

**EAST CLAYDON C OF E
SCHOOL & PRESCHOOL**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

POLICY 2026

“BUILDING EACH OTHER UP”

Kindness • Courage • Collaboration • Joy

Policy owner	Headteacher
Operational lead	RE Subject Leader
Approved by	Governing Board
Approval date	16 th September 2026
Next review	September 2028

1. Purpose and status of this policy

Religious Education (RE) is a high-profile academic subject and an essential part of a Church school curriculum. This policy sets out East Claydon's entitlement, curriculum principles and operational expectations from September 2026. It applies to pupils from Reception to Year 6 and is distinct from Collective Worship.

CORE ENTITLEMENT

Every pupil will receive a coherent, ambitious and inclusive RE curriculum which develops secure knowledge, disciplinary understanding, religious literacy and respectful dialogue. Pupils will study Christianity as a diverse global living faith alongside a planned range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

2. Our Christian vision and values

Rooted in God's love, we believe every child is a unique gift, created to flourish in a joyful environment. At East Claydon, we encourage one another and build each other up through kindness, collaboration and courage, so all may thrive and grow in wisdom, hope and dignity, living life in all its fullness.

"Encourage one another and build each other up." 1 Thessalonians 5:11

RE is one of the principal ways in which the school's Christian vision is explored, understood and lived. It enables pupils to encounter difference with kindness, explore challenging questions with courage, learn through dialogue and collaboration, and experience the joy of discovering how people make sense of life, faith and the world. Pupils listen respectfully to contrasting viewpoints, work together to interpret religious sources and consider how beliefs can inspire people to build up individuals and communities.

3. Legal and denominational framework

- RE forms part of the basic curriculum and is provided for all registered pupils at East Claydon, including pupils in Reception.
- As a maintained voluntary aided Church of England school, the Governing Board determines RE in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and denominational character.
- The curriculum is informed by the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2022-2027 and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education RE scheme, adapted to the school's context.
- The Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, January 2026, sets the minimum expectations for Church schools and is the reference point for SIAMS inspection from September 2026.
- RE is taught separately from Collective Worship. Time allocated to worship, assemblies, PSHE or general spiritual development does not replace dedicated RE curriculum time.

4. Aims of Religious Education

Through RE, pupils will:

- engage meaningfully and critically with a multi-religious and multi-secular world;
- know about and understand Christianity as a diverse, global and living faith, engaging with biblical texts and other sources of authority;
- gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, including diversity, continuity and change within them;
- grapple with questions of meaning and purpose arising from human existence and experience;
- understand religion's continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and on individuals, communities and societies across time and place;
- develop substantive and disciplinary knowledge that equips them to be religiously literate;

- explore and articulate their own personal worldviews, whether religious or non-religious, spiritual or philosophical;
- listen carefully, challenge misconceptions and take part in informed, respectful dialogue.

5. Curriculum entitlement and design

5.1 Curriculum principles

- The curriculum is well balanced, coherently sequenced and ambitious for every pupil.
- Christianity is the main religious worldview studied in every year group and accounts for at least 50% of RE curriculum time.
- Pupils study a planned range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Teaching avoids presenting any tradition as uniform and includes diversity within and between traditions.
- The detailed sequence, traditions, worldviews and key questions are set out in the school's RE long-term plan and progression documentation. Coverage is reviewed to ensure appropriate depth, progression and representation across the mixed-age curriculum.
- Units identify the substantive knowledge, vocabulary, sources, disciplinary questions and expected outcomes pupils will build over time.
- Content is adapted thoughtfully for East Claydon's mixed-age classes and local context without weakening curriculum ambition or entitlement.
- Curriculum design makes purposeful use of theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences as disciplinary lenses.
- RE is objective, critical and pluralistic. It is non-confessional and does not seek to convert pupils or secure assent to a particular belief.

