



Newbottle and Charlton C.E.V.A. Primary School

*'Let all that you do be done in love';
Every Person Matters, Every Moment Counts*

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Mr Chris Coopman

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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| Adopted by the Governing Body on [Date]: | May 2025 |
| Chair of Governors Signature: | Chris Coopman |
| Date of next review: | May 2027 |



Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary School

Newbottle & Charlton CEVA Primary School seeks to create an environment that reflects our Christian ethos, providing safe, happy and challenging working conditions for all members of the school.

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

"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 educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live 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".

(Taken from the Statement of Entitlement – Church of England Education Office 2019).

The Diocese of Peterborough's Board of Education Vision Statement aims to "provide all the children and young people with an excellent education in every area of the curriculum and in every aspect of their personal development, so that they are able to lead a fulfilling life and are equipped to make the world a better place. We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths... We aim to make sure our pupils appreciate the biblical basis and Christian beliefs that underpin Christian values".

(Taken from 'Education for Life, deeply Christian, serving the common good' – DBE 2019)

At Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high quality RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the 'Understanding Christianity' resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy.

Using the **Diocese of Peterborough RE syllabus** we learn about other religions and worldviews, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian values and vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on

learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

Our Vision

At Newbottle and Charlton Church of England Primary School we are building a community where children are more than just educated and where all feel safe, supported and cared for. Our mission statement and school bible verse, 'Every person matters, every moment counts' and 'Let all that you do be done in love' (Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 16.14) are at the heart of everything we do. Like St Paul we seek to foster unity in our diverse community by following Christ's new commandment that we should love one another (John 13.34).

Therefore, we provide a culture of mutual respect and acceptance rooted in our Christian values which spring from the stories of Jesus and his teachings. We celebrate a person as an individual and create moments that enable all children the opportunity to flourish and develop in their own unique way, and contribute to our shared life together in school. We are good role models who inspire through a love of learning by providing a place where children enjoy exploring, enjoy discovering and enjoy growing together. We continually strive to remove the barriers to success and fear of failure.

Children are motivated to build on their knowledge and skills and make a positive impact on the world around them. Our school takes pride in leading the children on this journey - academically, morally, socially and spiritually; enabling them to grow as educated citizens who have the ability to shape their own present and futures positively in our rich diverse world.

With this mind we ensure that lessons are engaging, inclusive and informative. Using our Christian values wheel and links with local churches, visits and visitors, we ensure that RE enables our children to achieve their full potential in a nurturing, supportive classroom environment where links are made with a variety of faith and worldview groups.

Aims and Purpose

The principal aim for Religious Education is "to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief".

(Taken from the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus and based on continuing Diocesan Adviser work on the Purpose of RE – www.reonline.org.uk/news/revision-rethinking-re-a-conversation-about-religious-and-theological-literacy/)

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church Schools as taken from the "Church of England Statement of Entitlement 2019". For pupils 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;
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied;
- Engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience;
- 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 the wider world;
- Explore their own religious, moral, social, spiritual, cultural understanding and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith;
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning;
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none;
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions

Legal Requirements

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)

RE is for all pupils.

- Every pupil has an entitlement to Religious Education.
- RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).
- 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 playgroups.

- At Newbottle & Charlton RE has the status of a core subject.
- Newbottle & Charlton CEVA Primary is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school and governors are ultimately responsible for the subject and they must ensure that their Religious Education **syllabus** and **provision** is in accordance with 'the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England'.

Right of Withdrawal

In keeping with the law, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. Parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. The school must ensure that suitable supervision is provided for the pupil. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all pupils admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making such a decision. Staff always refer to the headteacher with any questions from parents about withdrawals.

There are no pupils withdrawn from RE at present.

Statement of Entitlement

The Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2019 states:

"A high-quality sequential religious education (RE) programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews fostering respect for others. In voluntary aided schools, RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed: this document will help schools interpret that legal requirement."

Therefore, the governors at Newbottle & Charlton have a responsibility for holding the school leaders to account for the high quality of RE provided for pupils. All governors should understand the distinctive role and purpose of Religious Education within Church schools and academies; foundation governors and their academy equivalents bear particular responsibility in this area.

The role and responsibilities of governors are:

- To have strategic oversight of Religious Education;

- To ensure that proper provision and resources are available in accordance with the Trust Deed;
- To contribute to and support Religious Education, as a core subject of the school;
- To contribute to and support the formation of a policy and curriculum for Religious Education;
- To ensure that the policy and curriculum prepares pupils with a religious understanding and sensitivity to take their place in the world;
- To be a 'critical friend' in order to ensure the highest possible standards in teaching and learning in Religious Education;
- To ensure a curriculum that is inclusive and reflects breadth and depth;
- To ensure curriculum time and staffing meet the requirements of this syllabus.

Cross-curricular Links

RE supports the development of a wide range of educational skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues, which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

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 school's Health and Safety Policy in these circumstances.

National and Local Context

We provide a range of opportunities for pupils to make links between beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied. Our teaching and learning pedagogy uses an enquiry-based approach that engages with text and beliefs and helps to develop religious and theological literacy.

Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary School is a small primary school.

- We welcome the diversity of our families and we intend to be sensitive to the home background of each child.
- We have close links with St James' Church in Newbottle and the vicar and members of the congregation support RE and Collective Worship.
- We also have links with the wider community. This includes welcoming visitors to from a variety of religious and non - religious backgrounds to support RE lessons and talk to the pupils. These could be parents depending on the different faiths we have in the school at the time.

