

Malvern Wells CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy



2026

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Introduction

This policy has been written in the light of the Church of England's Vision for Education (Autumn 2016), Flourishing for All (September 2024) and through reflection on the 2023 SIAMS Evaluation Framework for schools.

Name of School: Malvern Wells CE Primary School
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Legal Position of Religious Education in School

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core nor foundation subject. The 1988 Education Act states 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.

Malvern Wells CE is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School; therefore, the provision of Religious Education must be in accordance with the school's Trust Deed. The Governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, have decided to adopt the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025 – 2030

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement (September 2026) outlines the aims and expectations for RE in Church of England schools and guides this school's approach to RE.

It begins by stating: 'Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together'. Quoting from the Church of England's *Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, it continues: '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'.

Religious Education and the school's Christian Vision

The School's Vision:

Let your Light Shine.

Nurturing potential for an even brighter future.

'You are the light of the world - like a town on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.' – Matthew 5:14

Building on these themes, RE in this school contributes to the outworking of our vision by holding our Christian values at the heart of all that we do. Together, children, parents, staff and the wider community have chosen the Christian values that are the most important to us. As a school, we have a commitment to ensuring that all children leave Malvern Wells with these four core Christian values that will help shape them as excellent citizens and role models of the future:

Community, Compassion, Courage, Commitment

Religious Education Intent

The intent of Religious Education at Malvern Wells CE Primary School is:

1. The school's senior leadership team will:

- Lead the school staff to develop a clear overarching curriculum intent which drives the ongoing development and improvement of all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure that the curriculum leaders have appropriate time to develop their specific curriculum intent through careful research and development.
- Provide sufficient funding to ensure that implementation is of high quality.

2. The curriculum leader will:

- Understand and articulate the expectations of the curriculum to support teaching and support staff in the delivery.
- Ensure an appropriate progression of knowledge is in place which supports pupils in knowing more and remembering more.
- Ensure an appropriate progression of RE skills and knowledge is in place over time so that pupils are supported to be the best they can be, and challenge teachers to support struggling pupils and extend more competent ones.
- Ensure an appropriate progression for vocabulary is in place for each phase of learning, which builds

on prior learning.

- Keep up to date with current RE research and subject development through an appropriate subject body or professional group.

3. The class teacher will, with support from the curriculum leader:

- Create a long-term plan which ensures appropriate coverage of knowledge, skills and vocabulary from the progression grid.
- Pursue support for any subject knowledge and skills gaps prior to teaching.
- Ensure that resources are appropriate, of high enough quality and are plentiful so that all pupils have the correct tools and materials.
- Provide our children with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain and the wider world.
- Develop pupils' appreciation and understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and outlook
- Develop in our children, a capacity to engage in a search for meaning and purpose in order to enhance their own spiritual and moral growth
- Develop skills which enable children to express their own ideas and beliefs and begin to consider how these impact their own and other peoples' lives
- Develop pupils' understanding and a positive attitude towards other people who hold different beliefs from their own
- Develop skills that enable children to find out and question key concepts such as belonging, purpose and truth

School Approach to Religious Education

In-line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views.

We aim:

- To provide our children with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions represented in their community, Great Britain and the wider world

- To develop our pupils' appreciation and understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and outlook.
- To develop in our children a capacity to engage in a search for meaning and purpose in order to enhance their own spiritual and moral growth
- To develop skills which enable children to express their own ideas and beliefs and begin to consider how these impact their own and other peoples' lives
- To develop an understanding and a positive and compassionate attitude towards other people who hold beliefs different from their own
- To develop skills that enable them to find out and question key concepts such as belonging, purpose and truth, showing courage and commitment in doing so.
- To encourage the children to aspire to make a difference in this world, and the need, at times to demonstrate courage to do so
- Support children in being confident and courageous to demonstrate what they believe in whilst developing tolerance love and compassion towards others.
- Enable children to be confident in asking the big questions in life, faith and religion and to be committed in learning the answers.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE.

Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the *Statement of Entitlement*, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- Engage meaningfully and critically with learning which helps them to make sense of the multi-religious and multi-secular world in which they live.
- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of beliefs and practices, using approaches which engage with biblical text and key sources of authority.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating the complexity, diversity, continuity and change that exists within those worldviews being studied.
- Grapple with questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- Understand the concept of religion and recognise its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals, communities and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge which equips pupils to be religiously literate.
- Explore their personal worldviews; their own religious or non-religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

RE that makes a positive contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development.

Organisation & Time Allocation

The Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education specifies that Christianity is to be the main religious worldview studied in and through RE in each year group/phase equating to at least 50% of curriculum time. It also states that, in a Church school there should be sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages (KS) 1-4.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement and the structure of Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus, we have agreed that, as a minimum:

- in the Foundation Stage pupils will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. They will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year

- at Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism or Islam – RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and also consider non-religious worldviews – RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.

Assessment / Recording & Reporting

The Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025–2030 sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of Key Stage learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus.

As a school we track progress in RE through:

Informal assessments made by the teacher during and after each lesson, this informs future planning and teaching.

Assessment at the end of each RE unit using the unit assessment and children are assessed as emerging, expected or exceeding ARE.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to attainment and effort in pupils' individual work.

Responsibilities for RE in School

The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the legal framework for RE is carried out and that the teaching of RE fits within the school's distinctively Christian vision. At Malvern Wells School, some of the responsibilities for RE may be delegated to other members of staff.

The **Subject Leader** is responsible for:

- ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for RE and share good practice
- attending RE clusters / hub meetings
- providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- all teaching staff and those responsible for governance understand the distinctive role and purpose of RE within a Church school

- ensure that Christianity is the main religion taught in and through RE in each year group/phase equating to at least 50% of curriculum time
- ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- ensure that RE teaching encompasses enquiry into religious and non-religious worldviews using theological, philosophical, and human and social scientific approaches.
- supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact
- engage with their diocese when developing the school's RE curriculum and adapting schemes and frameworks, such as a locally agreed syllabus, to the school's context
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and being able to discuss impact and standards, all in conjunction with the Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team
- contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, including, but not limited to Inspection Question 6 and 7.

The **Headteacher and Governors** must ensure:

- RE's high priority within the curriculum and status as an academic subject are clearly articulated.
- that the legal framework for RE is upheld within the school
- that the Statement of Entitlement for RE is adhered to within school
- that all pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- all teaching staff and those responsible for governance understand the distinctive role and purpose of RE within a Church school
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have effective and regular opportunities for CPD

- teachers newly-appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- that clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils make good progress
- engage with the diocese when developing the school's RE curriculum and adapting schemes and frameworks, such as a locally agreed syllabus, to the school's context
- appropriate support is in place to ensure the effective provision of RE
- monitor RE effectively in accordance with the Statement of Entitlement.

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

In the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from part of RE and can do so without giving any explanation. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. However, this does not apply to teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE. If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the head of the school and its chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the school must still make provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE.

At Malvern Wells CE Primary School, we believe that Religious Education helps all children, irrespective of their own religious beliefs, understand the world around them and the communities in our world. We wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship.

Any request from a parent for the withdrawal from RE must be made to the Headteacher. All requests will be granted, and parents are under no obligation to provide a reason for their decision. Once a request has been received and granted by the headteacher, parents may be offered an opportunity to discuss the nature of RE within school, to support the school's understanding of the parents' decision. We would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about Religious Education in the school; however, parents are under no obligation to take up this offer and it is not conditional on a request for withdrawal being granted. Should parents take up the offer of a discussion, the school may seek to establish the religious issues about which the parent objects to their child being taught.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the governing body every 3 years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- Change in Agreed Syllabus
- Change in Church of England Statement of Entitlement
- Change in legal position framework for RE

Approval / review by Governing Body:

Headteacher signed:

Date: January 2026

Chair of Governors signed:

Date:

Date of next review:

Date: January 2029