

Clipston Endowed VC Primary School

Religious Education Policy



Be Kind ~ Be Your Best ~ Be Happy

Religious Education Policy

Presented and adopted by Governors: Autumn 2024

Proposed Review: Autumn 2026

Signed
Mrs Sarah McElroy - Chair of Governors

Clipston Primary School's Vision, Mission, Ethos and Aims

Our Vision

Every Child Matters To God

Our Mission

Be Kind ~ Be Your Best ~ Be Happy

Ethos

Recognising its historic foundation, Clipston Primary School seeks to serve its community by providing a rounded, connected and coherent education of the highest quality.

We endeavour to preserve and develop our distinct religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.

The school lives out its Christian virtues – Thankfulness, Kindness, Justice, Love, Forgiveness, Responsibility and Courage – and all those essential human values, which are common to good, kind and tolerant people of all faiths and none, through the experiences it offers to all its pupils.

Aims

The school's aim, through its Christian ethos, is the creation of a safe, happy learning environment, which supports all children on their journey towards becoming:

- Successful engaged learners, who enjoy learning, who are knowledgeable and skilled, and who make progress and achieve their best;
- Confident, articulate individuals who can lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives in the communities in which they live now and in the future;
- Responsible, happy citizens of the world who have the capacity to make positive contributions to society.

“Do to others as you would have them do unto you” Luke 6:31

To achieve these aims, staff and governors will work in partnership with parents, carers and the local community for the benefit of all our pupils.

The Religious Education Policy

Statutory Requirements

Schools, as set out in the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, are required to teach RE to all pupils, within the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The National Curriculum 2014 states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum.

- All state schools are also required to make provision for a daily act of collective worship and must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage and sex and relationship education to pupils in secondary education.

Withdrawal

Religious Education (RE) is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents do have the right to withdraw their child/ren from RE. Any parent considering this is asked to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss the matter and the alternative arrangements that will be required. Clipston School does not support selective withdrawal from RE. We also recognise the right of individual staff to exempt themselves from teaching RE as legal entitlement.

What guides the RE curriculum at Clipston School?

The legal requirements for the curriculum and assessment in Religious Education are arrived at locally for Local Authority (LA) maintained schools and published by the LA as an “Agreed Syllabus for RE”.

Our aims for Religious Education are taken from the Agreed Syllabus for RE in Northamptonshire (currently under review).

The aims of the syllabus are for pupils:

- to develop religious literacy;
- to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and world views represented in the United Kingdom;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- to develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

Religions deal with some of the most profound and difficult questions in human life, such as:

- What is the purpose of life?
- How should people treat each other?
- How do we explain and cope with death and suffering?

Religions approach these issues in complex ways, considering ways of life, culture and action, as well as ritual, tradition, story, symbol and belief. Religious Education must take account of this depth and complexity, helping pupils to an understanding appropriate to their age and aptitude.

To do this RE needs:

- to develop pupils' skills;
- to enable them to ask questions;
- to discover information, to approach new material with empathy;
- to reflect on their learning. Pupils should not only acquire knowledge but also be able to use their knowledge to understand their world, build community, and develop their personal position.

Throughout the RE curriculum pupils should be encouraged to **explore** religions, **engage** with their knowledge, and **reflect** on their learning and their lives.

Religious Literacy

Religious literacy is the knowledge of, and ability to understand, religion, beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views. It plays an important part in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Its importance has increased as globalisation has created greater links across communities around the world and supported migration between societies of different faiths and cultures. Someone who is religiously literate is able to talk with fluency and understanding about religion and belief. It is firmly rooted within educational practice. A crucial aspect of religious literacy is developed through school RE.

The distinctive nature of Clipston School as a Church of England School in the Community

Clipston School is a Voluntary Controlled Endowed Primary School located in the small village of Clipston. Since 1667 it has held an important role in the village life.

The school has close links with the local church (All Saints' Church). The incumbent is welcomed into school to lead School Assemblies and to be involved in supporting RE lessons. Having been interregnum, since October 2022 – a new Rector took up their post in July 2024.

The church building features in the life of the school. The children make many visits there, not only to find out more about the building itself but also to lead and take part in school services and celebrations, throughout the church year.

The School also has close links with the community generally. Members of the local community come to school very regularly to help the children with various activities e.g. reading, and they in turn are invited to concerts and special events as part of our policy of broadening the depth of relationships between the School and its Community.

As part of our policy of broadening our children's horizons, representatives of other local churches in the area are invited to lead our assemblies and enrich the RE curriculum, as well as representatives of the wider community (e.g. National Children's Home, Children United, Barnados, Royal British Legion).

