

**WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy**

**2021- 2026**



**Date Approved: Autumn 2021**

**Date for Review: Autumn 2026**

**Approved By: Head Teacher**

## WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

**Vision**            **Preparing every child to become a successful individual in an ever evolving world.**

**Values**            **Build belonging, Strive for excellence and Do the right thing.**

#### **1. Aims and objectives**

Religious Education (RE) enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Wexham Court Primary we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children and staff within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children **learn from religions** as well as **about religions**.

We aim to provide opportunities and encounter-based experiences which enable children to deeply explore the key principles of different world religions. We will facilitate rich, memorable learning experiences in which children are challenged to push themselves to think outside of their comfort zones, whilst at the core bringing the vibrancy of religions to life. This will nurture children's understanding of their own and others' spirituality, morality and cultural background. Through this process, we also intend to equip children with excellent skills in communication, so they may critically discuss, debate and reflect on their own beliefs and the beliefs of others. Thought provoking questions will enable children to explore, discuss and reflect on what they are learning. All lessons will give pupils a voice and a voice that is valued. Discussions around ethics, morals and respect will take place so that pupils feel safe to express their opinions and thoughts. Teacher will ensure the environment they create is nurturing and calm.

#### **2. The legal position of religious education**

RE is a compulsory subject and forms part of the National Curriculum. The Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions. This does not include Collective Worship time as this is a separate requirement.

Parents have the right to withdraw their pupils from RE. However, parents must first meet with the Head Teacher to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved, parents need to apply to the governing body annually, in writing, to withdraw their child from RE lessons. The governing body will then make arrangements with the Head Teacher for the children to be supervised or engaged in another activity at this time.

### **3. Curriculum planning in religious education**

The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school's RE curriculum is based on the Discovery RE scheme of learning, which brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development, in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. Learning is assessed and children have the opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position. RE is also embedded in all areas of the curriculum, such as PSHE, daily collective worship and assembly. The topics studied in RE build upon prior learning, offering opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit. Progression is built into the scheme of work and offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) has been developed in line with the Ofsted inspection framework emphasising the opportunities children are offered for SMSC development, RE can be a key contributor. Therefore, SMSC opportunities are identified in each enquiry, and are mapped on the overview grid for each year group. Within British Values, RE is a key player in engendering knowledge and understanding, which can lead to tolerance and respect for others and their beliefs. It does not, however, teach children to passively accept, but rather encourages evaluation and critical thinking, equipping them to consider belief positions they encounter.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school 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. We achieve this through teachers annotating and differentiating the plans for each lesson they teach and by differentiating the work and the level of support given.

At Wexham various days and events are organised to highlight different faiths and celebrate a host of festivals. This is done in a number of ways, such as dress up days, assemblies and through class activities.

In Reception classes and Nursery, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the Reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the areas of learning set out in the guidance in Development Matters, which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

#### **4. Assessment**

Through our Curriculum design we have ensured robust coverage, progression and planning for all units. Each series of lessons has a clear structure and an end of unit assessment, which will inform the planning process, children's next steps and support us in refining and developing this Curriculum further. The planning and resources given throughout the Curriculum, provide teachers with the option to assess children against three strands: making connections with their own experience, subject knowledge, and critical reflection. This assessment approach mirrors our school's overall intent and will enable teachers to facilitate children's progress in an accordingly holistic way.

Sometimes work in RE contributes to assessment in other curriculum areas, such as literacy or art. Teachers record pupils' progress and use pupils' own records as evidence. Achievement in RE is reported to parents/carers at least annually.

#### **5. Trips**

Each year group, from Reception to Year 6 will visit at least one place of worship during the academic year or have a representative visit the school. Children will leave Wexham Court having experienced a place of worship for different faiths. We visit places of worship as guests and learners not as worshippers. Before all visits, staff will carry out a formal risk assessment. Staff will ensure that the context of the learning during the visit will not undermine a child's own faith or challenge their own beliefs. Throughout the year, children are encouraged to learn about different festivals and undertake related activities during these times. This is not to encourage all children to worship those particular festivals and faiths, purely to have an understanding of them.

#### **6. Monitoring and evaluation**

Responsibility for quality assuring content and delivery of the programme of RE rests with the Senior leadership Team and Governing Body Committee to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and given due coverage. The policy will be promoted and implemented

throughout the school. The school will assess its implementation and effectiveness as mentioned in point 4.

## **7. Collective worship**

As with all maintained schools, Wexham Court Primary School is expected to provide daily collective worship for all registered pupils (apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents). This act of collective worship can be provided within an assembly or as an individual class. The Head Teacher is responsible under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for arranging the daily act of collective worship after consulting with the Governing Body. Daily collective worship is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature depends on the family background, ages and abilities of the school's pupils. If ever it is inappropriate for some or all of the pupils to take part in Christian collective worship, the Head Teacher will apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination to have this requirement lifted. The aim of our collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

- Worship God.
- Reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature as well as on the values of their own beliefs.
- Practice mindfulness
- Develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared principles.
- Consider spiritual and moral issues.
- Respond to the worship offered through listening and participation.
- Actively promote fundamental British Values.
- Promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of our pupils.

Collective worship, whether in assembly or class time, will:

- Be applicable to the whole community, staff and pupils.
- Include a variety of elements at different times, will be reflect on topical issues and celebrate key festivals within the calendar year
- Involve the pupils.

Responsibility for assuring the quality of the content and delivery of the programme of collective worship rests with the Head Teacher.

The daily act of collective worship of a broadly Christian character, mandatory for all maintained schools and academies, is not seen as discriminatory. Schools are not obliged to provide an equivalent act of worship for other faiths. Wexham Court Primary School is free to celebrate religious festivals if we wish and are not discriminating against other faiths by doing so.

**8. Reviewing**

The efficacy of the policy will be discussed annually as part of the governors' rolling programme of reviews and formally reviewed every five years.

This is a true version signed by

Mr J. Reekie, Chair of Governors

Signed:

Date:

Miss N Mehat Headteacher

Signed:

Date:

Review date: Autumn 2026