Harbour Schools Partnership

A guiding light for education

# Religious Education Policy

**(For Church and Non-Church Schools)**

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| **Date Adopted:** | **Trustees Jul 26**<br>**LGB Oct 26** |
| **Reviewed on:** | **Oct 26** |
| **Author/owner:** | **Trustees / LGB** |
| **Anticipated Review:** | **Jul 28** |

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## 1. HISTORY OF MOST RECENT POLICY CHANGES

| Version | Date | Page | Change | Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation |
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## 2. VISION AND COMMITMENT

2.1 The Harbour Schools Partnership (THSP) is committed to *"excellence through collaboration to realise the right of every child to flourish"*.

2.2 Religious Education plays a vital role in enabling all pupils to develop religious literacy, ethical awareness, and respectful understanding of world faiths and worldviews.

2.3 In our Church of England schools, RE also supports the theological, biblical and lived expression of each school's Christian vision, as required by the SIAMS Framework.

2.4 Across all schools, RE contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and supports community cohesion, aligning with the Trust's culture of respect, openness and professional integrity.

## 3. LEGAL AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Statutory Status of RE

3.1.1 Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in all state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, under the Education Act 1996 (Section 375) and Education Act 2002.

3.1.2 All Harbour Schools Partnership schools—church and non-church—will deliver Religious Education in accordance with the Devon & Torbay Agreed Syllabus 2024–2029. This syllabus is statutory for all maintained Devon schools and recommended for academies, including Church of England schools, and is fully compatible with the C of E Statement of Entitlement. Church schools will follow the Devon syllabus and supplement it with Understanding Christianity, as recommended by the Diocese of Exeter.

3.1.3 The syllabus was produced by Devon SACRE and Torbay SACRE, with a full structure outlining content, progression, aims, assessment, planning and the Religion & Worldviews approach.

### 3.2 Principal Aim of RE (Devon Syllabus)

3.2.1 All RE across the Trust will be explicitly planned to fulfil the syllabus' Principal Aim:

*"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 worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living."*

3.2.2 This aim will serve as the foundation for all curriculum planning, teacher development and assessment within THSP.

### 3.3 Right to Withdraw

3.3.1 Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from RE under national legislation referenced in parliamentary briefings on RE.
Schools must ensure this process is *sensitive, recorded, and discussed* to protect children's entitlement to a broad education.

## 4. AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ACROSS THE TRUST

### 4.1 For All Schools

4.1.1 Our RE curriculum ensures pupils:

- Develop religious literacy through rigorous study of Christianity and other major world religions, along with non-religious worldviews, in line with proposed national RE guidance.
- Understand religion and belief in contemporary society, reflecting national reviews calling for a balanced, inclusive approach to religion and worldviews.
- Engage critically with theological, philosophical and human/social science perspectives through high academic expectations, as supported by the ISRSA framework.
- Build respect, empathy and cultural understanding to prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Develop their own values, moral reasoning and sense of identity, in line with the Trust vision for enabling every child to flourish.

### 4.2 Additional Aims for Church Schools (C of E)

4.2.1 Church schools must ensure that RE:

- Has Christianity as the principal religion studied across all key stages while including major world faiths, as legally guided.
- Explicitly supports the school's theologically rooted Christian vision, which SIAMS requires to shape every aspect of school life and flourishing.
- Contributes to evidence for SIAMS Inspection Question J1 focusing on Christian foundation and flourishing.

## 5. CURRICULUM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 5.1 Curriculum Principles

5.1.1 All THSP schools must provide an RE curriculum that is:

- Broad, balanced, and academically robust, reflecting national RE standards and recent review recommendations for stronger curriculum coherence.
- Sequential and progressive from EYFS to KS4.
- Reflective of Christianity's central place in British culture while including diverse global religious traditions.

- Inclusive of non-religious worldviews such as Humanism, supported by legal precedent.

### 5.2 Required Content

- Christianity studied in depth every year (Church schools) or every key stage (non-church schools).
- At least one additional world religion per key stage, in line with ISRSA guidance on pluralistic, inclusive RE.
- Critical and reflective exploration of belief, practice, texts, ethics, identity, community and lived religious experience.

## 6. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

### 6.1 Quality of Teaching

6.1.1 RE must be taught by staff with secure subject knowledge, supported by:

- Trust-wide professional development networks reflecting HSP's collaborative ethos and collective intelligence approach.
- Appropriate subject training as highlighted by national reports on RE teacher preparation and quality concerns.

### 6.2 Assessment

6.2.1 Assessment will:

- Reflect progression in knowledge, skills and dispositions.
- Use clear learning outcomes aligned with the locally agreed syllabus or Church school entitlement.
- Provide meaningful information that supports leadership monitoring (including SIAMS evidence requirements in Church schools).

## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### 6.1 Trust Level

6.1.1 The Trust will:

- Monitor RE provision across all schools to ensure statutory compliance.
- Facilitate cross-school moderation and quality assurance aligned with its mission to reduce workload through collaboration and share strong practice.

### 6.2 School Level

6.2.1 Schools will:

- Evaluate RE delivery annually in line with Trust expectations.
- Church schools will complete a SIAMS Self-Evaluation (SEF) and gather evidence demonstrating impact of the Christian vision, as recommended by diocesan SIAMS resources.

## 8. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (NOT RE BUT LINKED)

8.1 Church schools must comply with the Education Act 2005 Section 48 requirements for denominational inspection and collective worship as referenced in SIAMS guidance. Non-church schools will continue

collective worship/assemblies as required by current legislation, pending developments such as the proposed Assemblies Bill (2025) noted in national RE updates.

## 9. INCLUSION, EQUALITY AND SAFEGUARDING

9.1 The RE curriculum:

- Will support diversity, equality and respect for all beliefs and worldviews.
- Will align with the Trust's safeguarding culture and commitment to ensuring all pupils feel safe, respected and able to flourish.

## 10. IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 Trust Board: Ensures compliance with legislation and SIAMS requirements for Church school

10.2 Headteachers: Implement the policy and ensure provision meets statutory and Trust expectations.

10.3 RE Subject Leaders: Lead curriculum development, resources, CPD, monitoring and assessment.

10.4 Local Governing Boards: Monitor effectiveness and statutory compliance.

## 11. REVIEW CYCLE

11.1 This policy will be reviewed biennially, with adjustments made in response to:

- Changes in national RE guidance.
- Diocesan guidance for Church schools.
- Trust-wide curriculum developments and feedback.