



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. **Jeremiah 29:11***

Date of Policy / Reviews	Author(s)	Approved by Gov. Body	Signed	Date for review
27.09.24	S Wilcock			27.09.2025
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The Dove-Shell Federation comprises two Church of England, Voluntary Aided schools located in Oldham. The schools and staff work closely together to model the same strong Christian ethos and values. However, both schools have their own unique character and distinctiveness. At The Dove Shell Federation, Christian values are at the heart of all that we do and all that we are in school and in the wider community.

East Crompton St James' CE Primary School Ethos

We work together as one, having confidence in everyone's potential to persevere whilst showing courage, respect and trust to all.

Our vision is for all members of our school community to be equipped to serve in God's world and live life to its fullest.

'Encourage one another and build one another up' Thessalonians 5:11.

St Thomas' Moorside CE Primary School Ethos

Our school is grounded on friendship towards everyone we meet, on trust between children, staff and our wider community and on compassion shown through empathy for all.

Our vision is for all members of our school community to be equipped to serve in God's world and live life to its fullest.

'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Mark 12:31

The Henshaw Trust

St Thomas' Moorside work together with The Henshaw Trust to achieve a common aim of promoting God's kingdom and the values and teaching of the Church of England

Legal Requirements

As both schools in our federation are voluntary aided the management of Religious Education is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher in line with the Church of England's Education Office statement of entitlement. RE at our federation is taught within the terms laid out by the school's trust deeds and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. It is taught in accordance with the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE which fulfils all legal requirements.

The purpose of Religious Education

Religious Education adheres to the Manchester Diocese Religious Education Syllabus 2023 and the aims and purposes of the 2019 Statement of entitlement.

- 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.
- to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- to 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 places.

- to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

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

Christian values

Christian values are derived from the teachings of Jesus Christ. We feel that by using the Christian values below and sharing the word of God we create opportunities for maximum growth and development – academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally and mentally. These values link directly to our mission statements and vision.

Term	Christian Value
Autumn 1	Service
Autumn 2	Compassion
Spring 1	Perseverance
Spring 2	Justice
Summer 1	Trust
Summer 2	Courage

British Values

The Dove Shell Federation reflects British Values in all we do. We carefully select biblical text for RE and reflect on the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance in storytelling.

Our Christian and British Values together:

Democracy – Justice / Trust

The Rule of Law - Service

Individual Liberty – Perseverance/Courage

Tolerance & Respect – Compassion

Parents and children can expect that in a Church school RE will have a high profile within the curriculum and will be a priority for senior leaders. The RE curriculum is intrinsic to the outworking of a Church school's Christian vision in enabling all children to flourish. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual moral social and cultural development.

Spirituality

At The Dove Shell Federation, we value spirituality and the holistic development of the child. We fully embrace the National Curriculum by “promoting children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.” Our role as educators is to guide the children in our care along the path of life, therefore spirituality plays a big part in our RE curriculum. As children grow in their understanding of spirituality and values are embedded, they become secure enough to make mistakes and therefore move on with their spiritual learning and academic growth. Our definition of spirituality is...

Spirituality is an individual connection with something greater than one’s self. It gives us a unique feeling of belonging, peace and contentment. It leads us to question, in awe and wonder, what it is to be human.

Time Allocation

One hour per week for Key Stage One and one hour and a quarter for Key Stage Two, is dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives. RE curriculum time does not include collective worship, even where the theme provides a starting point for curricular work. The provision of RE is statutory for children in Reception classes. RE is not compulsory for nursery children but we provide suitable activities to encourage questions and reflection, and choose to make use of the material from the Diocesan syllabus. An RE day is also planned into each term. The focus of the day is on the three world faiths set out in the Manchester Diocese Religious Education 2023 syllabus. In our federation, we deliver a 50% balance between Christianity and other Religions and Worldviews.

Syllabus

The syllabus has been developed by RE Today and it reflects current thinking and research around religion and worldviews. As we strive to create a broad and balanced, knowledge rich curriculum, considering all elements that define high quality RE, it was recognised that the need for greater amounts of time and focus needed to be given to faiths and worldviews other than Christianity.

It provides opportunity for the thematic study of religious belief (through comparing beliefs on a theme) and the developing of the associated skills in this area, yet it also has planned opportunity for systematic study, approaching one religious tradition at a time. It is hoped that this approach will develop a depth of knowledge, wisdom and understanding, while encouraging curiosity, reflection and exploration of the ways in which people live, enabling our children and young people to recognise the value of their communities and contribute to them living well together.

This syllabus is designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE. It responds to national calls for deepening pupils’ knowledge about religions and for developing their ‘religious literacy’. It does this by studying one religion at a time (‘systematic’ units), and then including ‘thematic’ units, which build on learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied.

It sets out an underlying teaching and learning approach, whereby pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to handle questions of religion and belief.

The federation’s medium-term plans (Appendix A) have been developed with the teaching and learning approach which incorporates three core elements, which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, underpinning the aims of RE (Making sense of beliefs, making connections, understanding the impact). Teaching and learning in the classroom will

encompass all three elements (success criteria), allowing for overlap between elements as suits the religion, concept and question being explored. These elements set the context for open exploration of religion and belief. They offer a structure through which pupils can encounter diverse religious traditions alongside non-religious worldviews – which reflect the backgrounds of many pupils in our schools. The elements present a broad and flexible strategy that allows for different traditions to be treated with integrity. These elements offer a route through each unit while also allowing for a range of questions reflecting different approaches, for example, from religious studies, philosophy, sociology, ethics and theology.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception units of work are identified on long-term planning. Whilst Nursery do not have discrete lessons, RE in Nursery follows the same thematic structure that is identified on Reception long term planning. It enables children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others and learn how to form positive and respectful relationships through the use of story. Nursery children will begin to understand and value the differences of individuals and groups within their own community. Children will have opportunity to develop their emerging moral and cultural awareness as they discuss the stories they have shared. Furthermore, provision within 'Understanding the World' will enhance RE teaching. Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. As well as building important knowledge, this area of learning extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across RE.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching of RE is both a huge responsibility and a privilege that must be recognised by those who teach it. Children will learn about religions and also from religions through a balanced approach. Where meaningful, links may be made between other subjects and RE in a mutual partnership. For example, P4C is often used to facilitate learning objectives. Art skills are applied to allow children to represent their own beliefs and visualisations. Children apply English skills when recording written reflections.

RE work is recorded in purple federation exercise books. Alternatively, each class also has a floor book where learning from some lessons is recorded. Floor books are largely used where lessons have been discussion based. Post it notes with children's final thoughts can then be stuck in floor books and used for formative assessment purposes with teachers addressing misconceptions when needed.

Exercise books are to have the date and learning challenge recorded in them for all accompanying work.

We ensure that the topics studied in RE build upon prior learning. Diagnostic questions are used for assessment at the beginning of every unit of work to ensure that lessons are being delivered with appropriate challenge. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding 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 school. We recognise the fact that in our federation we have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

Recording, Marking, Assessment and Reporting

Children's work is marked in line with the federation's marking policy. Formative assessment following discussion-based lessons is completed after analysing floor

books.

We report on children's progress in RE to parents annually in our end of year report – stipulating whether children are emerging, at or exceeding the expected level of achievement.

Drop-in sessions by the RE lead take place on a regular basis which allows for areas of success and development to be highlighted and addressed. Deep dives in RE are also another approach used to celebrate and improve practice. The impact of CPD that staff receive is also monitored.

Inclusion

All governors and staff recognise their duties under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate discrimination, bullying and harassment aimed at protected characteristics
- Promote equality of access and opportunity within our federation and within our wider community
- Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

All pupils will have access to the RE curriculum. Within this framework, sensitivity will be shown to the religious beliefs and practices of all class members.

The Right to Withdraw

At The Dove – Shell Federation we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Worship and/or Religious Education.

Religious Education provided by our federation is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher will explore the reasons for the request with parents and seek to arrive at an agreement. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

Parents may request the governing board to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend

another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing board should make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing board be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails. Parents are informed in the school prospectus that they have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and worship.

Self-Evaluation

The subject leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and areas for development of RE alongside the senior leadership team. Monitoring takes place according to policy. Ongoing self-evaluation is completed at least annually.

There are a range of stakeholders who are asked to be involved in monitoring RE. These include: The Executive Headteacher, the Senior Leadership team, Chair of Governors, foundation governors, the Collective worship leader, staff and children.

Kathryn Jackson	Chair of Governors
Andrew Turner	Foundation Governor St Thomas
Sally Johnson	Foundation Diocesan Governor
Rev. Paul Pritchard	Foundation Ex Officio Governor St James'
Deborah Warrington	Foundation PCC Governor EC St James'
Simon Cane	Foundation Link Governor for RE Henshaw Trust (St Thomas')

RE leader: Sophie Wilcock

Appendix A



Year	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
EYFS	F4: Being special where do we belong?	F2: Why is Christmas special to Christians? (Christianity: Incarnation)	F1: Why is the word God important to Christians? (Christianity: God)	F3: Why is Easter special to Christians? (Christianity: Salvation)	F5: What places are special and why?	F6: What times/stories are special and why?
Year 1	1.2 Who do Christians say made the world? (Christianity: Creation)	1.1 What do Christians think God is like? (Christianity: God)	1.7 Who is Jewish and how do they live? (Judaism: God/Torah/People)		1.10 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	1.9 How should we care for the world and for others and why does it matter? (c, J NR)
Year 2	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Islam)	1.2 Why does Christmas matter to Christians? (Christianity: Incarnation)	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Islam)	1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians? (Christianity: Salvation)	1.3 What is the good news Christians believe Jesus brings? (Christianity: Gospel)	1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers? (c, M)
Year 3	L2.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation story? (Christianity: Creation/Fall)	L2.2 What is it like for someone to follow God? (Christianity: People of God)	L2.9 How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim? (Islam)	L2.10 How do festivals and family like show what matters to Jewish people? (Judaism)	L2.4 What kind of world did Jesus want? (Christianity: Gospel)	L2.12 How and why do people try to make the world a better place? (C, M, J, NR)
Year 4	L2.3 What is the Trinity and why is it important to Christians? (Christianity: God/Incarnation)	L2.7 What do Hindus believe God is like? (Hinduism)	L2.8 What does mean to be a Hindu today? (Hinduism)	L2.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (Christianity: Salvation)	L2.6 For Christians when Jesus left, what was the impacts of Pentecost? (Christianity: Kingdom of God)	L2.11 How and why do people mark the significant events of life? (C, H, NR)
Year 5	U2.1 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving? (Christianity: God)	U2.8 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Islam)	U2.3 Why do Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah? (Christianity: Incarnation)	U2.9 Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people? (Judaism)	U2.4 Christians and how to live: What would Jesus do? (Christianity: Gospel)	U2.10 What matters most to Humanists and Christians? (C, M, J, NR)
Year 6	U2.2 Creation and Science conflicting or complimentary? (Christianity: People of God)	U2.11 Why do some people believe in God and some people not? (C, NR)	U2.7 Why do Hindus want to be good? (Hinduism)	U2.5 What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people? (Christianity: Salvation)	U2.6 For Christians, what kind of king was Jesus? (Christianity: Kingdom of God)	U2.12 How does faith help people when life gets hard?

