Religious Education Policy

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Statement of intent

At **Coquet Community School** we firmly believe in the potential of every single student and that each one is capable of achieving great things. We want our students to leave us confident, well-rounded and well qualified. We will prepare students to go out into the world and seize every opportunity.

At our school, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with Northumberland Agreed Syllabus.

The school has created this policy in order to ensure that:

- All pupils are provided with a balanced and broad curriculum which encompasses the traditions of Great Britain as well as a variety of other mainstream religions and non-religious worldviews
- All staff members are aware of planning, assessment, teaching and learning requirements for the RE curriculum
- All pupils know how to plan, practice and evaluate their work
- All pupils understand elements of RE, as per the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus.

1. The purpose and aims of religious education at CCS

The Northumberland Agreed Syllabus 2022 asserts the importance and value of religious education (RE) for all pupils, with on-going benefits for an open, articulate and understanding society.

The following purpose statements underpin the syllabus, which is constructed to support pupils and teachers in fulfilling them:

- Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- In RE, pupils learn about religions and beliefs in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions.
- Pupils learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully.
- Teaching, therefore, should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and beliefs, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities.
- RE should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society, with its diverse religions and beliefs.
- Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

These purpose statements are taken from A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England (REC 2013)

1.1 The principal aim of RE at CCS

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England (REC 2013).

1.2 The aims of RE

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1) make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:
    - identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
    - explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
    - recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation.
2) understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

3) make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
- challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding.

(Northumberland Agreed Syllabus 2022-2027)

2. Legal framework

2.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The School Standards and Framework Act

2.2 This policy has been created with regard to the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2019) 'Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010'

2.3 This policy has been created in conjunction with the following school policies:

- British Values Statement
- Equality Opportunities Policy

RE is a statutory part of the curriculum that evert pupil has an entitlement to. It is agreed locally. A locally agreed syllabus is the statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The subject leader is responsible for:

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Reviewing changes to the locally agreed curriculum and advising teachers on their implementation
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RE, providing support for staff where necessary
- Ensuring continuity and progression from year group to year group

- Helping to develop subject colleagues' expertise in RE
- Liaising with the ELT/SLT to establish budget and purchase further resources.
- Liaising with teachers across all phases
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff and the SLT as appropriate
- Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for the development of RE in subsequent years
- Reviewing and updating long-term and medium-term lesson plans and communicating these to teachers.

3.2 Classroom teachers are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy
- Ensuring progression of pupils' RE, with due regard to the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus
- Liaising with the subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an **annual** basis to parents
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach RE and developing their own subject knowledge
- Reviewing and updating short-term lesson plans, building on the medium-term lesson plans, taking into account pupils' needs and identifying the methods in which topics could be taught
- Attending subject directorate time.

3.3 The SENCO is responsible for:

- Advising staff on how best to support pupils' needs
- Advising staff on the inclusion of learning objectives in pupils' individual education plans
- Advising staff on the use of Learning Support Partners in order to meet pupils' needs.

4. Curriculum

Coquet Community School adheres to the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus and our curriculum is designed to meet the principal aim.

RE provision will include a distinct body of knowledge and will enable all pupils to make effective progress in achieving RE learning outcomes.

Compulsory religions and non-religious beliefs will be taught in a systematic and thematic way as per the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus.

All pupils will have a coherent and progressive experience of RE.

11-14s Key Stage 3	Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Buddhists	Consideration of other religions and non-religious world views can occur at any key stage, as appropriate to the school context.
14-16s Key Stage 4	Two religions are required, usually including Christianity. This will be through a course in Religious Studies or Religious Education leading to a qualification approved under Section 96.	
16-19s RE for all	Religions and world views to be selected by schools and colleges as appropriate	

The school will decide the attitudes and skills it wishes to emphasise across a school year or key stage, which meets the needs of the pupils.

Pupils will be introduced to issues of right and wrong, good and evil, conflict and justice and progress to being introduced to issues of crime and punishment, sex and relationships, addiction and dependency. This will reinforce the work carried out in PSHE to meet our RSE Policy.

Good practice for the curriculum includes:

- Exploring controversial issues in the modern world
- Working with local communities who promote the beliefs taught in lessons
- Introducing themed opportunities which celebrate different beliefs
- Encouraging pupils to deploy their skills and reflect on questions regarding truth and morality
- Promoting debate and dialogue of pupils within their local community.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of five per cent of curriculum time for RE. This is set out in the table below, and based on the most recent national guidance.