5.2 Dedicated curriculum time

Across each key stage, sufficient dedicated curriculum time will be protected to deliver the planned RE curriculum in full and to meet the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement. The school will provide no less than 5% of curriculum time for RE. This allocation will be audited annually using the published timetable and planned annual curriculum provision. RE time is separate from Collective Worship.

NON-NEGOTIABLE

RE must not be routinely displaced by other subjects, interventions, rehearsals, events or Collective Worship. Any exceptional change must be recovered so that the planned entitlement and sequence are maintained.

6. Teaching and learning

Units will normally be organised around a carefully framed enquiry or key question. Enquiry will be underpinned by secure substantive knowledge and the purposeful use of theological, philosophical and human and social scientific approaches.

High-quality RE at East Claydon will:

- critically engage with a range of religious and non-religious source materials, including biblical texts and other key sources of authority;
- use theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences to help pupils ask different kinds of question and understand how knowledge is constructed;
- explore how texts, beliefs, rituals and practices help form identity, and how these may vary across time, place, community and culture;
- explicitly teach accurate subject vocabulary and challenge common misconceptions and stereotypes;
- generate meaningful and informed dialogue in safe, supportive classrooms;

- recognise the personal knowledge pupils bring while never requiring pupils to disclose, defend or represent a family belief position;
- develop enquiry, analysis, interpretation, comparison, evaluation, reflection and reasoned response;
- include planned encounters with lived religion and worldviews through suitable visitors, visits or high-quality virtual encounters where these strengthen curriculum learning;
- use high-quality, accurate and age-appropriate resources which reflect diversity within worldviews;
- contribute appropriately to pupils' understanding of Fundamental British Values, particularly mutual respect, individual liberty and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, without reducing RE to a general values curriculum.

7. Inclusion, equality, SEND and disadvantage

Every pupil is entitled to achieve highly in RE, irrespective of educational need, disability, prior attainment, disadvantage, religious or non-religious background, family context or personal worldview. RE will be planned and taught in accordance with the school's Equality Policy, SEND Policy and the National Society for Education's Flourishing for All (2024). No pupil will experience a reduced curriculum entitlement because of a protected characteristic or background.

Teachers will maintain the intended curriculum while adapting access through explicit vocabulary teaching, carefully selected sources, visual support, modelling, structured talk, chunked texts, retrieval, assistive technology and other reasonable adjustments. Scaffolds will be purposeful and reduced as pupils become more independent.

Assessment and task design will allow pupils to demonstrate deep thinking in different valid ways. Adult support will promote participation and independence rather than replacing pupils' thinking. Leaders will monitor participation, curriculum access and outcomes for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

8. Assessment

Assessment will be accurate, inclusive, proportionate and closely linked to the planned curriculum. It will identify what pupils know, understand and can do using substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge without assessing the strength, correctness or maturity of a pupil's personal beliefs.

- Teachers will use questioning, discussion, retrieval, short written or creative outcomes, observation and end-of-unit tasks to check learning.
- Key assessment points and expected outcomes will be identified in curriculum planning and mixed-age progression documentation.
- Feedback will address misconceptions, improve use of evidence and support increasingly informed, reasoned responses.
- Assessment findings will inform reteaching, adaptation, curriculum review and future planning.
- The RE Subject Leader will support moderation and sample evidence across year groups to check progression, curriculum coverage and consistency.

9. Safe, respectful and objective RE

RE classrooms will be safe spaces for open exploration. Staff will establish clear expectations for respectful dialogue, use accurate language, distinguish between a personal view and an evidence-based claim, and intervene when stereotypes or prejudicial statements arise. Sensitive or controversial questions will be handled in an age-appropriate, balanced way. Pupils may pass on personal disclosure and will not be asked to speak as representatives of a religion, worldview or community.

Visitors and external materials will be checked in advance for suitability, accuracy, safeguarding and curriculum purpose. A teacher will remain responsible for the lesson and will actively frame and follow up visitors' contributions.

10. Religious literacy

Religious literacy is central to RE at East Claydon. It is the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and worldviews. Through progressively developed substantive knowledge, disciplinary understanding and respectful dialogue, pupils learn to engage thoughtfully with complex questions, evaluate differing viewpoints and articulate informed responses. Religious literacy prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and supports the school's vision of building one another up through understanding, respect and dignity.

11. Spiritual development

RE contributes significantly to spiritual development by creating opportunities for pupils to encounter wonder, complexity, challenge, meaning and mystery. East Claydon's shared language of WOWs, OWs and NOWs may support reflection where it serves the RE learning intention. Personal reflection will remain invitational and inclusive of pupils of all faiths and none. Spiritual reflection in RE does not turn the lesson into Collective Worship and is not assessed as personal faith.

12. Leadership and professional development

12.1 Governing Board

- approves this policy and the overall basis and intent of the RE curriculum;
- ensures that RE reflects the Trust Deed and Church school character;
- assures itself that the adopted curriculum meets statutory requirements, the locally agreed syllabus and the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement;
- assures itself that RE has high status, sufficient time and appropriate resources;
- monitors standards and impact through a named governor, reports, visits and appropriate challenge;
- ensures leaders and staff have access to suitable subject training and diocesan support.

12.2 Headteacher and senior leaders

- protect RE's status, timetable and resources and articulate its distinctive purpose;
- ensure all staff and governors understand the entitlement and the separation of RE from Collective Worship;
- enable subject leadership, professional development and engagement with the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education;
- ensure findings from monitoring lead to clear, proportionate improvement actions.

12.3 RE Subject Leader

- maintains a coherent long-term plan, progression documentation, resources and assessment guidance;
- supports staff subject knowledge, planning and adaptation in mixed-age classes;
- monitors curriculum enactment through planning review, work scrutiny, pupil voice, learning visits and assessment evidence;
- completes an annual audit against the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement and reports findings and improvement actions to leaders and governors;
- reports strengths, risks, actions and impact to senior leaders and governors;
- keeps abreast of diocesan, local and national developments and recommends policy or curriculum changes.

12.4 Teachers

- follow the agreed curriculum and protect the planned allocation;
- prepare with secure subject knowledge and check the accuracy of content and resources;
- plan for participation, challenge and independence for all pupils;
- assess learning proportionately and respond to misconceptions and gaps;
- seek support or training where subject knowledge is not secure.

13. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring will evaluate both implementation and pupil impact. The annual cycle will include proportionate review of timetables and coverage, planning and resources, pupil work, pupil voice, lesson visits, assessment evidence, staff development needs and compliance with the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement. Findings and improvement actions will be reported to the Governing Board.

Leaders and governors will check:

- whether the curriculum is balanced, sequenced and contextually appropriate;
- whether Christianity receives at least 50% of curriculum time and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews is taught;
- whether protected RE time meets the minimum entitlement;
- whether pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, know more, remember more and can increasingly use disciplinary approaches;
- whether teaching is accurate, objective, critical, pluralistic and free from stereotypes;
- whether professional development and resources are improving classroom practice.

14. Right of withdrawal

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE and are not required to give a reason. A written request should be sent to the Headteacher and will be granted without delay. The school may offer a discussion only after confirming that the request has been granted, so that the scope and practical implications are clear. This discussion is not a condition of withdrawal.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the parent is responsible for providing alternative religious education. The school will provide appropriate supervision but is not required to provide an alternative curriculum. Withdrawal will not be used for unrelated intervention, catch-up or additional subject teaching. Partial withdrawal arrangements will be recorded clearly and reviewed if the curriculum or parental request changes.

Teachers retain the statutory right to withdraw from teaching RE, except where specifically employed to teach or lead it. Any teacher wishing to exercise this right should write to the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The school remains responsible for ensuring pupils receive their full entitlement.

