

Religion and Worldviews Education Policy

Torre Church of England Academy



Achieving and Flourishing in our Christian Community

Torre Church of England Academy will provide a happy, caring, family environment where children feel inspired. Our aim is to ensure that each and every child **achieves and flourishes within our committed church school community**. Belonging to a safe and nurturing community, founded on strong Christian values, we hope that children will develop an array of skills that will equip them to meet the challenges of our ever-changing world and to make their own positive contribution to our global society.

The Legal Position

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

Torre Church of England Academy is a Church of England School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors, in consultation with the Head teacher, have decided to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus and supplement this with material from the Diocese and elsewhere. Torre Church of England Academy adheres to the [RE Statement of Entitlement for Church of England Schools](#).

Rationale and Aims

Throughout their time at Torre Church of England Academy, our children will be given the opportunity to study a range of world religions and non-religious worldviews. As a school, we are committed to ensuring that our RE curriculum is based upon recent research. For this reason, our children will learn through the worldviews approach to RE. This will ensure that they will learn about diversity within the worldviews that they study. All of our children will be given a range of opportunities to ask big questions about religion and belief, reflecting on their own personal ideas and ways of living. In Religion and Worldviews Education (RWE) at we aim that RWE will (as stated in the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus):

Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions

and non-religious worldviews, 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

Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews, 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

Make connections between religious and non-religious worldviews, 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

A child-friendly aim has been adopted by the staff at Torre which is shared with the pupils:

Aim

R.W.E. explores big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live.

R.W.E. helps us to make sense of religion and belief, reflecting on our own ideas and ways of living.

Effective teaching and learning about Religion and Worldviews

Church schools have a duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews. They should provide:

- A challenging and robust curriculum based on pupils learning more and remembering more.
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations, and, in which real dialogue and enquiry takes place.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and worldviews as lived by believers.

- RWE that makes a positive contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

Torre Church of England Academy's approach to teaching RWE

RWE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RWE are designed and provided by careful planning through the Devon Agreed Syllabus.

In order to make RWE a lively, active and relevant subject, we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

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 have a strong link to All Saint's Church, Torre, Torquay.

We use as a basis for our planning the Devon Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2024 supplemented with, and supported by, other ideas including Understanding Christianity and NATRE resources.

RWE is taught explicitly in classes every week in accordance with diocesan plans.

EYFS

During the Foundation Stage, children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects, visiting places of worship and through celebration. Children listen to and talk about stories. They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect upon their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live. The Early Learning Goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage.