KS3 and 4 will be delivered through two one hour lessons per fortnight and KS5 through 10 hours of teaching during Y12 and 13.

5. Teaching and learning

The RE curriculum is delivered for two hours per fortnight at KS3 to KS5.

Classroom teachers use high-quality resources which model the religious and non-religious beliefs of Great Britain, in accordance with the school's British Values Policy.

Classroom teachers encourage pupils to discuss topics covered in RE with their peers and as a whole class.

During RE lessons, sufficient time is given for pupils to discuss, plan and edit their work.

To improve understanding of the topic, several methods of teaching are deployed, including but not limited to:

- Storytelling
- Teacher-led activities

- Pupil initiated activities
- Research
- Debating
- Problem solving
- Real life scenarios and decision-making opportunities.

To improve communication and language in the classroom, teachers will encourage pupils':

- Organisation, clarification and sequencing of thoughts, feelings and ideas
- Development of their own narratives in relation to the stories they hear in lessons
- Exploration of their feelings and emotions towards set narratives.

6. CPD

Lead teacher of RE to attend meetings and other CPD provided by Northumberland SACRE as relevant and provided.

7. Planning

All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils. They are designed in line with the Northumberland agreed syllabus to meet the principle aim and pedagogy of belief, impact and connections.

Planning for RE will comprise long-term, medium-term and short-term planning which will be undertaken by the relevant member of staff, e.g. the classroom teacher

Long-term plans will be created by the subject leader and will include the topics studied during each term in the key stage

Medium-term plans will be established by the subject leader and the details of work studied

11–14s	**45 hours of tuition per year** (e.g. an hour a week)
14–16s	**5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours of tuition across the key stage** (e.g. an hour a week for 5 terms, or 50 minutes per week, supplemented with off-timetable RE days)
16–19s	**Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable**

each term will be outlined for the teacher to build upon and personalise to their groups where necessary

Short-term plans will include the details of work studied during each lesson. The subject aims and lesson objectives will be outlined by the teacher and referred to the subject leader for verification.

8. Assessment and reporting

Pupils will be assessed using methods of formative and summative assessment throughout the year.

Formative assessment will be carried out routinely throughout the year and the results will be used to inform teachers' lesson plans.

Summative assessment will be carried out in line with data entry points. Teachers will use the results to assess pupils' overall achievement for each term. This information will be passed on at the end of the school year to each pupil's future teachers, in order to measure how well a pupil has progressed at any given time in their religious education.

Verbal reports will be available at parents' evening from subject teachers.

9. Resources

Writing resources, such as books, dictionaries and thesauruses, are available in most classrooms. Basic equipment is required to be brought to school by all pupils. Staff will have a small collection which can be loaned out.

The school library contains resources to support pupils' learning including non-fiction texts and fictional books where the characters are people of faith.

A regular audit will be carried out to ensure RE has the resources needed to meet the requirements of the syllabus be that artifact, texts, training to develop staff subject knowledge or material resources to improve lesson delivery.

10. Right of withdrawal

This was first granted when RE was actually Religious Instruction and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different now – open, broad, exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons or any part of the RE curriculum and the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost.

Where the pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parents want the pupil to receive. These arrangements will be made by the ***parents***; the school is not expected to make these arrangements. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or by another school in the locality. If neither approach is practicable, the pupil may receive external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not have a significant impact on the pupil's attendance.

Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE.

(Northumberland Agreed Syllabus 2022-2027)

Teachers also have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. However, this does not apply to teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE. If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the head of the school and its chair of governors.

10.1 Should a parent wish to withdraw a pupil the following steps are used:

- Parents request their child is removed from religious education in writing.
- Parents are then invited in for a meeting with the Lead teacher for Religious Education and a member of ELT to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of RE before honouring this right.

11. Equal opportunities

All pupils will have equal access to the RE curriculum.

Learning ability, physical ability, linguistic ability, gender, ethnicity and/or cultural circumstances will not impede pupils from accessing RE lessons. In line with the schools SEND policy.

The school's Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be adhered to at all times.

Cultural and gender differences are positively reflected in RE lessons and the teaching materials used.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis by the subject leader.

The scheduled review date for this policy is September 2027.

The subject leader will review the teaching of RE in the school, ensuring that taught content adheres to the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus.

Any changes to the Northumberland Agreed Syllabus will be communicated to the headteacher, link governor and relevant teaching staff.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff.