



Curiosity | Care | Courage | Creativity

# King Edward VI CEVC School

## Religious Education and Collective

### Worship Policy

### January 2025

Our Vision:

*To be a vibrant learning community nurturing courage, care, curiosity and creativity in every young person, so that they flourish in the world with hope and self-belief.*

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# 1. Religious Education at King Edward VI School

King Edward VI School is a Voluntary Controlled School with a Church of England ethos, vision and set of values. Such a Christian ethos aims to provide an excellent framework for the intellectual, moral and spiritual development of our students. The teaching of Religious Education follows the statutory requirements as presented in the Suffolk Locally Agreed Syllabus.

At KS3, Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject to all Year 7, 8 and 9 students and called Philosophy and Ethics. The Philosophy and Ethics component of the GCSE Religious Studies course is a popular GCSE option choice at KS4. Other KS4 students receive their RE entitlement through a program of Diocese assemblies, tutor time activities, visits to the Cathedral and Big Question events

## 2. Vision and values

Our school vision is deeply rooted in Christian values.

### Care

*Matthew 25:40*

And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.

*John 3:16*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

*Colossians 3:14*

*And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

### Courage

*John 14:27*

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid*

*Isiah 54:4*

*Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace, you will not be humiliated.*

*2 Timothy 1:7*

*For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline*

*Psalms 23:1-4*

*The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your*

*goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

### **Curiosity**

*Ecclesiastes 1:13*

*I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens.*

*Proverbs 12:1*

*Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge*

*Romans 12:2*

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind*

*Proverbs 2:3-5*

*Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.*

### **Creativity**

*Exodus 35:31-32*

*And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze*

*Luke 1:37*

*For nothing will be impossible with God.*

*Psalms 51:10*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*

### **Flourishing**

*John 10:10*

*I have come that you may have life in all its fullness.*

### **Hope**

*Romans 5:3-4*

*Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope*

*John 3:3*

*And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure*

### **Self-belief**

*Philippians 4:13*

*I can do all things through him who strengthens me*

*2 Timothy 1:7*

*For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control*

### **3. Key Documents**

Our Religious Education (RE) policy has been written to be fully compatible with The Church of England document: *Our Hope for a Flourishing Schools System: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good (2016)*

Our policy is also based on guidance from the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for RE (2023) *Where do I stand?*

We are committed to providing a form of Christian teaching fully committed to respecting The Equality Act 2010.

### **4. The Rationale and Aims for Teaching Religious Education**

At King Edward VI School, we consider Religious Education to be a highly significant area, both as an academic pursuit, and for the contribution it makes to the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Religious Education contributes to a wide range of educational areas and human experience (such as ethical, political, social and environmental), and is not restricted to the teaching of RE as a discrete subject, but is embedded in the wider curriculum too.

Our Religious Education policy aims to develop religiously literate citizens who:

- Possess rich knowledge of the beliefs of different religions and worldviews, including how these may be differently interpreted or change over time.
- Recognise that the lived reality of different religions and worldviews is complex and diverse, and that generalities and assumptions must be treated with care.
- Contribute constructively to the debate about the religious questions and shared human concerns, using their understanding of religion and belief.

*(taken from Agreed Syllabus for RE in Suffolk 2023)*

In order to achieve these central aims, our syllabus aims to:

- Provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.
- Develop students' understanding of the beliefs and teachings of Christianity and other principal religions and worldviews in Britain, and their influence on the lives and decisions of individuals, families, and communities.
- Stimulate students' curiosity about the diversity and impact of worldviews, religions, beliefs, values and traditions, and develop their ability to learn from these.
- Challenge students to reflect on, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics, and to communicate their own ideas and responses clearly, while being sensitive to the worldviews of others.
- Encourage students to develop their own sense of identity and belonging, and clarify their own worldview, enabling them to flourish individually as responsible citizens in a plural society, and in a wider global community.
- Prepare students for adult life and employment, encouraging sensitivity to those whose beliefs differ, and seeking to combat prejudice and negative discrimination.

## 5. Three disciplines of Religious Education

Religious Education can be divided into three disciplines: Theology, Social Science and Philosophy.

Theology in RE involves enquiry into:

- Key beliefs / concepts of a religion or worldview, both distinctive and shared.
- Sources of authority for religious beliefs e.g. sacred texts, religious leaders, divine revelation.
- Particular beliefs about God, humanity, life, and the nature of an after-life.
- Differences in interpretation of key beliefs and changes in religious belief across time / culture.

Social Science in RE involves exploration of:

- Different customs, celebrations and rituals based on religious and secular beliefs.
- The influence of sacred texts and religious leaders on communities.
- Diverse interpretations of religious practices in different societies locally and globally, and at different times.
- Moral, ethical and practical lifestyle choices based on secular or religious worldviews.

Philosophy in RE involves engagement with:

- Ultimate questions of truth, morality, purpose and meaning in life.
- Questions arising from religious and secular standpoints, texts or customs.
- Conflicting answers offered by religious and non-religious groups and individuals.
- Changes in questions / answers over time and across societies.

We also understand the importance of philosophy in KS3 and KS4. For this reason, we call our KS3 RE program Philosophy and Ethics.

## 6. Developing Positive attitudes

Acquiring knowledge of religions and worldviews is central to Religious Education (RE), but it is also vital that students develop positive attitudes if they are to 'hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief'. Students need to develop a positive attitude to RE as a subject; all teachers can work on developing engaging lessons. Students also need practice in responding positively to those, in class and in wider society, who have differing views and backgrounds. Teachers in every key stage should actively seek opportunities to develop the following:

Self-awareness

- Feeling confident about sharing their own beliefs and identity without fear of ridicule or embarrassment.
- Developing a realistic, positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas.
- Recognising their uniqueness and self-worth as human beings.
- Becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.

Respect for all

- Feeling the need to listen and be sensitive to others' feelings.
- Being willing to learn from others, even if their views differ.

- Being ready to value difference and diversity for the common good.
- Appreciating that some views are not inclusive and that this raises issues for individuals and society.
- Being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias.

#### Open-mindedness

- Being willing to learn and gain new understanding.
- Being able to engage respectfully in debate about religious, moral or spiritual questions.
- Learning to disagree reasonably without belittling or abusing others.
- Going beyond surface impressions.
- distinguishing between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs.

#### Appreciation and wonder

- Appreciating, and continuing to develop a sense of wonder at, the world in which they live.
- Recognising that knowledge is bounded by mystery.
- Developing their imagination and curiosity.
- Developing a deep desire to ask, and respond to, questions of meaning and purpose.

## 7. The Organisation and Teaching of Religious Education at King Edward VI School

In KS3 students are taught through enquiry. Students are taught Christianity with particular focus on an inclusive Church of England perspective alongside other denominational beliefs. A range of other religions and worldviews are taught across the key stage. Students receive one lesson per week. The learning style for this course is designed to encourage thought-provoking discussion and provide opportunities to engage, enquire, explore, evaluate, express and extend. Units covered tend to be theme-based (e.g. Religious Leaders) and include the perspectives of a variety of religious and secular perspectives.

KS4: The Philosophy and Ethics GCSE is taught by RE specialists and follows the specification of the AQA Religious Studies A course. The two main religions studied are Christianity and Muslim but students also learn about a range of themes from a variety of religious and secular perspectives. These themes include Religion and Life, Crime and Punishment, Peace and Justice, and Relationships. The learning style is also very enquiry based, encouraging good quality debates and discussions.

Developing critical thinking and written argument is important to our teaching of this subject.

## 8. The Management of Religious Education

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Producing detailed schemes of learning showing how each lesson links to the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Supporting staff in their delivery of RE, and offering guidance and advice where needed.
- Helping to promote and maintain the status of RE within the school
- Keeping in touch with developments in RE-related issues and updated resources accordingly.

- Monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes e.g. observing lessons, moderating assessments etc.
- Ensure students' work is regularly marked and that teachers of RE are following the departmental and school marking policy.
- Checking that assessments are added to Go4Schools and monitoring the progress of students, providing intervention where appropriate.
- Updating the RE SEF and Action Plan.
- Accountability for RE standards in the school.
- Leading literacy initiatives and monitor their use and success.
- Performing quality assurance of marking and assessment.
- Liaise with other Humanities departments to share and embed good practice.
- Run intervention strategies across all Key Stages that improve student attainment and progress.
- Participate fully in professional development activities that to develop good practice further.

## **9. Arrangements for assessment, recording and monitoring of the standards of teaching and learning in RE**

Within their Religious Education, students are regularly assessed and their progress monitored by their subject teacher at KS3. In Year 7, students sit a Benchmark Assessment within the first few weeks of joining the school, and their progress is monitored in relation to that assessment. At KS3, students are expected to complete an assessment at least once every term, and their progress is recorded on Go4Schools. Students are required to respond to the feedback they are given and demonstrate progress as a result of this feedback.

At KS4, students have tracking sheets at the front of their books which track their progress in assessments in relation to their FFTD data. Assessments take place at least every half term and are based around exam-style questioning. Assessments are recorded on Go4Schools, where progress is carefully monitored. Students are required to respond to the feedback they are given and demonstrate progress as a result of this feedback.

## **10. Legal Requirements and Parental Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education (RE)**

The legal requirements are that:

- 1) Religious Education must be provided for all registered students in full-time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request.
- 2) Religious Education must be taught in accordance with an agreed syllabus in voluntary controlled schools (i.e. Suffolk Agreed Syllabus).
- 3) The Headteacher, along with the governing body and the local authority, is responsible for the provision of religious education in in voluntary controlled schools.

According to the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus a parent may request:

- That their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
- That a student who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the student on any day except at the beginning or end of a school session.
- That a student who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the



parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.

If any parent wanted to utilise their right to withdraw from our inclusive approach to this subject we respect this right, and request staff or parents to explore this with the Headteacher so we can accommodate.

## **11. Collective Worship**

Our collective worship focuses on awe and wonder both for the beauty of the planet, the teachings of Jesus and the universal connectedness of all people. We believe in the ethical teaching and example of Jesus. In particular, we promote reflection on the Christian teachings on non-violence, service, hope and stewardship of the planet. It is through understanding the example of Christ that we provide a window into a Christianity for our students.

We also seek to provide routes through to discipleship in a variety of ways:

- Regular engagement with local clergy through our assembly program.
- Nurturing the support for the Cathedral youth community.
- Outreach provided in school from the Cathedral.
- Weekly Christian society.
- Annual Prayer space week.
- Strong links with a variety of local churches.
- Outreach from Bury Christian Youth.

In order to enjoy life in all its fullness we make time to develop and to be reflective about our beliefs (religious or otherwise), that inform our perspective on life and our interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values. We foster across our whole community a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about ourselves and the world around us through a willingness to reflect on our experiences and through the use of imagination and creativity our learning and response.

As a Church of England school, our collective worship follows the church year and Christian patterns. Our collective worship creates inclusive opportunities for us to gather, to engage, to respond and to be 'sent' (we put our response, our reflection and our learning into practice into our daily lives). Our caring ethos, and the values which we place on the development of the whole person - spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually - are revealed in the way we listen and speak with one another and treat each other.

We ensure that all collective worship is inclusive for all of our students regardless of their background. We celebrate all faiths within the school and world views outside of religion. We seek to support the spiritual development of all regardless of their religious background and for those with none.