Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Everything RE

2024 - 2027

Adopted	September 2024
Review Cycle	Three Years
Review Date	Academic Year 2027 - 2028

Sedlescombe Vision and Values

Motto:

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

Values:

Aspiration	**Honesty**	**Forgiveness**
Courage	**Thankfulness**	**Kindness**

Vision:

Our school is a family where curiosity is the seed of all growth, and everyone is nurtured and challenged to learn and grow as a unique individual. Where enquiring minds are developed in a safe, loving environment where everyone belongs and is loved by God.

Introduction

Religious Education at Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School is a cornerstone of our curriculum and a vital expression of our Christian vision.

As a Church school, we believe that RE is not simply a subject but a transformative experience that shapes pupils' understanding of themselves, others and the world. Our teaching of RE is theologically rooted, intellectually rigorous and spiritually enriching. It enables pupils to explore life's deepest questions—about meaning, purpose, identity and values—through the lens of Christianity and other major world faiths, while respecting non-religious worldviews.

We adopt an enquiry-based approach that begins with a Big Question**,** encouraging curiosity, critical thinking and dialogue. Through high-quality resources such as *Understanding Christianity* and the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus, pupils engage with sacred texts, concepts and practices in ways that are age-appropriate, challenging and inspiring. Our curriculum is designed to be inclusive, diverse and reflective of our global community, promoting respect and empathy for all.

RE at Sedlescombe is taught creatively, using drama, art, music and philosophy for children to deepen understanding and foster awe and wonder. It is never about indoctrination; rather, it invites pupils to learn about and from religion, developing their own beliefs and values while appreciating those of others.

Through RE, we aim to cultivate wisdom (the ability to make good choices based on knowledge, experience, and Christian values), hope (life has meaning and purpose) and moral courage (standing up for justice, truth and kindness). This equips pupils to make ethical decisions and live well together. It is central to our vision and motto, preparing children not only for academic success but for life in a diverse and interconnected world.

Religious Education Curriculum Aims and Statutory Compliance

Our Religious Education curriculum is designed to meet and exceed the expectations set out in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education and the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus. As a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school, RE is a core subject and is allocated a minimum of 5% of curriculum time:

- **KS1:** 36 hours per year (approximately 55 minutes per week)
- **KS2:** 45 hours per year (approximately 69 minutes per week)

Our curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- **Know about and understand** a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Describe, explain, and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising diversity within and between communities.
  - Identify, investigate, and respond to questions posed by sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
  - Appreciate and appraise the significance and impact of different ways of life and forms of expression.
- **Express ideas and insights** about the nature, significance, and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs and practices influence individuals and communities.
  - Express personal reflections and critical responses to questions about identity, diversity, meaning, and value, including ethical issues.
  - Appreciate varied dimensions of religion and worldviews.
- **Gain and deploy skills** needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:
  - Investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose, and truth, responding creatively.
  - Enquire into what enables individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.
  - Articulate beliefs, values, and commitments clearly to explain why they matter in their own and others' lives.

Our curriculum is balanced and inclusive, giving significant attention to Christianity while ensuring pupils learn about major world faiths and non-religious worldviews. It is enquiry-based, beginning with a Big Question for each unit, and promotes curiosity, critical thinking, and respectful dialogue.

We use Understanding Christianity to teach core Christian concepts and The Agreed RE Syllabus for East Sussex for other faiths, ensuring progression and depth across all key stages. The curriculum is well-sequenced, challenging, and age-appropriate, enabling pupils to develop theological literacy and cultural awareness.

Statutory Compliance:

- RE is taught in accordance with the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from RE; however, as RE is central to our school's vision and ethos, we encourage parents to discuss any concerns with the Headteacher.
- Collective worship is distinct from RE curriculum time and does not replace statutory RE provision.

Vision

Our Children

"When I meet people from other cultures I know that they too want happiness and do not want suffering, this allows me to see them as brothers and sisters."
— Dalai Lama

Learning Through Faith

Learning in RE is a journey of heart,

Exploring the stories that wisdom imparts.

From parables spoken to prayers that inspire,

We learn to be kind, to forgive, and aspire.

Each faith is a window, a view we can see,

Of love, hope, and courage, of deep mystery.

We ask and we wonder, we listen, we share,

To build understanding, to show that we care.

Learning in RE helps us grow strong and wise,

To value all voices, all truths, all ties.

So open your mind and let questions flow,

For learning through faith helps our spirits grow.

Every Unique Individual – What this Means for RE

Every child in our school is a unique individual, created with their own experiences, beliefs, and questions about the world. In Religious Education, this means we value and celebrate their individuality by providing opportunities to explore big ideas in ways that respect their voice and perspective. High-quality RE does not impose answers but invites curiosity, dialogue, and reflection, enabling each child to develop their own sense of identity while learning to appreciate the richness of others' beliefs. By

recognising uniqueness, we ensure RE is inclusive, nurturing, and empowering—helping every child to flourish spiritually, morally, and socially.

Through the lens of Religious Education, we aim for our children to be:

1. Open-Minded Thinkers

We aspire for our children to develop a mindset that welcomes diversity and values dialogue. High-quality RE encourages them to explore different beliefs and worldviews without judgment, fostering curiosity and critical thinking. By learning to ask meaningful questions and consider multiple perspectives, they grow into individuals who can navigate complexity with respect and understanding.

2. Compassionate and Empathetic Individuals

Through stories of faith, moral dilemmas, and real-life examples, RE nurtures empathy and compassion. Children learn to step into the shoes of others, appreciating the joys and struggles that shape human experience. This emotional awareness empowers them to respond with kindness, care, and a sense of responsibility toward those in need, both within their immediate community and across the wider world.

3. A Sense of Shared Humanity

RE helps children recognize that, despite cultural and religious differences, we all share common hopes, fears, and aspirations. This understanding builds bridges rather than barriers, promoting unity and reducing prejudice. By valuing every individual as unique and worthy of dignity, children learn that respect and fairness are the foundations of a just society.

4. Global Citizens

In an increasingly interconnected world, RE equips children with the knowledge and attitudes needed to thrive as global citizens. They gain insight into diverse traditions, ethical frameworks, and cultural practices, enabling them to engage positively and respectfully with people from all walks of life. This global awareness prepares them to contribute to a world where cooperation and understanding are essential.

5. Advocates for Peace and Harmony

RE provides opportunities to reflect on teachings about forgiveness, reconciliation, and justice. Children learn that peace is not passive but requires courage, dialogue, and action. By understanding the roots of conflict and the power of compassion, they become advocates for harmony—committed to resolving differences peacefully and promoting fairness in their communities and beyond.

6. Spiritually Reflective Learners

High-quality RE invites children to explore life's big questions about meaning, purpose, and identity. It offers a safe space for reflection, where they can develop their own beliefs while respecting those of others. This spiritual growth helps them build resilience,

a strong moral compass, and a sense of belonging, enabling them to flourish in an ever-changing world.

The Importance of a Child's Holistic Development in RE

We believe that focusing on a child's holistic development within Religious Education is essential because it nurtures every aspect of their growth—spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, and social—ensuring they become well-rounded individuals. RE supports children in building strong relationships, developing self-awareness, and acquiring the values and skills needed to live well together in a diverse world. It goes beyond factual knowledge, emphasising empathy, resilience, and a healthy sense of identity rooted in respect and understanding.

One powerful approach in supporting holistic development through RE is encouraging reflection and dialogue. By exploring big questions about meaning, purpose, and belief, children learn to recognise their own thoughts and feelings while appreciating those of others. This reflective practice helps them develop emotional literacy and moral reasoning, which are key to forming positive relationships, managing differences sensitively, and engaging thoughtfully with the world around them.

As we prioritise a child's holistic development in RE, we create safe, inclusive environments where children feel valued and understood. This focus helps children thrive not only academically but spiritually and socially, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being. Our RE approach recognises that every child is unique, and that nurturing the whole child—mind, heart, and spirit—leads to compassionate, informed individuals who contribute positively to society.

Linking Emotional Regulation to Religious Education

At Sedlescombe, each child decorates a peg doll in their image and likeness, symbolising their individuality and sense of belonging. These representations sit in a large green house, reflecting calm and readiness to learn. When a child becomes dysregulated, they can move their peg doll into the red, yellow, or blue house, visually expressing their emotional state. This practice connects beautifully to RE because it mirrors key themes of self-awareness, reflection, and understanding others.

Just as RE encourages children to explore big questions about identity, feelings, and relationships, the Zones of Regulation help them recognise and name emotions—an essential part of spiritual and moral development. Through sensitive conversations with adults, children learn strategies to return to their 'green zone,' promoting peace and harmony within themselves and their community.

These moments of reflection echo RE's aim: to nurture empathy, resilience, and respect for self and others, values that underpin many faith traditions and our school vision.

Immersing Our Youngest Learners in Religious Education

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we believe that Religious Education should be a joyful, exploratory experience that nurtures curiosity and wonder. Our youngest learners are immersed in rich opportunities to ask questions, share ideas, and develop their communication and language skills through meaningful discussions. We want them to be confident and articulate, unafraid to express their thoughts and feelings as they begin to explore big concepts about themselves, others, and the world around them.

Through stories, celebrations, and hands-on experiences, children learn about different faiths and traditions, including those represented within their own families. This connection to home values and beliefs helps them feel respected and included, while broadening their understanding of diversity. We celebrate festivals together, explore symbols and artefacts, and encourage children to notice similarities and differences in ways that promote mutual respect.

Our approach ensures that RE in EYFS is not about memorising facts but about developing a sense of belonging, empathy, and curiosity. By fostering these qualities early, we lay the foundations for children to grow into thoughtful, open-minded individuals who value dialogue and appreciate the richness of our shared humanity.

Cultural Capital & Religious Education

We endeavour to understand a child's cultural capital upon entry to our school, recognising that every child brings unique knowledge, beliefs, traditions, and experiences from their family, community and environment. These shape their understanding of the world and influence how they engage with Religious Education.

By valuing and building upon a child's cultural capital, our RE provision aims to:

1. **Personalise Learning:** We tailor RE experiences to reflect children's backgrounds and interests, ensuring lessons feel relevant and meaningful. This helps children see themselves in the curriculum and fosters curiosity about others.

2. **Build Confidence and Self-Esteem:** When children's home faith practices, celebrations, and values are acknowledged, they feel respected and empowered. This sense of belonging encourages them to share ideas confidently and engage in dialogue.
3. **Promote Cultural Sensitivity and Respect**: Our staff approach RE with sensitivity, avoiding assumptions and stereotypes. We celebrate diversity and encourage children to appreciate different beliefs, creating an inclusive environment rooted in mutual respect.
4. **Facilitate Spiritual, Moral, and Emotional Development:** Recognising varied experiences helps children reflect on big questions about identity, meaning, and relationships. This nurtures empathy, resilience, and understanding—key aspects of holistic development.
5. **Enhance Communication and Partnerships with Families:** By learning about a child's cultural and religious background, we strengthen relationships with families. This partnership supports continuity between home and school, reinforcing shared values and respect.
6. **Ensure Equity and Flourishing for All:** Understanding cultural capital enables us to provide equitable opportunities for every child to succeed in RE. We aim to close gaps in experience and ensure all children can explore faith and worldviews confidently.
7. **Embed British Values Through RE:** RE provides a natural context for teaching and embedding British Values—democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Through discussions, stories, and celebrations, children learn to respect diversity, understand fairness, and appreciate the freedoms and responsibilities that underpin life in modern Britain.

Knowing and respecting children's cultural capital ensures our RE teaching is responsive, inclusive, and rooted in our Christian vision, enabling every child to flourish and reach their God-given potential.

50 Things Books

At Sedlescombe, we have planned for 50 things to do before a child leaves our educational setting to improve and enhance their cultural capital.

50 Things to do Before You Leave Sedlescombe

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Create and Follow Maps	Seasonal Woodland Welly Walk	Recreate the Fire of London	Go on a Safari	An Overnight Stay away From Home	Visit a London Theatre and use Public Transport	Stay overnight and take part in outdoor adventure activities
Taste Exotic Fruits	Visit a Farm	Learn to Make a Soup	Experience River Paddle Boarding & Rafting	Take a River Cruise on the Thames	Visit a Cathedral	Dissect an animal organ
Meet a Police Officer	Experience Hanukah	Write to a Child in Another Country	Learn to Code a Machine	Experience Climbing and Archery	Learn to ride a Bike on the Main Road	Visit a London Museum
Visit a Zoo and Handle an Animal	Go to a Pantomime	Spend a day at the seaside and Funicular railway	Visit a Science Centre & Take Part in a Science Show	Achieve the Blue Peter Music Badge	Achieve the Blue Peter Sports Badge	Take Part in an Engineering Project
Observe an Egg Hatch	Grow Produce to Eat	Experience a live music performance	Travel back in time to a different era	Experience Forest School	To Experience Sailing & Wind Surfing	Design a Keepsake
Pond Dipping	Perform in a Dance Show in front of an audience	Take Part in a Sports Activities Taster Session	Achieve the Blue Peter Reading Badge	Design and Make a Range of Bread Products	Participate in a Competitive Tournament	Achieve a Blue Peter Green Badge (Eco)
	Whole School	Take Part in a Debate	Learn to Swim	Learn to Save a Life	Learn to Speak French	
		Meet an Author	Achieve an Arts Award	Visit a Church and take part in a church service	Learn To Sew Simple Stitches	

Links to RE

-Experience Hanukkah (Year 1) – Direct exposure to a Jewish festival promotes understanding of different faiths and traditions.
-Visit a Church and Take Part in a Church Service (Year 4) – Provides firsthand experience of Christian worship, deepening understanding of faith practices.
-Visit a Cathedral (Year 5) – Encourages awe and wonder, linking to spirituality and the significance of sacred spaces.
-Write to a Child in Another Country (Year 2) – Builds empathy and global awareness, key RE themes.
-Meet an Author (Year 2) – Can link to exploring stories with moral or spiritual themes.

Spiritual Experiences

Observe an Egg Hatch (Reception) – Encourages awe and wonder about life and creation, linking to big questions in RE.

- Seasonal Woodland Welly Walk (Year 1) – Nature-based experiences can foster reflection on the beauty of creation.
- Go on a Safari (Year 3) – Promotes appreciation of the natural world and stewardship, often discussed in RE.
- Experience Forest School (Year 4) – Opportunities for reflection and connection with nature, supporting spiritual development.

Sense of Belonging

- Whole School Performance (Year 1) – Builds community and confidence, reflecting RE values of inclusion and shared celebration.
- Take Part in a Debate (Year 2) – Encourages respectful dialogue and listening, key to RE discussions.
- Design and Make a Range of Products (Year 4) – Collaborative projects foster teamwork and shared purpose.
- Stay Overnight (Year 4) and PGL Take Part in Outdoor Adventure Activities (Year 6) – Strengthens relationships and trust, echoing RE themes of community and fellowship.

Safety and Well-being

The welfare of our children is of utmost importance, and this extends to their spiritual, moral, and emotional well-being. Through Religious Education, we help children understand boundaries, rules, and limits in the context of respect, fairness, and shared values. We teach the reasons behind these principles, linking them to themes such as justice, compassion, and responsibility found in many faith traditions. This supports children in managing behaviour in a way that reflects empathy and understanding, appropriate to their stage of development and individual needs.

Children should be encouraged to take risks in their learning—asking big questions, exploring different beliefs, and engaging in dialogue—while being guided to recognise and navigate sensitive topics with care. We create safe spaces for discussion, ensuring that children feel secure when sharing their thoughts and feelings. Our approach complies with statutory welfare requirements and aligns with our Christian vision, ensuring that the environment, resources, and practices are safe, inclusive, and purposeful.

By embedding these principles into RE, we nurture a sense of belonging and respect, helping children flourish academically, socially, and spiritually. This holistic approach ensures that every child is valued and supported to reach their God-given potential.

Our Environment

"The environment is the third teacher."

-Loris Malaguzzi

Our Whole-School Environment: A Foundation for Flourishing

At Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School, we believe that the physical environment is a powerful influence on learning and well-being—often described as the "third teacher." Alongside skilled educators and the child's own curiosity, the spaces in which children learn shape their sense of belonging, security, and engagement. Our whole-school approach ensures that every classroom and shared area reflects our Christian vision and values, creating an atmosphere that nurtures both academic and spiritual growth.

The Hygge Principle: Comfort and Calm

Inspired by the Danish concept of *Hygge*, we design spaces that feel warm, homely, and inviting. Soft lighting, natural textures, plants, and personal touches such as photographs create an environment that feels safe and familiar. This approach reduces sensory overload and fosters emotional regulation, helping children feel calm and ready to learn. When pupils feel secure, they are more able to engage deeply with learning, including the big questions explored in Religious Education.

Why This Matters for Mental Health

A thoughtfully designed environment is not just aesthetically pleasing—it is a vital component of mental health and well-being. Research shows that calm, uncluttered spaces reduce anxiety and support focus, while natural elements promote relaxation and resilience. For children, especially those with additional needs, a predictable and soothing environment helps them manage transitions and feel valued. This sense of security underpins positive relationships and enables pupils to participate fully in classroom dialogue, including sensitive discussions in RE about identity, beliefs, and values.

EYFS: The Curiosity Approach and Religious Education

The Curiosity Approach, inspired by Reggio, Steiner, Te Whāriki, and Montessori principles, aligns beautifully with our vision for Religious Education. By creating beautiful, well-designed spaces that invite exploration and wonder, we nurture the same qualities that underpin high-quality RE—curiosity, reflection, and respect for diversity.

In EYFS, children are encouraged to ask big questions, share ideas, and engage in meaningful discussions about themselves, others, and the world. This early emphasis on enquiry lays the foundation for RE learning in Year 1 and beyond, where children explore concepts of faith, identity, and belonging. Through sensory and imaginative play, children begin to understand symbols, celebrations, and traditions, including those from their own families and wider communities. This fosters a sense of inclusion and respect for different beliefs.

Using authentic, real-life resources—such as natural materials, recycled objects, and cultural artefacts—supports spiritual development by encouraging children to treat items with care and value. These experiences help children make connections between the physical and the symbolic, a key aspect of RE learning. For example, handling real objects during role play or celebration activities can spark conversations about meaning and significance in different faiths.

As children progress through school, the skills developed through the Curiosity Approach—problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity—become essential for RE. They enable pupils to engage confidently in dialogue, express their views, and listen to others with empathy. This approach ensures that RE is not just about acquiring knowledge but about developing thoughtful, articulate individuals who are intrigued by life's big questions and respectful of diverse worldviews.

EYFS: An Interwoven Approach to Diversity in RE

In our setting, diversity is not an add-on—it is woven into the fabric of our Religious Education curriculum and learning environment. We believe that offering diverse resources is essential for promoting inclusion, cultural awareness, and equal opportunities for all children. RE provides the perfect context for this, as it invites children to explore different faiths, traditions, and worldviews in a way that fosters respect and understanding.

Diverse resources in RE help children see themselves represented while learning about others, creating a sense of belonging and curiosity. They encourage dialogue, empathy, and reflection—key skills for spiritual and moral development. Here's how we embed diversity into RE:

1. Books and Stories

- Multicultural storybooks that reflect different religions, traditions, and family structures.
- Stories featuring characters of varying abilities, cultures, and genders in non-stereotypical roles.
- Faith-based stories and parables from Christianity and other world religions to spark discussion about values and beliefs.

2. Role-Play and Artefacts

- Dolls and figures representing different faiths and cultural clothing (e.g., hijabs, saris).
- Play food and utensils from different cultures to explore traditions and celebrations.
- Authentic religious artefacts (e.g., menorah, prayer mat, cross) for hands-on learning.

3. Music and Instruments

- Instruments and songs from global traditions, including those used in worship.
- Music linked to festivals and celebrations from different faiths.
- Opportunities to listen, move, and reflect on how music expresses belief and identity.

4. Art and Creative Materials

- Skin-tone crayons and paints for self-portraits, celebrating uniqueness.
- Materials for cultural crafts linked to religious festivals (e.g., rangoli patterns for Diwali, lanterns for Chinese New Year).

- Opportunities to create symbols of faith and explore their meaning.

5. Visuals and Displays

- Posters showing people from various backgrounds and abilities, including faith communities.
- Displays celebrating festivals and values from different religions alongside Christian values.

By embedding these resources into RE, we create an environment where diversity is celebrated daily—not through stand-alone projects but as part of our ethos. This approach helps children develop respect, empathy, and a deeper understanding of the world, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and spiritual growth.

Whole School RE Displays: Creating Spaces for Spiritual Curiosity

Our approach to displays is rooted in creating calm, purposeful environments that support children's focus, creativity, and spiritual development. In Religious Education, displays are not just decoration—they are tools for enquiry, reflection and dialogue.

Classroom Reflection Areas

Every classroom includes a dedicated reflection area to embed spirituality into daily life. These areas typically feature:

- **A Cross and a Bible:** Multiple versions (traditional, children's, and creative formats like Lego Bibles) to make scripture accessible.
- **School Vision and Values:** Displayed with a linked Bible verse to reinforce theological roots.
- **The RE Big Question:** Clearly visible, inviting pupils to think deeply and respond throughout the unit.
- **Interactive Elements:** Space for pupils to add prayers, thoughtsor reflections on current worship themes.
- **Artefacts and Symbols:** Items from Christianity and other faiths studied, promoting respect and curiosity.

Why this matters:
We believe that our reflection areas create a visible and tangible link between RE, collective worship, and the school's Christian vision. They encourage stillness, wonder, and dialogue, helping pupils develop habits of reflection and prayer in a safe, inclusive environment.

Whole School: Pop-Up Prayer Spaces

Why we do them:
Pop-Up Prayer Spaces provide pupils with opportunities to pause, reflect, and engage with spiritual questions in creative ways. They make prayer accessible and invitational, allowing children to explore themes like forgiveness, hope, and gratitude in a hands-on, age-appropriate manner.

How we do them:

- Transform an area, indoor or out, into a multi-sensory prayer space with stations linked to current worship themes or RE Big Questions.
- Activities include writing prayers on pebbles, creating thankfulness chains, or reflecting on global issues through interactive prompts.
- Spaces are inclusive and invitational—children choose how to engage, whether through prayer, quiet reflection, or creative expression.

Impact:
Pupil voice shows that prayer spaces help children feel calm, connected, and reflective. They deepen understanding of Christian values and encourage empathy and compassion. Staff report that these spaces enhance spiritual development and contribute to a positive school ethos.

Our Curriculum

"Wonder is the beginning of wisdom."
- Socrates

In RE, cultivating wonder encourages children to explore mysteries of faith, morality, and meaning—laying the foundation for deeper spiritual understanding.

Sedlescombe's Curiosity Curriculum Through the Lens of RE

At Sedlescombe, our curiosity-driven curriculum aligns perfectly with the aims of Religious Education. We believe that nurturing children's innate desire to learn is central to helping them explore life's big questions—about identity, meaning, and belonging. RE thrives in an environment where curiosity, enquiry, and discovery are celebrated, enabling children to investigate different faiths and worldviews with respect and openness.

Our approach emphasises the process of learning in RE: asking thoughtful questions, engaging in dialogue, and reflecting on diverse beliefs and practices. This makes learning meaningful and encourages children to develop empathy, critical thinking, and spiritual awareness rather than simply memorising facts.

We create spaces where children's inquisitiveness is valued, their creativity is nurtured, and their confidence grows through hands-on experiences. For example, exploring religious artefacts, celebrating festivals, and engaging in role play allow pupils to make authentic connections between their own lives and those of others. These experiences are underpinned by our learning behaviours—attitudes and habits such as respect, resilience, and reflection—which are essential for flourishing in RE.

By embedding curiosity into RE from EYFS onwards, we prepare children to become articulate, open-minded individuals who are not afraid to ask big questions, share their views, and listen to others. This approach ensures that RE is dynamic, inclusive, and deeply connected to our Christian vision of enabling every child to reach their God-given potential.

Knowing More Remembering More
"Curiosity in children is but an appetite for knowledge."
John Locke
Values
Our values are the beating heart of our curriculum. We have designed a curriculum that supports each and every child to thrive academically, emotionally and spiritually. As a church school we want to support every child to develop a strong moral compass that will guide them through life.
Enquiring Minds
At Sedlescombe we do not tell children what to think,.. Instead we give them the knowledge and skills they need to question, the oracy skills to debate and articulate a point of view and the courage to challenge. We want children to feel that they can make a difference we do not want them to be passive learners, but thinkers and doers.
Rich Texts
Stories and rich texts underpin our teaching across the WHOLE curriculum We have an unwavering commitment to ensuring each and every child leaves Sedlescombe a fluent and avid reader so that they can become life-long learners and unlock their God given potential. We want every child to be represented in the books that are read, and for our books to be windows, mirrors and sliding doors.
Curiosity
Curiosity is the seed from which our curriculum has grown. We want to encourage every child to ask questions and have an enquiring mind. As such our curriculum is built around enquiry questions.
Global Citizens
Our curriculum has been designed to take learning beyond the classroom as we want to nurture a child's natural curiosity to explore the world around them. We have chosen 50 enrichment activities that we believe every child should experience whilst at primary school . We want to provide experiences that allow our children to live and thrive in an ethnically diverse world.
Creativity
Creativity blossoms within our curriculum, sparked by curiosity and grounded on knowledge. In our curriculum we teach with creativity and for creativity. We want children to put their imagination to work and be innovative, imaginative, critical thinkers who can work collaboratively and make links across their learning.
Belonging
Our curriculum has been designed to ensure that every child feels they belong by providing experiences which are mirrors, windows and sliding doors. We want children to see themselves in the curriculum, to view the world of others and to be transported into other worlds so that they can have empathy. We want our children to celebrate their similarities and differences, because they are what make us all human.
"The prerequisite of knowledge is curiosity." Jacques Cousteau
Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God
"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength" Philippians 4:13

Knowing More Remembering More

"Curiosity in children is but an appetite for knowledge."
John Locke

Strong Foundations

At Sedlescombe, we believe strong foundations in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are essential to a successful primary school curriculum because they lay the groundwork for children's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

Our EYFS is where children begin to explore the world around them through play, talk, and hands-on experiences—driven by their natural curiosity.

We ensure children are prepared for Y1 and beyond through our well-structured EYFS curriculum which:

-Encourages exploration and discovery, which fuels a lifelong love of learning.

-Builds confidence and independence, allowing children to take risks and solve problems.

-Develops language and thinking skills

Pupils as Leaders

We believe that empowering pupils as leaders is a vital part of our primary curriculum, as it nurtures independence, responsibility, and a sense of agency in their learning. When children are given opportunities to lead—whether through pupil voice, peer mentoring, or leading learning activities—they become more engaged, confident and curious. Leadership roles tap into children's natural inquisitiveness, encouraging them to ask questions, explore ideas, and take ownership of their learning journey. By fostering leadership from an early age, we help pupils develop the skills and mindset needed to become thoughtful, active contributors to their school community and beyond.

Spirituality

Spirituality is an integral part of a child's journey at Sedlescombe. It nurtures the whole child, going beyond academic achievement to support emotional, moral, and reflective growth. It helps children explore big questions about life, identity, and human experience—often sparked by curiosity. Children are naturally curious about the world and their place in it. Spiritual development channels this curiosity into meaningful reflection by encouraging them to:

-Wonder about the lives of others, past and present.

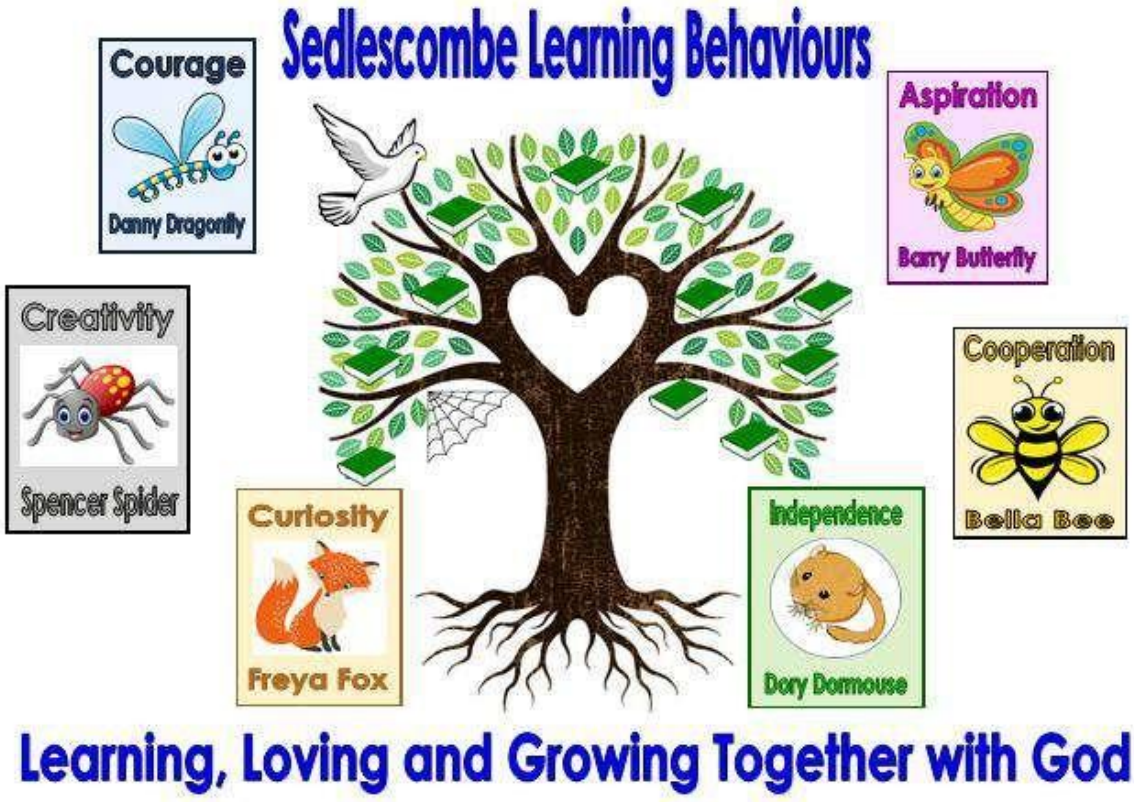
"The prerequisite of knowledge is curiosity." Jacques Cousteau

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength" Philippians 4:13

Learning Behaviours

These behaviours are closely linked to how children approach learning, how they interact with others and how they navigate challenges and new experiences. We enable children to foster positive learning behaviours as we believe they are essential for supporting academic success and personal growth.



Christian Values

Our Christian values support the development of well-rounded, compassionate and responsible individuals, fostering a learning environment where children can grow academically and personally within a context of love, respect, and ethical responsibility.

<u>Our Values are:</u>

- Forgiveness
- Thankfulness
- Kindness
- Courage
- Honesty
- Aspiration

They are essential as they guide children in developing a strong moral character, helping them to their behaviour, decisions and interactions with others. They provide children with a sense of purpose, helping them understand their role in the world, their responsibility to others and the importance of contributing to a caring and just society. They encourage compassion, empathy and understanding, promoting a supportive environment where children can thrive emotionally and socially, feeling valued and cared for. They emphasise the importance of respect for others, regardless of differences which ultimately creates an inclusive school culture where diversity is celebrated and all children feel accepted. Finally, they ensure a sense of unity and belonging among staff, children, and parents, building a strong, supportive school community rooted in faith and common purpose.

Religious Education Principles & Curriculum at Sedlescombe

An Enquiry-Based Approach

At Sedlescombe, Religious Education is taught through a dynamic, enquiry-based approach that inspires curiosity and deep thinking. This method empowers children to investigate and reflect on life's most profound questions—about meaning, purpose, identity, and belonging. Through discussion, debate, and hands-on experiences, pupils develop the confidence to ask big questions and explore diverse answers with respect and empathy.

Understanding Christianity

Our teaching of Christianity is rooted in the *Understanding Christianity* framework, which uses core concepts of Christian belief as expressed in the Bible and lived out by Christians today. These concepts form part of the 'big story' of salvation, revisited throughout each key stage to deepen understanding and make meaningful connections. Pupils engage with a wide range of Bible texts, exploring how Christians interpret and live by these teachings in community and personal life. This approach encourages reflection on questions and puzzles arising from scripture and invites pupils to consider implications for their own lives and worldview.

While this provides a strong foundation for understanding the heart of Christian faith, we also acknowledge the diversity within Christianity and encourage pupils to appreciate its richness and complexity.

A Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Our RE curriculum is ambitious and inclusive, following the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus. It ensures pupils learn **about** and **from** Christianity and other major world faiths, including Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. Each term begins with a *Big Question*—such as *What does it mean to live a good life?* or *Why do people worship?*—which drives enquiry, investigation, and discussion. Pupils explore these questions in local, national, and global contexts, weighing wisdom from different sources and developing their own insights. They learn to agree or disagree respectfully, fostering critical thinking and empathy.

Progression and Depth

From EYFS onwards, pupils build a secure foundation in RE through active learning and reflection. In KS1 and Year 3, the focus is on Christianity, Judaism and Islam, while Years 4 - 6 expands to include. This progression ensures depth of knowledge and understanding, while nurturing spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

Yearly Overview for the Teaching of RE

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
EYFS	F4 Being Special. Where do we belong?	F2 Why is Christmas special for Christians	F1 Why is the word GOD so important to Christians?	F3 Why is Easter special to Christians?	F5 What places are special and why?	F6 What time/ stories are special and why?
Year 1	1.10 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	1.1 What do Christians believe God is like?	1.7 Who is Jewish and how do they live?		1.2 Who do Christians say made the world?	1.9 How should we care for the world and for others and why does it matter?
Year 2	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (1)	1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (2)	1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians?	1.4 What is the "good news" Christians believe Jesus brings?	1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers?
Year 3	L 2A.1 What do Christians learn from the creation story?	L 2A.4 What kind of world did Jesus want?	L 2A.2 What is it like to follow God?	L 2.10 How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?	L2.9 How do festivals and worship show what matters to Muslims?	L2.12 How and why do people try to make the world a better place?
Year 4	L 2A.3 What is the 'Trinity' and why is it important to Christians?	L2.7 What do Hindus believe God is like?	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?	L 2A.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday '?	L 2A.6 For Christians, when Jesus left, what was the impact of the Pentecost?	L2.11 How and why do people mark the significant events of life?
Year 5	U 2B.1 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving.	U 2.8 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?	U 2B.4 Why do Christians believe Jesus is the Messiah?	U 2B.6 What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people?	U 2.9 Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?	U 2.10 What matters most to Humanists and Christians?
Year 6	U 2B.2 Creation and Science: conflicting or complimentary?	U 2B.5 How do Christians decide how to live? What would Jesus do?	U 2.7 Why do Hindus want to be good?	U 2.11 Why do some people believe in God and some people not?	U 2B.8 For Christians what kind of King was Jesus?	U 2.12 How does faith help people when life gets hard?

The Role of the Adult in RE: Explore, Discover and Learn

At Sedlescombe, the role of the adult during RE lessons—whether in continuous provision in EYFS or enquiry-based learning across the school—is vital in supporting and deepening pupils' spiritual and theological understanding.

1. Facilitators and Guides

Adults create rich RE learning environments by providing authentic resources, artefacts, and thought-provoking questions. They guide exploration by modelling curiosity and respect, stepping in to extend thinking while allowing pupils the freedom to investigate big questions about faith and meaning.

2. Observers and Assessors
Teachers observe pupils' dialogue, reflections, and engagement with texts and artefacts, using these insights to assess understanding and plan next steps. Observations focus on how pupils use theological vocabulary, respond to stories, and express their own ideas.

