions with children and response time.

The assessment journey in Religious Education is observed through ongoing review of children's application and understanding of skills. This is identified through work completed in lessons and evidence produced. In making assessments, staff will consider children's capacity to:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.
- Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

In addition to identifying the impact of teaching and learning of substantive knowledge, assessment of children's disciplinary skills is also made. These transferable skills are taught alongside substantive knowledge and assessed formally each term (assessments recorded on the half term). Teachers make informed assessment decisions based on activities and learning. These assessment decisions identify whether a child is demonstrating that they are meeting the expected standard, working towards it or exceeding it.

## Impact: End of Key Stage outcomes

By the end of Key Stage One, children should be able to:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.	Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.	Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews
Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.	Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make	Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry
Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come.	Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.	Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of cooperation between people who are different.
Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.	Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.	Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response

By the end of Key Stage Two, children should be able to:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.	Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.	Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews
Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their significance.	Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.	Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry.
Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.	Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.	Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the wellbeing of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.
Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.	Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews.	Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.



## Legal Requirements

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of 5 per cent of curriculum time for RE.

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

At Sleights, we note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school will comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.