- Pupils also experience visits to diverse places of worship. All such visits are fully educational in nature and no confessional religious practice takes place.

The RE Subject Leader supports the organisation of these educational visits (in addition to the Education Visits Coordinator - EVC).

Pupils also have the opportunity to experience how different cultures celebrate key events and festivals other than their own, within RE and other areas of the curriculum.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for the headteacher and governors, to ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- Contributes to British Values (mutual tolerance, respectful attitudes, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews;
- Enables pupils to develop their religious literacy;
- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews;
- Supports the development of other curriculum areas and a wide range of skills such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs;
- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs;
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it;
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Curriculum Balance and Time

Reflecting the school's trust deed parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year

group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus, the Diocese of Peterborough Board of Education strongly recommend a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE based upon the law and the Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office. Schools should aim to be close to 10% of curriculum for teaching RE, but must be no less than 5%.

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| Reception (36 hours of RE) | Children will encounter Christian and other worldviews represented in the local area | <p>This is the minimum entitlement. We will consider the pupils and decide whether to go beyond the minimum entitlements.</p> |
| Key stage 1 36 hours of RE | <p>Christians for at least 50% of study time and Muslims and Jews</p> <p>Pupils may also learn from other religions and non-religious worldviews in thematic units.</p> | |
| Key stage 2 45 hours of RE | <p>Christianity for at least 50% of study time and Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs</p> <p>Pupils may also learn from other religions and non-religious worldviews in thematic units.</p> | |

Teaching

Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. RE lessons, provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

The Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus has been designed as a resource to support schools/academies in developing and delivering excellence in RE. It sets out an approach to teaching and learning, supporting teachers to help pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs.

The Syllabus is underpinned by three core elements (Text/Beliefs, Impact and Connections) which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, thus supporting the aims of RE. (Further details are found in Section A3 of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus).

We ensure that teachers in Religious Education to allow access by all pupils adopt a variety of teaching and learning styles. The variety enables pupils to encounter their preferred learning style as well as to develop a broad repertoire. The teaching and learning styles used promote a range of skills such as thinking skills, reasoning, enquiry and research.

Examples of active learning strategies and activities, which we use, are:

- Dramatic conventions;
- Group work;
- Individual reflection;
- Use of music and art;
- Artefact handling;
- Multi - sensory approaches;
- Visits and visitors;
- Use of ICT and Multi Media;
- Use of photos, posters, DVDs.

Subject Leadership

RE is a core subject in all Church of England schools. RE has equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. It is a priority in our school to build up the expertise of all those who lead and teach RE.

The RE subject leaders are Melanie Hirst and Gemma Hetherington

The Subject Leader for Religious Education has the following role.

Policy, knowledge and development

- Works with the Headteacher to reviews the School's RE Policy annually;
- Devises a whole school Long Term Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Decides which religions are to be included at which key stage, based on the syllabus requirements;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient across the school

- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy;
- Ensures that SEN and school policies are promoted in RE;
- Promotes RE with staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- Promotes displays of pupils' work in RE;
- Audits available resources, buy new ones and deploys appropriately;
- Keeps up-to-date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

- Reviews, monitors and evaluates the provision and the practice of RE with the headteacher;
- Identifies trends, makes comparisons and knows about different groups within the school
- Monitors planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
- Provides observation feedback and report on findings;
- Samples pupil's work;
- Evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment;
- Sets overall school targets for improvement.

Supporting and advising

- Prepares a subject action plan or implementation plan
- Leads curriculum development and ensures staff development through courses, in-house meetings and training;
- Keeps up-to-date with new developments and resources, including accessing the Diocese of Peterborough termly RE Newsletter;
- Supports non-specialist teachers and staff;
- Works alongside colleagues to demonstrate good practice;
- Prepares statements about RE for parents and governors, as required;
- Ensures parents and pupils are involved in the process.

Quality Assurance

We ensure that there is external verification of standards in RE in a variety of ways. This includes monitoring by a Diocesan Schools Consultant; RE Link Governor monitoring; completing a SIAMS/RE self-evaluation.

Resources

Resources are in place for each theme/unit within Religious Education which include some religious boxes which are stored outside the resource room. These have been updated in April 2021.

We maintain an RE story shelf in the library, which offers many stories from different traditions. Teachers may choose to use these in RE. Staff are invited to suggest gaps in the resources for future spending.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in RE will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work/resources used such as "Understanding Christianity";
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Diocesan Syllabus. Further detail including End of Phase Learning Outcomes, Unit Outcomes and Pupil Speak Unit Outcomes can be found in Section D of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus;
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop;
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy;
- Include pupil self-assessment;
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development;
- Enable effective reporting to parents

An annual report which includes information about RE and informs parents of their child's progress, as required by law. We will make specific, individual, accurate comments on each child's progress in RE in this report, based on regular monitoring of work and with regard to the end of phase outcomes. We will transfer this information to new schools when pupils leave us.

Self-Evaluation, RE and Inspection

The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, in line with guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Striving for Excellence

We know that RE makes a powerful contribution to children and young people's learning. It provides them with the chance to explore the big ideas of religion and belief and to think about what matters in their own lives. We look at the continuing role of religion in contemporary British and global society.

We aim to make our school a challenging but safe space for pupils to explore their own and others' religious, spiritual and philosophical convictions critically and responsibly. We give opportunities to engage in dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.

High quality RE supports the development of the whole child. It also has a significant contribution to make to whole school improvement.

We continuously strive for excellence for all our pupils in Religious Education

Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed annually in line with schools' procedures.