

Religious Education & Worldviews Policy

Ridgeway Farm CE Academy



Policy owner	Headteacher and RE Subject Leader
Status	Approved
Approval body	Local Governing Body
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Implementation	September 2026
Review	September 2028 or earlier if national or diocesan requirements change

Vision: Believe, Learn, Grow – Growing together as part of God’s family

This policy sets out Ridgeway Farm CE Academy's entitlement, principles and expectations for Religious Education and Worldviews. It replaces the policy reviewed in September 2025 and reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2026, for implementation from September 2026.

1 Purpose and scope

Religious Education is a high-profile academic subject and an essential expression of Ridgeway Farm's theologically rooted Christian vision. This policy applies from Reception to Year 6 and should be read alongside the school's curriculum overview, subject-on-a-page, long-term plan, assessment arrangements, collective worship policy and spiritual development approach.

The policy explains the knowledge pupils are entitled to learn, the ways in which the curriculum is taught and assessed, the responsibilities of leaders and governors, and the arrangements for inclusion and parental withdrawal.

2 Vision and rationale

Our vision is for every child to believe in themselves, develop a love of lifelong learning and grow together as part of God's family. Religious Education gives pupils the knowledge and intellectual tools needed to understand Christianity, a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, and the diverse ways in which people live, believe, think and belong.

RE is inclusive, invitational and non-confessional. It welcomes pupils from religious and non-religious backgrounds, creates space for thoughtful dialogue, and never requires a pupil to adopt or disclose a particular belief. It supports pupils to explore questions of meaning, truth, identity, morality and purpose while respecting the integrity and freedom of others.

3 Legal and accountability framework

Ridgeway Farm provides Religious Education in accordance with:

- the academy's funding agreement and the statutory requirements for Religious Education in academies with a religious character;
- the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;
- the Swindon Agreed Syllabus, which the academy has adopted as a framework for its curriculum;
- the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2026;
- the school's Anglican foundation, Christian vision and local context;
- the National Content Standard for Religious Education as a non-statutory benchmark for breadth, depth and ambition.

The Church of England Statement of Entitlement is the reference point for SIAMS inspection questions IQ6 and IQ7 from September 2026. RE is distinct from collective worship. Time allocated to collective worship, church services or general spiritual development does not replace pupils' curriculum entitlement to Religious Education.

4 Believe curriculum intent

Through Religious Education and Worldviews, we intend pupils to:

- develop rich and well-informed knowledge of Christianity as a diverse, global and living faith;
- gain secure knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews;

- recognise complexity, diversity, continuity and change within and between worldviews;
- engage meaningfully and critically with religious and non-religious sources, beliefs, practices and lived experiences;
- develop disciplinary knowledge through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences;
- explore questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience;
- consider how religion and worldviews influence individuals, communities, cultures and societies;
- explore their personal worldviews and recognise some of the influences that shape their ways of living, believing and thinking;
- develop religious and worldview literacy, including accurate vocabulary, interpretation, reasoning and respectful dialogue;
- flourish as curious, reflective and informed members of a diverse society.

5 Curriculum entitlement and time

Every pupil receives a clearly identifiable and sequenced RE curriculum from Reception to Year 6. Christianity is the main religious worldview studied in each phase and accounts for at least 50 per cent of curriculum time. Pupils also study a purposeful range of religious and non-religious worldviews selected through the Swindon Agreed Syllabus and the school's context.

Dedicated curriculum time for RE aims to be close to 10 per cent and must not fall below 5 per cent in Key Stages 1 and 2. This time is separate from collective worship. Enrichment, visits, visitors and themed experiences enhance the curriculum but do not replace regular, progressive teaching.

6 Understanding religion and worldviews

A worldview is a way of understanding life and the world. It may influence what a person believes, values and chooses to do. Worldviews may be religious or non-religious and may be shared through organised traditions, communities and institutions. Each person's lived worldview is also shaped by influences such as family, culture, community, location, experience and individual interpretation.

No religious or non-religious worldview is experienced or expressed in only one way. Pupils therefore learn about diversity within and between worldviews. They encounter the beliefs, interpretations and practices of real people in different times, places and contexts rather than treating a worldview as a fixed list of uniform beliefs.

7 Knowledge in Religious Education

The curriculum develops three connected forms of knowledge. They are planned deliberately and revisited with increasing depth.

Form of knowledge	What pupils learn
Substantive knowledge	Knowledge about religious and non-religious worldviews, including beliefs, concepts, sources, practices, people, places, vocabulary and lived expressions.
Disciplinary knowledge	Knowledge of how to investigate and construct understanding in RE through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.
Personal knowledge	Awareness of the assumptions, experiences and influences that shape a pupil's own developing worldview and response to what is studied.

Personal knowledge supports reflection and dialogue but is not a measure of faith. Pupils' personal beliefs, religious commitments or non-religious positions are never judged or graded.

8 Learn curriculum implementation

8.1 Curriculum design and sequencing

The RE curriculum is coherently sequenced so that pupils build knowledge over time, revisit significant concepts and make increasingly sophisticated connections. Understanding Christianity supports the study of Christianity. The Swindon Agreed Syllabus informs the selection and sequencing of other religious and non-religious worldviews, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Humanism.

Planning identifies the substantive knowledge, disciplinary lens, key vocabulary, sources and intended outcomes for each enquiry. Teachers connect new learning to prior knowledge, identify likely misconceptions and adapt published resources to the school's context rather than treating a scheme as the curriculum itself.

8.2 Disciplinary knowledge

Pupils investigate religion and worldviews through three complementary disciplinary lenses. An enquiry may emphasise one lens or draw upon more than one.

Discipline	Primary focus	Examples of methods and questions
Theology	Beliefs, concepts, sources of authority and interpretation	Interpreting texts and traditions; examining how beliefs connect; considering why sources may be understood differently.
Philosophy	Meaning, truth, knowledge, ethics and reasoning	Asking conceptual questions; giving reasons; testing arguments; exploring what may be true, good, right or fair.
Human and social sciences	Lived experience, diversity, context and evidence	Using case studies, interviews, observations, surveys and data; examining how time, place, culture and experience influence lived worldviews.

Theo the Theologian, Sophie the Philosopher and Livvi the Social Scientist are used as age-appropriate prompts to help pupils recognise these ways of knowing. The characters support disciplinary thinking; they do not replace the enquiry question, accurate subject knowledge or evidence.

8.3 People centered teaching

Teaching is grounded in the lives and experiences of people. Pupils explore how beliefs and worldviews are interpreted and expressed by individuals and communities, including differences within the same worldview. Resources should reflect diversity of culture, denomination, tradition, geography, age and personal experience without presenting one person as representative of an entire group.

Teachers use precise language such as many, most and some when evidence supports those terms. Universal statements about what a group believes or does are avoided unless a claim is genuinely universal. For example, pupils may learn that many Christians celebrate the Eucharist as a way of remembering Jesus' sacrifice.

8.4 Teaching and learning

High-quality RE teaching may include:

- careful study of sacred and significant texts, including biblical texts and other sources of authority;
- direct teaching of concepts, vocabulary and contextual knowledge;
- engagement with artefacts, images, music, art, places, practices and data;

- encounters with people who can explain their lived worldviews, in person or through high-quality recorded material;
- structured discussion, dialogue, debate and philosophical enquiry;
- analysis, interpretation, comparison, evaluation and reflection;
- regular retrieval and opportunities to connect new learning with prior knowledge;
- writing and other forms of communication that require pupils to use evidence and disciplinary thinking.

Classrooms should be safe and supportive spaces in which pupils can ask questions, express uncertainty and disagree thoughtfully. Teachers distinguish between teaching about a worldview and promoting it.

8.5 Inclusion and adaptive teaching

Pupils are enabled to achieve highly in RE irrespective of educational need, disability, disadvantage, language background, religion or belief. Teachers maintain ambitious subject content while adapting access through explicit vocabulary teaching, visual support, scaffolded sources, modelling, alternative recording methods and appropriate adult support.

Adaptations should remove barriers without reducing the intellectual purpose of the enquiry. Pupils with SEND should have access to the same significant concepts and disciplinary thinking as their peers, with appropriate support and depth.

8.6 Spiritual development

RE contributes significantly to spiritual development by enabling pupils to wonder, question, reflect and consider meaning. Opportunities are planned through Ridgeway Farm's relational understanding of spirituality: relationship with self, others, the world and God. Reflection is invitational and is not used to assess a pupil's faith or spirituality.

8.7 Enrichment and encounters

Visits to places of worship, visitors, church-led experiences, reflection activities and purposeful links with the local community enrich pupils' understanding. Such experiences are prepared carefully, connected explicitly to curriculum objectives and followed by opportunities to interpret and apply what has been learned.

9 Assessment and reporting

Assessment identifies how securely pupils know and remember curriculum content and how effectively they use disciplinary knowledge. It supports responsive teaching, reveals misconceptions and informs future planning. Assessment does not judge a pupil's personal faith, commitment, spirituality or willingness to agree with a particular viewpoint.

Teachers draw on evidence including:

- responses to carefully chosen questions and retrieval activities;
- pupil discussion and explanations;
- interpretation of sources and use of evidence;
- written, creative and oral outcomes;
- the ability to make connections and apply previous learning;
- the use of theological, philosophical and human or social scientific methods;
- pupil voice considered alongside curriculum evidence rather than as a substitute for it.

Summative judgements are based on clear curriculum expectations. Leaders consider patterns in attainment and participation, including for pupils with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage.

Information about learning and progress is communicated to parents through the school's reporting arrangements.

10 Grow curriculum impact

By the end of Year 6, the curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- recall and explain significant knowledge about Christianity and the other religious and non-religious worldviews studied;
- use religious and worldview vocabulary accurately and in context;
- interpret sources of authority and explain why interpretations may differ;
- recognise diversity, continuity and change within and between worldviews;
- apply theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences to appropriate enquiry questions;
- use reasons and evidence to develop and communicate conclusions;
- identify some influences on their own developing personal worldview without being required to disclose private beliefs;
- engage in informed and respectful dialogue about religion, belief and difference;
- make connections between beliefs, practices, identity and lived experience;
- approach the multi-religious and multi-secular world with curiosity, confidence and intellectual humility.

Impact is evaluated through the quality of pupils' cumulative knowledge, work, talk and application of disciplinary thinking. It is not inferred solely from participation in activities, positive attitudes or the completion of written tasks.

11 Leadership governance and professional development

The Headteacher and senior leaders will:

- maintain RE as a high-profile academic subject and protect sufficient curriculum time;
- ensure that the curriculum reflects the academy's funding agreement, Christian foundation and the 2026 Statement of Entitlement;
- provide appropriate resources, training and opportunities to strengthen staff subject knowledge;
- ensure RE is evaluated with the same seriousness as other curriculum subjects.

The RE Subject Leader will:

- maintain a well-sequenced and contextually appropriate curriculum;
- support teachers with substantive and disciplinary subject knowledge;
- monitor planning, teaching, pupil work, assessment and pupil voice;
- identify strengths, misconceptions and priorities for improvement;
- engage with Trust, diocesan, SACRE and professional development opportunities;
- report accurately to senior leaders and governors.

Those responsible for governance will:

- understand the distinctive role and statutory status of RE;
- monitor curriculum entitlement, time, standards, inclusion and leadership;
- provide informed support and challenge;
- consider evidence about RE within the school's wider Christian vision and SIAMS preparation.

12 Relationship with collective worship

Religious Education and collective worship are distinct. RE is an academic curriculum subject taught in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Collective worship is an invitational communal activity

shaped by the school's Anglican foundation. Learning that takes place during worship may enrich pupils' understanding but is not counted as dedicated RE curriculum time or used as a substitute for RE lessons.

13 Right of withdrawal

Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of Religious Education. A request does not require a reason. Parents considering withdrawal are invited to meet with the Headteacher and RE Subject Leader so that the curriculum, the specific content concerned and the educational implications can be explained. This discussion is not intended to place pressure on the family or delay a valid request.

Requests should be confirmed in writing and should state whether withdrawal applies to the whole subject or specified parts. The school will respect the request and supervise the pupil appropriately. The school is not required to provide an alternative curriculum or additional work. Parents may make alternative arrangements for Religious Education where permitted by law, provided these arrangements do not incur additional cost to the school or disrupt its organisation.

Withdrawal from RE does not extend to other curriculum subjects in which religion or belief may arise incidentally. A pupil will not return to RE until the parent or carer changes or removes the request. The school may invite families to review the arrangement periodically while respecting the continuing legal right to withdraw.

14 Safeguarding equality and respectful dialogue

RE is taught in accordance with the school's safeguarding, equality, behaviour and curriculum policies. Discussion of identity, belief, prejudice, conflict or ethical issues is planned carefully and managed in an age-appropriate way. Teachers do not ask pupils to disclose private beliefs or family practices and respond sensitively when personal experiences are shared.

Resources and visitors are checked for accuracy, suitability and bias. Stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory language are challenged. Visitors support the planned curriculum and do not proselytise or present themselves as speaking for every person within a worldview.

15 Monitoring and review

Implementation of this policy is monitored through curriculum review, lesson visits, work scrutiny, assessment information, pupil voice, staff development and governor oversight. Monitoring focuses on curriculum quality and pupils' learning rather than compliance with a preferred style of teaching.

The policy will be reviewed by September 2028, or earlier if the academy's funding agreement, legislation, the national curriculum, the Swindon Agreed Syllabus, the SIAMS framework or Church of England guidance changes. Any substantial revision will be presented to the Local Governing Body for approval.

16 Reference documents

- Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education 2026;
- SIAMS Evaluation Schedule and supporting guidance;
- Swindon Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
- Understanding Christianity;
- National Content Standard for Religious Education in England;

- Department for Education guidance on Religious Education and collective worship in academies and free schools;
- Ridgeway Farm CE Academy curriculum, collective worship, spirituality, equality, SEND and safeguarding policies.