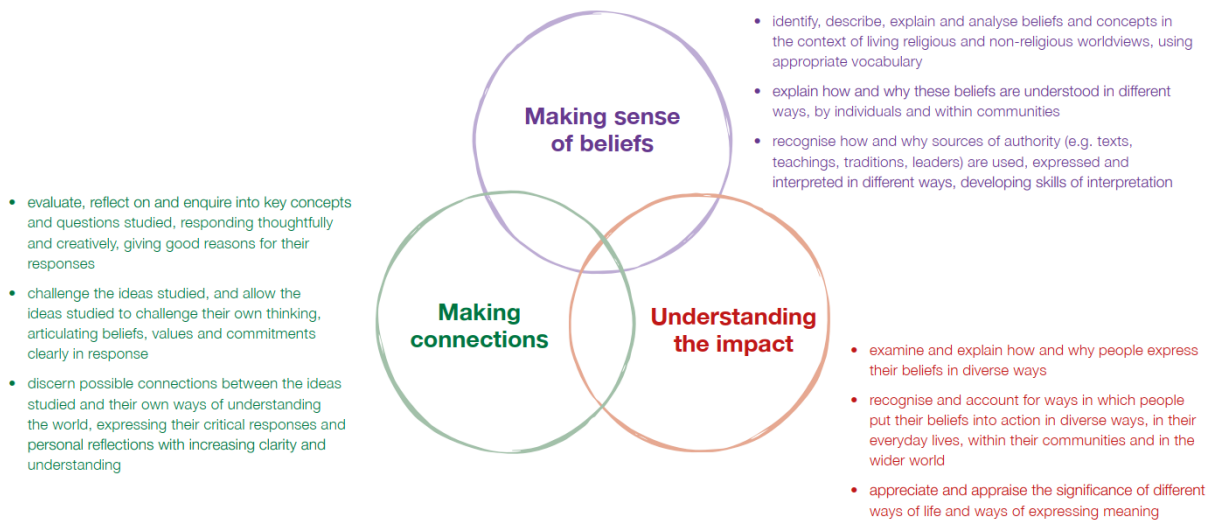
Key Stage 1

Enquiries take the form of a key question followed by a series of supplementary questions which provide the structure and direction of the individual enquiry. Together the enquiries are designed to engage pupils in both learning about and from religions and worldviews. KS1 are taught about Christians, Jews, Muslims and non-religious worldviews. The substantive knowledge gained in KS1 provides the foundations needed for when they revisit the same religion/worldview in KS2.

Key Stage 2

These enquiries have been shaped to form a key question followed by a series of supplementary questions which provide the focus and structure for each enquiry. The emphasis is on developing the skills of investigation in order to gain the ambitious substantive knowledge the pupils are expected to master. Throughout Key Stage 2 children study Christians, Hindus, Jews and Muslims and non-religious worldviews such as Humanism.

Enquiries are based on the following approach:



At Torre, three kinds of knowledge are recognised:

Substantive knowledge

This is **the subject content** being studied, in terms of the core concepts, truth claims, teachings and practices of traditions (mainly religious, but it applies to non-religious worldviews too), and the behaviour and responses of people within traditions. The subject content is clearly laid out in the curriculum so that teachers can see what has been taught previously and what is to be taught in the future.

Ways of knowing

This includes **the methods used** to establish the substantive knowledge. Sometimes this is called 'disciplinary knowledge', to illustrate the use of academic disciplines to examine content, such as theology, philosophy or sociology. 'Ways of knowing' also includes being explicit about the implications of using different ways to explore knowledge, such as through looking at statistics, or using historical sources, or reading sacred texts, or listening to voices from within traditions. Each way of knowing offers different kinds of knowledge and leads to different ways of evaluating the knowledge gained.

Personal knowledge

This includes **the personal perspective or worldview of the pupil**. It enables pupils to better understand and examine their own position, assumptions and values. It involves recognising that all of us see the world from our own position, and building up opportunities for pupils to become more self-aware about their own assumptions. Personal knowledge includes reflecting on the substantive content, the pupils' own 'lenses', and how they affect their responses in RWE.

Skills

Progress in RWE involves the application of general educational skills and processes in handling subject knowledge. This, in turn, strengthens the skills and deepens understanding and knowledge. A Torre, RWE teaching aims to develop these skills:

Investigating, reflecting, expressing, interpreting, expressing, empathising and evaluating.

Assessment and Recording of RWE

Pupils from Year 1-6 have individual learning journals in RWE. In EYFS, they share their learning through a class journal. In KS1 and KS2, at the beginning and end of each unit of work, teachers will assess the children based on their work and contribution's during class activities. Where relevant, an assessment task will be given. Attainment of the children will be recorded on the RWE 'EEE' assessment grids and is monitored by the class teacher and subject lead. End of term data judgments are made and recorded on 'Insight'. Data is analysed by the subject leader and feedback for teachers is given.

Spiritual development in RE

The RWE curriculum at Torre Church of England Academy, supports spiritual development by promoting:

- **self-awareness:** offering opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own views and how they have been formed, as well as the views of others
- **curiosity:** encouraging pupils' capacity for critical questioning, such as by keeping big questions in a 'question bag' and allowing time and space where these questions can be addressed to show that they are important
- **collaboration:** utilising lesson techniques which engender group collaboration and communication
- **reflection:** providing a space to reflect on pupils' own values and views, as well as those of others, and to consider the impact of these values
- **resilience:** promoting a spirit of open enquiry into emotive or complicated questions, in order to learn how to cope with difficult ideas when they arise in the future
- **response:** exploring ways in which pupils can express their responses to demanding or controversial issues
- **values:** promoting an ethos of fairness and mutual respect in the classroom and compassion and generosity in pupils through exploring inspiring examples of these qualities in others
- **appreciation:** encouraging pupils' ability to respond with wonder and excitement by exploring some of the marvels and mysteries of the natural world, of human ingenuity, and examples of the capacity of humans to love, create, organise and overcome adversity

Moral development in RE

Our RWE curriculum is extremely well-suited to exploring social and personal morality in significant ways:

- **valuing others:** in exploring the views of others, young people are well-prepared in RE to appreciate the uniqueness of all humans and their moral value, and to act in the world and towards others accordingly.
- **moral character development:** RWE offers a safe space where pupils can learn from their mistakes, appreciate ideas of right and wrong, continue to strive after setbacks, take the initiative, act responsibly and demonstrate resilience.