3. Encouragers of Independence
Adults empower pupils to take ownership of their RE learning—choosing enquiry paths, forming opinions, and engaging in respectful debate. This independence builds confidence and critical thinking.

4. Models of Behaviour and Dialogue
Teachers model respectful listening, empathy, and open-mindedness, demonstrating how to agree or disagree thoughtfully. This sets the tone for inclusive, meaningful RE discussions.

5. Responsive Interactors
Adults engage pupils in rich conversations, using open-ended questions like *"Why do you think this matters to Christians?"* or *"How might this story influence someone's life?"* These interactions foster language development, reasoning, and spiritual reflection.

Enriching Children's Language and Vocabulary in RE

Developing Language Through Sentence Stems

In Religious Education, we actively enrich children's language by providing structured sentence stems that support discussion and reflection. Stems such as *"I believe… because…"*, *"Christians might think…"*, or *"This story teaches…"* help pupils articulate their ideas clearly and respectfully. These scaffolds encourage deeper reasoning and enable children to express complex thoughts about faith, morality, and identity with confidence. By modelling and embedding these stems in lessons, we create a culture of dialogue where pupils learn to listen, respond, and build on each other's ideas.

Embedding Key Theological Vocabulary

We ensure that children develop a rich theological vocabulary that grows progressively across year groups. Words such as *salvation, incarnation, covenant, forgiveness,* and *sacred* are introduced in context and revisited through enquiry-based learning. Teachers explicitly teach these terms, using visuals, stories, and practical examples to make meaning clear. Pupils are encouraged to use this vocabulary in discussion and writing, enabling them to engage with big questions and theological concepts at greater depth. This approach not only strengthens subject knowledge but also empowers children to think critically and communicate with precision.

Rich Texts and Bible Stories

At Sedlescombe, we believe that rich texts and Bible stories are central to high-quality Religious Education. They provide pupils with opportunities to encounter profound ideas, moral dilemmas, and spiritual truths in an accessible and engaging way. Through stories such as the Good Samaritan, Creation, and the Parable of the Lost Son, children explore themes of love, forgiveness, justice, and hope. These narratives are not taught in isolation—they are woven into enquiry-based learning, enabling pupils to reflect on their meaning, consider how Christians live in response, and make connections to their own lives. Alongside the Bible, we use diverse texts from other faith traditions and contemporary literature to broaden understanding and promote respect for different worldviews. This approach enriches language, deepens theological thinking, and inspires curiosity about life's big questions.

Spiritual Moments

"The task of education is to cultivate the child's inner world of soul, through love, warmth, joy, creativity, gratitude, and respect for the environment, so that they may grow into happy and confident human beings."

- Rudolf Steiner

Emotional and Spiritual Development Across Our School

At Sedlescombe, we believe that the emotional and spiritual aspects of a child's development are just as vital as their intellectual growth. Our whole-school approach to Religious Education reflects this belief by creating nurturing environments where love, warmth, joy, and creativity are central. Through RE, we provide opportunities for children to explore life's big questions, develop a sense of purpose, and understand their role in God's world. This helps them grow into balanced, confident individuals who flourish academically, socially, and spiritually.

We ensure that every child experiences moments of awe and wonder—whether through visiting a church, taking part in collective worship, or pausing to reflect on the beauty of creation and the 'little joys of life.' These experiences are woven into our RE curriculum and school ethos, encouraging mindfulness, gratitude, and respect for diversity. By celebrating achievements, exploring faith traditions, and fostering curiosity, we create a sense of belonging and unity across our community. This holistic approach ensures that children feel valued and supported, enabling them to develop empathy, resilience, and a strong moral compass rooted in our Christian vision.

A Continuous Cycle in RE

Across our school, Religious Education follows a continuous cycle of observation, assessment, and planning to ensure every child makes meaningful progress in their spiritual and theological understanding.

Observation: Teachers actively listen and observe during RE lessons—whether in discussion, reflection, or creative tasks—to identify pupils' interests, misconceptions, and depth of thinking. Observations capture how children engage with big questions, use theological vocabulary, and respond to stories and concepts.

Assessment: These observations inform ongoing assessment, helping teachers understand where pupils are in their RE learning journey. Assessment focuses not only on knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths but also on enquiry skills, ability to articulate ideas, and respect for different viewpoints.

Planning: Based on assessment, teachers plan purposeful next steps—such as introducing sentence stems for deeper dialogue, revisiting core concepts, or providing opportunities for reflection and application. This ensures lessons are responsive, challenging, and inclusive.

This cycle is flexible and continuous, allowing teachers to adapt in the moment and create learning experiences that are relevant and thought-provoking. It ensures that RE is not static but dynamic, enabling pupils to flourish spiritually, morally, and academically.

Assessment

Formative Assessment in RE

Formative assessment in Religious Education is a continuous, embedded process that enables teachers to understand and support children's learning through meaningful, everyday interactions. It is not a separate activity but an integral part of classroom practice, where observations, conversations, and questioning help adults gauge what pupils know, understand, and can do. Professional judgement plays a key role, allowing teachers to interpret responses and behaviours in the context of prior learning. These insights inform planning, ensuring that teaching is responsive and tailored to individual needs, while promoting deeper thinking and engagement with the enquiry-based approach that underpins RE.

Summative Assessment in RE

Summative assessment provides a clear picture of pupils' progress over time and their ability to apply learning to key concepts and questions. In RE, this often takes the form

of 'hot and cold tasks' linked to the enquiry question, enabling teachers to measure how children's understanding has developed from the start to the end of a unit. These tasks, alongside key assessment markers for the year group, allow pupils to be assessed as Working Towards (WT), Working At (WA), or Greater Depth (GD) using Insight or similar tracking systems. Summative assessment complements formative strategies by offering a structured overview of attainment, supporting accurate reporting and informing future curriculum planning.

Life Skills & Values (RE Books)

RE books provide a dedicated space for children to record their learning, reflections, and responses to enquiry-based questions, ensuring that their work demonstrates progression over time. These books capture a rich variety of evidence, including written tasks, drawings, annotations, and personal reflections, which showcase both knowledge and understanding as well as the development of critical thinking skills. By maintaining high standards of presentation and encouraging thoughtful responses, RE books become a valuable tool for monitoring attainment and supporting formative assessment. They also serve as an important record for pupils to revisit and build upon, reinforcing the idea that Religious Education is a meaningful, reflective subject that values individual perspectives and deep engagement.

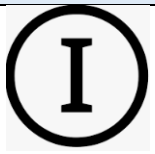
Life Skills and Values (RE Books) Pens & Codes

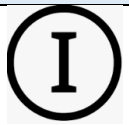
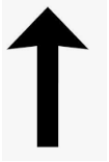
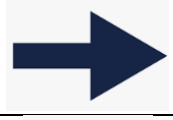
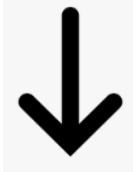
Pens:

Green	Indicates a positive
Pink	Indicates support given or next step
Purple	Indicates an improvement made

Codes:

Adults write codes to identify how much support was given.

Literacy	
Code	**Meaning**
	**Independent:** the child has created this by themselves

	Supported: adults supported the child in some way (forming letters, verbally creating a sentence)
VF	**Verbal Feedback given (with a short description):** this is only used in exceptional circumstances as a reminder to the adults on what the child should be working on in their next steps
	Wiggly underline: this identifies when an adult has up-levelled a word or phrase to improve the children's vocabulary, letter formation or punctuation
Maths	
Code	**Meaning**
	**Independent:** the child has answered this by themselves
	Supported: adults supported the child in some way (using resources, helping them to count, modelling how to solve the problem)
VF	**Verbal Feedback given (with a short description):** this is only used in exceptional circumstances as a reminder to the adults on what the child should be working on in their next steps
	**Up Arrow:** The learning intention was achieved
	**Side Arrow:** The learning intention was partially achieved
	**Down Arrow:** The learning intention was not achieved

Our Governors

"Governors are the guardians of a school's vision and standards—they provide strategic leadership, accountability, and challenge to ensure every child receives the best possible education."

At Sedlescombe, our Governors and Ethos Committee play a vital role in ensuring that Collective Worship and Religious Education reflect the school's Christian vision and values while meeting statutory requirements. Their responsibility is to act as critical friends, supporting and challenging leaders to maintain high-quality provision that nurtures pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Governors ask informed questions about the impact of Collective Worship on the school community—how it inspires reflection, promotes inclusivity, and reinforces the school's ethos in daily life. They also monitor how RE teaching fosters respect, curiosity, and understanding of Christianity alongside other world faiths, ensuring that pupils develop both knowledge and empathy.

Governors scrutinise curriculum intent, implementation, and impact in RE, checking that teaching is enquiry-based, engaging, and aligned with the Statement of Entitlement. They review evidence such as pupil voice, work in RE books, and worship evaluations to understand how well the provision promotes deep thinking and personal reflection. Safeguarding and wellbeing remain central, with Governors ensuring that worship is a safe, welcoming space for all and that RE celebrates diversity while upholding the school's Christian distinctiveness. By maintaining high expectations and monitoring resources, staffing, and training, the Ethos Committee ensures that Collective Worship and RE are not only compliant but transformative—shaping a community rooted in compassion, courage, and respect.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The governors responsible for the Quality of RE Education will monitor the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and RE subject leaders will carry out monitoring as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The Religious Education policy is reviewed and updated annually.

Our Families

"When families and schools work together, children thrive. A child's learning is most successful when home and school share the same vision and values, creating a partnership that nurtures curiosity, confidence, and character."

Partnering with Parents in RE

At Sedlescombe, we recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and we highly value the role they play in nurturing spiritual development and understanding. A strong home–school partnership is essential for children to explore big questions, reflect on values, and develop respect for different beliefs. Together, we aim to help every child flourish and achieve their God-given potential.

Parent/Carer Communication

Our parents' evenings in Term 1 and Term 3, alongside additional meetings where needed, provide valuable opportunities to explore how children are engaging with Religious Education and Collective Worship. These conversations go beyond academic progress—they allow teachers to share rich insights into each child's spiritual and personal development.
During these meetings, teachers discuss:

- **Responses to Big Questions and Bible Stories:** How children reflect on themes such as courage, kindness, and forgiveness.
- **Understanding of Christianity and Other World Faiths:** Progress in knowledge and respect for diversity.
- **Social and Emotional Growth:** How RE themes like empathy and community are shaping relationships and character.
- **Practical Support for Home:** Simple, meaningful ways families can continue discussions and reflection beyond the classroom.

Children's school reports also highlight how they are living out our school values, ensuring that character development is celebrated alongside academic achievement.

Weekly Teacher Update

Each week, teachers post a detailed RE curriculum update on Tapestry. These updates share what children have been learning in class, including key enquiry questions, Bible stories, and reflective activities. They also provide practical ideas for families to extend learning at home, such as discussion prompts or creative tasks linked to worship themes.

Fortnightly Newsletter

Our fortnightly newsletter keeps families connected to the spiritual life of the school. It includes upcoming Collective Worship themes, Bible verses, and suggestions for family engagement—such as questions to explore together or simple acts of kindness inspired by our school values. This regular communication ensures parents feel informed, involved, and empowered to support their child's spiritual journey.

Helping Your Child Explore RE at Home

We encourage families to:

- Talk About Big Questions: Use prompts like "What makes a good friend?" or "Why do people pray?" to spark discussion.
- Share Stories: Read Bible stories together or explore stories from other faiths to build empathy and understanding.
- Celebrate Festivals: Mark Christian festivals and learn about others, discussing their meaning and traditions.
- Model Values: Show kindness, forgiveness, and gratitude in everyday life—children learn most from what they see.

Recommended Resources

- RE:Quest (www.request.org.uk) – Interactive resources about Christianity.
- BBC Bitesize RE – Videos and activities on world religions.
- Barnabas in Schools – Creative ideas for exploring Bible stories.
- Books: *The Lion Storyteller Bible* or *Stories for Thinking* by Robert Fisher for philosophical questions.