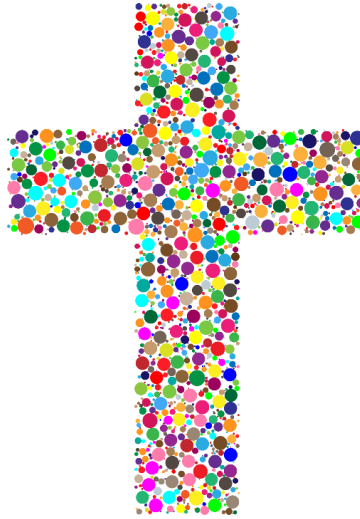


GARSTANG ST THOMAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY: Religious Education (RE)



VISION

Our vision is to be an excellent Church of England school which is forward thinking and strives for continual development.

We seek to support all our children in knowing that they are loved by God and encourage them in reaching their full potential academically, physically and spiritually.

We seek to develop in our children a great love of learning and for them to become confident, resilient, independent, inquisitive individuals who are able to both lead and serve others joyfully.

OUR MISSION

Our Christian values flow from the person of Jesus Christ and are:

Love • Courage • Creativity • Friendship • Responsibility • Peace • Compassion • Truthfulness • Respect & Reverence • Humility • Forgiveness • Trust • Thankfulness • Hope • Generosity • Wisdom • Perseverance • Service • Justice

These values underpin the work that we do as a Church of England school. Both adults and children in our school are expected to support and live out these values in order to create and develop a positive and caring environment in which all can grow, learn and work.

We promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our staff and children work towards our vision by focusing on the following every day:

WE ARE GUIDED BY GOD

WE LOVE EACH OTHER

WE LOVE LEARNING

WE WONDER WHY

WE JOYFULLY SERVE

WE LEAD

WE PERSEVERE

Purpose and legal basis of Religious Education

Religious Education (RE) at Garstang St Thomas lies at the heart of the curriculum and reflects the school's distinctive Christian character. RE is an academic subject which contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their religious literacy, and their capacity to live well together in a multi-religious and multi-secular society.

As a Voluntary Aided Church of England school, RE is provided in accordance with the school's Trust Deed, the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England, and the requirements placed on maintained schools. The governing board is responsible for ensuring that the RE curriculum is appropriate, well led, resourced and monitored.

This policy is informed by:

- The Church of England / National Society Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education in Church Schools, January 2026, for implementation by September 2026.
- The Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, 2019, which remains the operative reference until September 2026.
- The SIAMS framework, including the inspection of the effectiveness of the RE curriculum and, for voluntary aided schools, the quality of denominational RE.
- The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Questful RE syllabus and resources.
- Understanding Christianity and other high-quality resources used to support enquiry, biblical literacy and theological understanding.
- The Religious Education Council National Content Standard for RE in England, which the 2026 Statement of Entitlement aligns with.

Curriculum intent

Our RE curriculum enables pupils to flourish by developing a rich and well-informed understanding of Christianity, alongside a respectful understanding of other religious and non-religious worldviews. It is designed to be sequenced, ambitious, inclusive and responsive to our local context.

Through RE pupils will:

- know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith, including core Christian beliefs, biblical texts, key sources of authority and the life of the Church;
- gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating complexity, diversity, continuity and change;
- engage meaningfully and critically with learning that helps them make sense of the world in which they live;
- grapple with questions of meaning, purpose, truth, values, identity and belonging;
- develop disciplinary knowledge through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences;
- explore their own religious or non-religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing, thinking and belonging;
- develop an informed and respectful approach to people of all faiths and none.

Curriculum implementation: Questful RE

Garstang St Thomas follows the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Questful RE syllabus and resources as the principal scheme of work for RE. Questful RE is an enquiry-based, balanced curriculum for primary schools and academies, exploring Christianity, world faiths and worldviews. It

promotes explicit teaching of Christian concepts and God's big salvation story, while enabling pupils to investigate major religions and worldviews through purposeful questions.

Questful RE is used alongside Understanding Christianity where appropriate. Teachers adapt units to meet the needs of pupils and the local context while ensuring that the Church of England Statement of Entitlement is fully met.

The curriculum will include:

- a progressive study of Christianity across all year groups, including Anglican Christianity, global Christianity, biblical literacy and the lived reality of Christian faith;
- planned study of other principal religions and religious traditions, including Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, and encounters with other worldviews including non-religious worldviews such as Humanism where appropriate;
- authentic encounters with living faith communities, visits, visitors and high-quality resources;
- opportunities for pupils to ask and investigate big questions, express ideas, listen respectfully and challenge misconceptions;
- clear links with the school's Christian vision, values, spirituality, courageous advocacy, British values and SMSC development.

Curriculum balance and time allocation

Sufficient dedicated curriculum time is allocated to meet RE objectives. RE will be taught for no less than 5% of curriculum time.