- **moral diversity:** activities in RWE lessons help pupils feel confident when taking part in debates about moral issues. Debates and discussions prepare pupils for the fact that there will always be disagreement on matters of morality and their right of expression is balanced by a responsibility to listen to the views of others.

Social development in RE

RWE gives pupils the opportunities to explore and understand social situations and contexts they may encounter in school or outside. RWE offers social situations which may include exploring:

- **shared values:** opportunities to consider values which are or should be part of society, such as those associated with right and wrong, treatment of others or diversity.
- **idealised concepts:** reflection on the abstract concepts our society is built on, such as justice, fairness, honesty and truth, and specific examples of how they affect our common life, such as in relation to how people treat each other in the classroom and school, issues of poverty and wealth, crime and punishment.
- **moral sources:** a chance to reflect on *where* ideas about how we should behave come from, whether religious or non-religious texts, teachings or traditions, in order to more fully understand social and behavioural norms.
- **influences:** opportunities to explore and reflect on the great influence on individuals of family, friends, the media and wider society, in order to understand how our behaviour is affected for good or ill.
- **social insight:** a chance to acquire insight into significant social and political issues which affect individuals, groups and the nation, such as how churches and gurdwaras may contribute practically to needs in their local communities, or how some religious and nonreligious charities fight to change government policies where they are unjust.
- **role models:** teachers and staff at Torre model the sort of behaviour we expect of our children and young people, and RW explores a range of role models.
- **experiential learning:** pupils have opportunities to embody for themselves expected behavioural and social norms, whether through class discussions, group work and ongoing behaviour expectations, or through special events such as school visits or drama workshops.

Cultural development in RE

There are two meanings associated with 'cultural' development, and RWE embodies both of them. Firstly, the term refers to the pupils' own home culture and background, whether religious or not, and secondly the term describes our national culture. Schooling should prepare all young people to participate in Britain's wider cultural life, whatever their own background.

Cultural development is evident in RWE in two major ways:

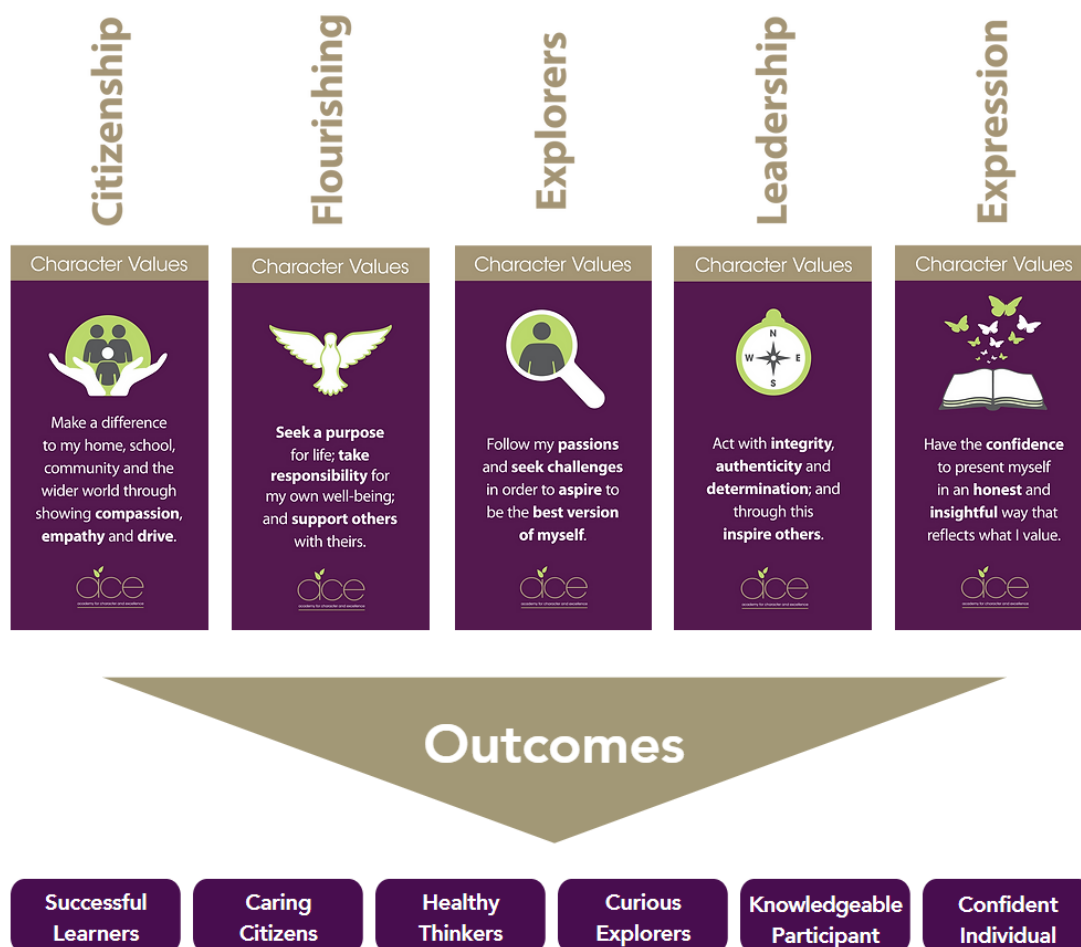
- **own culture:** RWE is the perfect subject in which to explore Britain's rich diversity of religious, ethnic and geographical cultures. Although all children share Britain's common life, cultural diversity is part of that life and no child should feel their cultural background is a barrier to participation.

- **wider culture:** schooling is a preparation for adult life in terms of behaviour and expectations as well as in achieving qualifications. This wider cultural education prepares children for adulthood.

Personal development and well-being

RWE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

This aligns with our Trust Character Gateways and outcomes for all our pupils:



Monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RWE

The subject lead will monitor RWE within the school through analysis of this assessment data, through lesson observations, through work sampling and through pupil conferencing.

This information will feed into the subject maintenance plan and the Church school self-evaluation process. (SIAMS)

Responsibilities for RWE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

Developing staff expertise

To demonstrate the subject's comparable status with other core curriculum areas in both staffing and resourcing, RWE is a high priority at Torre Church of England Academy. To build up staff expertise in RWE specifically but not exclusively, Torre ensures that:

- At least one member of staff having specialist RWE training or qualifications.
- All staff teaching RWE having access to appropriate professional development.
- All teaching staff and governors having an understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RWE within church schools.
- A governing body which monitors standards in RWE effectively.
- An ethos committee who regularly discusses and evaluates the impact of the provision of RWE at Torre.

The role of the Diocesan Boards of Education

One function of Diocesan Boards of Education (DBEs) as set out in the DBE measure is to promote, or assist in the promotion of, RE in schools in the diocese. This can be fulfilled by:

- Monitoring the quality of RWE in church schools.
- Offering high quality training to all schools throughout the diocese so that provision for RWE is effective and promotes religious literacy.

Support for effective and outstanding RWE

RWE teachers belong to a wider educational and church community. They should expect positive support in providing effective and outstanding RWE from:

- Their senior leadership team.
- Their governing body, especially Foundation governors.
- Their local Diocesan Board of Education, including a Schools' Adviser with an appropriate RWE background.
- Clergy.
- The Church of England Education Office (see 'Making a Difference' p.31 no.4).
- The Church of England representatives on their local SACRE.
- Our Trust Church School Leads: opportunities to attend RWE lead meeting and Church School Leads meetings.

The right of Withdrawal from RWE

At Torre Church of England Academy, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children 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 or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Torre Church of England Academy.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RWE are aware of the RWE 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 RWE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school 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 RWE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RWE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RWE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RWE, 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.
- 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.

Date of policy review: March 2024

Next renewal date: March 2026