Preparing our pupils for Life in Modern Britain

At present, pupils at Clipston School are predominantly from a White British background. From time to time, we welcome children onto the school roll from other ethnic groups and all children are very well integrated. The rural location of the school means that we are a considerable distance away from other faith communities and places of worship. As a result, our children's everyday experience of the increasingly pluralistic nature of British society is limited. To compensate for this, we invite specialists from a range of faith communities to share their understanding and experience of a range of religious and cultural celebrations such as Sukkot and Diwali. We also have long-established links with a culturally diverse school in the city of Leicester; the children enjoy reciprocal visits to Sparkenhoe Primary School. We have rolling curriculum programme for RE to ensure that children have opportunities to visit other places of worship, such as a mosque in Northampton and the central mosque in Leicester, and to welcome visitors from other major world faiths to our school.

Our Mission

At Clipston, we consciously strive to achieve a positive, caring ethos as reflected by the distinctive ethos statement of our school: **“Be Kind ~ Be Your Best ~ Be Happy”**

Recognising its historic foundation, Clipston Primary School aims to serve its community by providing a rounded, connected and coherent education of the highest quality. We endeavour to preserve and develop our distinct religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. The school promotes its Christian virtues – Thankfulness, Kindness, Justice, Love, Forgiveness, Responsibility and Courage – and all those essential human values, which are common to good, kind and tolerant people of all faiths and none, through the experiences it offers to all its pupils.

The school’s aim, through its Christian ethos, is the creation of a safe, happy learning environment, which supports all children on their journey towards becoming:

- Successful engaged learners, who enjoy learning, who are knowledgeable and skilled, and who make progress and achieve;
- Confident, articulate individuals who can lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives in the communities in which they live now and in the future;
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“Do to others as you would have them do unto you” Luke 6:31

We consider RE to be a vehicle through which we support pupils in developing their own identity, beliefs and values, as well as growing in knowledge and understanding of the subject as they explore, engage and reflect on their learning. Religious Education is regarded as fundamental in fulfilling our school’s Aims.

RE and the wider school curriculum

A holistic approach to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC), British Values, and Community Cohesion focuses on preparing pupils for life in the 21st century, engaging pupils in a contemporary and relevant context. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and secular world views, and explores their responses to life's challenges.

Frequent reference is made to those who live out their beliefs, insights and values in their daily lives and within their own communities. This gives pupils the knowledge and skills to flourish spiritually both within their own community and as members of a diverse and global society.

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for their future, for employment and lifelong learning. It enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their learning.

Although RE contributes to other subjects, it is not defined by or confined to them. Similarly, although RE and Collective Worship can enrich each other, RE cannot be replaced by or delivered through Collective Worship.

The Organisation of the Curriculum

RE plays an integrated role within the school's curriculum plans. The nature of the Agreed Syllabus means that most aspects are taught discretely. Thus, RE is taught with integrity and is not compromised in order to fit in with a topic/theme. The school takes account of the mixed-age classes through careful planning to ensure that the children are encouraged to engage with, explore and reflect upon a variety of world religions during KS1 and KS2.

RE is taught mainly during specific timetabled sessions each week. As part of a two-year rolling curriculum programme, children will learn about all the main religions as they progress through the school. Distinctively Christian elements are usually explored annually, as we move through the church year.

The Understanding Christianity resource is key to the Christianity aspect of RE. We also use Discovery RE - an enquiry-based approach to the teaching of RE - as a resource to support the delivery of the RE Syllabus, plus the Kapow online resource.

Planning for RE will reflect the two Attainment Targets:

- 1) Learning about Religion and Belief
- 2) Learning from Religion and Belief

Our **Big Picture for RE** and the **Overview and End Points** from Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6 documents (available on our website) show in detail how the RE curriculum is organised at Clipston School.

RE Management and Leadership

The Leader for RE at Clipston is Mrs Emma Mercer. This role requires her to:

- Work with the Governors and the external Diocesan Schools' Consultant to review the RE Policy;
- Oversee the organisation of the RE syllabus and resources;
- Ensure that teachers make judgements about pupil attainment at the end of each year and report this to parents.

Continuity, Progression and Coherence

The schemes of work set out in the Agreed Syllabus and the use of Attainment Descriptors lend themselves to continuity and progression. They are developmental and progressive, and by planning as a school and working together, we aim to ensure that progression through the RE Syllabus is coherent. As children move through school, their understanding and appreciation develops as their maturity allows them to reflect and question their own beliefs and values.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The school assesses the pupils' attainment against the Descriptions in the Agreed Syllabus, the National Curriculum statements and the school's own End Points. The Understanding Christianity assessment statements support this process. Overall attainment is reported to parents annually.