15. Resources, visits and handling sacred materials

Resources will include authentic source material, sacred and other significant texts, artefacts, images, scholarship, digital media, visitors and lived examples. The long-term curriculum plan will identify appropriate opportunities for encounters through visits, visitors or high-quality virtual engagement. These experiences will be selected for their curriculum value and will not be treated as isolated enrichment activities.

The RE Subject Leader will review resources for currency, accuracy, accessibility, bias and representation. Sacred texts and artefacts will be handled respectfully and pupils will be taught why particular communities may use or handle them in specific ways.

16. Complaints

Questions about RE should normally be raised first with the class teacher or RE Subject Leader. Unresolved concerns will be considered through the school's Complaints Policy. Concerns about statutory entitlement, withdrawal or denominational provision will be referred to the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Governing Board and Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

17. Related documents and guidance

- Church of England, Religious Education Statement of Entitlement for Church of England Schools, January 2026, for implementation by September 2026;

- Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2022-2027;
- Oxford Diocesan Board of Education RE scheme and guidance;
- Understanding Christianity;
- National Society for Education, Flourishing for All (2024);
- East Claydon Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, SEND, Equality, Assessment and Feedback, Collective Worship, Spirituality and Complaints policies;
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998, including Schedule 19;
- Education Act 1996.

18. Compliance, approval and review

All staff, governors, volunteers and visitors are expected to support and comply with this policy. Staff responsible for delivering RE must follow the agreed curriculum, assessment arrangements and requirements set out within this policy.

Where there are concerns that this policy is not being followed, the Headteacher or relevant leader will first seek to understand the reasons and provide appropriate clarification, support, training or direction. Continued failure to follow agreed requirements may be addressed through the school's normal line management, appraisal, capability or disciplinary procedures, as appropriate.

Implementation of this policy and the effectiveness of the RE curriculum will be evaluated annually by the Headteacher, RE Subject Leader and Governing Board. The policy will be formally reviewed every two years, or sooner where legislation, diocesan guidance, the locally agreed syllabus, the Trust Deed or the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement changes.

Appendix A: Statement of Entitlement implementation check

Entitlement expectation	East Claydon policy commitment	Evidence / review
High status and priority	RE has protected time, named leadership, governor oversight and equal academic status.	Timetable; reports
All pupils achieve highly	Ambitious entitlement with adaptations that preserve intended learning.	Work; pupil voice
Sequenced, balanced curriculum	The long-term plan identifies progression, diversity and disciplinary learning.	Plans; scrutiny
Christianity at least 50%	Christianity is taught in every year group and receives at least half of RE time.	Curriculum audit
Range of worldviews	Religious and non-religious worldviews, including internal diversity, are planned.	Coverage map
Disciplinary lenses	Theology, philosophy and human and social sciences are deliberately used.	Unit plans; work
Enquiry and key questions	Units normally use carefully framed enquiry or key questions rooted in secure knowledge.	Planning review
Objective, critical, pluralistic	Teaching is non-confessional, accurate, balanced and open to reasoned dialogue.	Visits; pupil voice
Safe exploration	Pupils can question, reflect and articulate views without compelled disclosure.	Pupil voice
Religious literacy	Pupils develop informed language and reasoned dialogue about religion and worldviews.	Work; discussion
Subject expertise	Staff receive training, feedback, resources and access to diocesan support.	CPD records
Dedicated time	No less than 5% across each key stage, separate from Collective Worship.	Annual timetable audit
Inclusive assessment	Assessment checks curriculum learning and progress, not the quality of personal belief.	Assessment samples
Equality and inclusion	Access and participation are monitored, with reasonable adjustments that preserve ambition.	SEND review; pupil voice
Lived encounters	Visits, visitors or virtual encounters are planned where they strengthen learning.	Long-term plan
Effective governance	Governors approve curriculum intent and monitor standards, impact, time and improvement actions.	Minutes; visits
Annual entitlement audit	The Subject Leader reports compliance, risks and actions to leaders and governors.	Audit; governor report