



Ellingham VC & Woodton Primary Federation

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR RE

Date Reviewed:	Agreed by Governors:	Date for Next Review:
June 2025	June 2025	June 2028

*Our vision is to love our neighbour,
enabling everyone to flourish and to
reach their full potential.*

RESPECT

CHALLENGE

INSPIRE

RESILIENCE

NURTURE

ASPIRATION

Introduction

Ellingham is a Church of England voluntary controlled school, which preserves and develops its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. Although Woodton is a Community School, it has close links with the local church and retains the Vision, Ethos and Values as at Ellingham.

Statutory Requirements for the Provision of RE

The primary legislation passed with regard to RE between 1944 and 1993 was consolidated by The Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Circular 1/94 and the subsequent revision of this guidance in 2019 Religious Education in English Schools (Non-Statutory Guidance 2010) offered an interpretation of the legislation: RE must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request.

The Purpose of RE

RE will enable pupils' **religious literacy**. This means that pupils will have the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religions and worldviews. Pupils will be able to make sense of religion and world views around them and begin to understand the complex world in which they live. RE is primarily about enabling pupils to become freethinking, critical participants in public discourse, who can make informed judgments about matters of belief, which shape the global landscape.

Aims

- To know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews by learning to see these through the lenses of theology, philosophy and human and social science
- To express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews through a multi-disciplinary approach.
- To gain and deploy skills rooted in theology, philosophy and human and social science engaging critically with religious and non-religious worldviews

Pupils progress will be assessed in relation to the purpose and aims of the subject. The primary concern is how well pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religions and worldviews. RE supports the aims of the school curriculum which is balanced and broadly based.

Our school vision is to "Love Our Neighbour". RE supports and informs our vision, thus enabling everyone to flourish and to reach their full potential.

Teaching

Religious education at Ellingham VC and Woodton Primary Federation follows the guidance and recommendations of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2019. The RE curriculum is taught through discrete skill-based lessons weekly. Teaching is planned using an enquiry question

focus as a stimulus for developing the children's knowledge and understanding. Over the course of each school year, five or six enquiry questions are taught.

We plan and teach each of our enquiry questions units using an enquiry based cycle of Engage, Enquire, Explore, Evaluate Express, as recommended by the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2019.

An enquiry-based approach for RE

- **Engage:** The new enquiry is introduced by exploring the conceptual focus and core question.
- **Enquire:** The enquiry is co-constructed with the pupils whilst staying within the parameters of the learning outcomes.
- **Explore:** Pupils enquire into the core question through the suggested core knowledge.
- **Evaluate:** Pupils respond to, analyse and evaluate their understanding of the core question.
- **Express:** Pupils express the knowledge and understanding they have gained to answer the key question, with an opportunity (if appropriate) for the teacher to assess if pupils have met the age-related expectations.

Enquiry questions are carefully chosen to ensure that our RE curriculum provides teaching and learning that encompasses skills development in the three lenses of RE outlined in the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus, (Theology, Philosophy and Human Social Science)

The Lens of Thinking through Believing (Theology)

This is about asking questions that believers would ask. It examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

The Lens of Thinking through Thinking (Philosophy)

This is about asking questions that thinkers would ask. It is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

The Lens of Thinking through Living (Human/Social Science)

This is about asking questions about how thinking and believing affects people and their lives. It explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

We use a range of teaching strategies to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, drama, thinking skills, artefacts and stories. We value real, multi-sensory experiences to support our children's learning whenever possible.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities. We provide opportunities for the children to develop their knowledge, beliefs and spirituality through active involvement. For example, in preparations for religious festivals such as Easter and Christmas, with Carol services and Nativity performances.

Whole School Faith Days

We follow a 3-year cycle for our termly whole school faith days. Each Faith Day within the two-year cycle focuses on a specific Religion/Worldview. During a two year cycle the following Faiths and worldviews are studied: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Humanism.

Entitlement and Inclusion - EAL, SEN, More Able

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Teachers include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child should be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is regarded as a vital part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in RE and to plan future work. Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to their religious knowledge and understanding and their skills to analyse, interpret and evaluate what they have learnt.

Pupils are assessed against our RE Nutshell which details substantive and disciplinary knowledge being taught. These are delivered in a variety of ways such as written activities, role-play, craft activities, educational visits and oral discussion. We assess the children's progress, once per term, across the three lenses of RE – Theology, Philosophy and Human and Social Sciences. Children's progress in RE is shared with parents annually through parents evenings and annuals school reports.

Monitoring and Review

The whole staff, led by the subject leader, is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work. The co-ordinator will monitor RE provision and standards within the schools through learning walks, book looks, pupil voice and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The RE co-ordinator, under the direction of the Head teacher, is responsible for this policy, its implementation and review. The Governing Board will ensure that monitoring procedures are in place. This policy will be reviewed by the RE co-ordinator every three years.

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

A parent or pupil may request:

- That their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of a school day.
- That a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.

Ellingham VC and Woodton Primary Federation wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head Teacher to discuss any concerns about the policy, provision and practise of Religious Education at Ellingham VC and Woodton Primary Federation. Presently all class teachers are involved in RE teaching, but the schools recognise any teacher's right to withdraw on the grounds of conscience.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- Ellingham VC and Woodton Primary Federation will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The schools may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the schools, although the schools should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.

- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, the 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.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the schools in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Role of RE Leader

- To keep the RE policy under regular review.
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes
- To maintain and build priorities set by the school.
- To monitor, review and update resources.
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese.
- To support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate

Responsibilities for RE within Ellingham VC and Woodton Primary School Federation (Headteacher and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and Headteacher will also ensure:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed
- standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the schools can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in the schools who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

Equal Opportunities

RE is delivered in accordance with the schools Equal Opportunities Policy.

Parental and Community Involvement

Woodton and Ellingham each have close links with their local churches and communities in various ways and are developing links with religious communities further afield. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE within each school. Parents are invited into the schools to celebrate religious festivals such as Harvest and Christmas Nativity and Carol Services. A report on their child's attainment and progress in RE is given out annually.

Links to Other Policies & Guidance

- Collective Worship Policy
- Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2019
- C of E statutory Entitlement
- RE Nutshell