Christianity is the majority study in RE. In accordance with Church of England expectations for Church schools, more than 50% of the RE curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 will focus on Christianity, while also ensuring that pupils gain a secure, sequenced understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

RE and Collective Worship are complementary and enrich one another, but they are planned, led, taught, monitored and evaluated separately.

Pedagogy and classroom climate

RE at Garstang St Thomas is taught in a way that is objective, critical and pluralistic, while remaining faithful to the school's Anglican foundation. Classrooms should be safe, supportive spaces in which pupils and adults can talk openly and respectfully about religion, belief, doubt, questions and personal worldview without fear of ridicule.

Teaching will balance three disciplinary lenses:

- Theology: believing - where beliefs come from, how sacred texts and sources of authority are interpreted, and how beliefs connect within and across traditions.
- Philosophy: thinking - questions of meaning, purpose, morality, knowledge, reality and truth.
- Human and social sciences: living - how beliefs and worldviews are practised and lived by individuals, communities and societies.

Teachers will ensure that RE is not used for proselytising. Pupils will be taught to understand, analyse and evaluate beliefs and practices, not to adopt a particular belief position.

Inclusion, SEND and disadvantaged pupils

All pupils are entitled to high-quality RE and to achieve highly, irrespective of educational need, disability, language, background or disadvantage. Teachers will remove barriers to learning through adaptive teaching, scaffolding, carefully chosen resources, practical experiences, vocabulary support and appropriate recording methods.

Pupils from Christian families, other faith backgrounds and no religious background are all valued. The curriculum is designed to give every child insight into what it means to be a person of faith, a person of another worldview, or a person still exploring their own worldview.

Assessment, recording and progression

Assessment in RE is linked to the learning intentions, key knowledge and progression expectations within Questful RE and school curriculum plans. Assessment should support learning and help teachers identify next steps.

Evidence may include:

- pupil discussion, questioning and dialogue;
- written work, creative responses and reflective tasks;
- class floor books;
- teacher assessment against unit outcomes;
- pupil voice, subject leader monitoring, book looks, learning walks and lesson visits;
- class displays and evidence of wider curriculum links.

The subject leader will monitor coverage, progression and standards over the year and report key findings to senior leaders and governors.

Leadership, governance and monitoring

The management of RE is a distinctive responsibility of the governing board and the headteacher, supported by the RE subject leader. Foundation governors have a particular role in ensuring that RE reflects the school's Church of England foundation and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.

The school will:

- maintain a named RE subject leader with appropriate time, training and support;
- provide professional development so teachers develop secure RE subject knowledge and confidence;
- engage with Blackburn Diocesan training, updates and networks as appropriate;
- monitor RE through curriculum review, assessment information, pupil voice, book scrutiny and lesson visits;
- review Questful RE implementation in the light of the 2026 Statement of Entitlement and SIAMS expectations from September 2026;
- ensure resources represent diversity within and between religious and non-religious worldviews accurately and respectfully.

Resources

Core resources include the Blackburn Diocese Questful RE online syllabus and resources, Understanding Christianity materials, Bibles and age-appropriate texts, artefacts, images, videos and visitor / visit opportunities. Resources are stored centrally and reviewed regularly by the subject

leader. Staff should request additional resources where needed to ensure accurate, inclusive and engaging learning.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

RE contributes strongly to SMSC development. Spiritual development is supported as pupils explore mystery, awe, wonder, prayer, worship, identity, meaning and their own worldview. Moral development is supported through engagement with Christian teaching and other traditions on justice, compassion, forgiveness, responsibility and ethical decision-making. Social development is supported through dialogue, respect and encounter. Cultural development is supported through learning about Christianity as a local, national and global faith, and through learning about diverse religious and non-religious communities.

Links with British values and protected characteristics

RE helps pupils to understand democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The curriculum also supports pupils in recognising dignity, diversity and equality. Teaching will challenge prejudice, stereotypes and misconceptions.

Parental right of withdrawal

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE. The school recognises this right while also noting that, as a Church of England school, the Christian foundation is reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community.

If a request for withdrawal is made, the headteacher will meet with parents to understand the reasons for the request, explain the aims and content of RE, and seek an appropriate accommodation where possible. It may be that only some elements of RE are objected to.

Parents may request that the governing board provides RE for their child according to the locally agreed syllabus where the legal conditions for such a request are met. The governing board will consider such requests in line with the law and diocesan advice. If the governing board is unable to make such arrangements, responsibility may fall to the Local Authority, subject to the relevant legal tests.

Key reference documents

- National Society for Education / Church of England, Religious Education: Statement of Entitlement for Church of England Schools, January 2026, for implementation by September 2026.
- Church of England, Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, 2019.
- Church of England, SIAMS Inspection Framework and related inspection guidance.
- Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education, Questful RE syllabus and resources.
- Religious Education Council of England and Wales, National Content Standard for RE in England, 2023.
- Understanding Christianity resources.