

INVESTING IN THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL



ST. MARY'S CE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Love, Trust & Hope*

## **RE Policy**



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## St Mary's CE Primary School

### RE Policy

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through our vision and commitment to be an inclusive Christian Family learning and growing together. Investing in the uniqueness of each individual, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019). This is also in accordance with Article 2 (non-discrimination) in the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

#### Introduction

At St Mary's CE School, pupils and their families can expect a high-quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge, and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. This is also in accordance with Article 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion) in the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

We teach according to the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus for Religious Education. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between beliefs, practices, and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.



## **Aims and Objectives**

As stated in the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus for Religious Education the principle aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and world views appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures, and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual, philosophical ways of living, believing, and thinking.

As stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 14

Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

## **Curriculum for Religious Education**

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning, and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctly Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.



- reflects a good balance between the principles of theology, philosophy, and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy.
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the foundation texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general education abilities such as literacy, empathy, and the ability to express thoughts, feelings, and personal beliefs.
- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support, and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs.
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

### **Curriculum balance and time**

Parents, carers and pupils are entitled to expect that as a Church school in St Mary's CE Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This aim should be close to 10% but not less than 5% in Key Stage 1 and 2.

EYFS	Planned within the EYFS framework
KS1	50 mins
KS2	1 hour

RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship.



## Schemes of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in according to the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus for Religious Education.

EYFS	Themes emerging from the EYFS framework
KS1	Christianity, and Islam
Lower KS2	Christianity, and Sikhism
Upper KS2	Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism

## Teaching and Learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad, and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living, and thinking, believing, and belonging. (Article 14 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)/

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- posing and discussing “big” and challenging questions.
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in books and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music, and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender, and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and



worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs, and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

### **Cross-curricular links**

Cross-curricular work is encouraged in line with our topic-based approach to teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, and the ability to express thoughts, feelings, and personal beliefs. RE also contributes to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues that arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama, and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social, and emotional education and citizenship.

### **Visits and visitors**

We can visit St Mary's Church in Long Newton where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class. Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school.

EYFS	St Mary's Church
KS1	St Mary's Church, a local Mosque,
Lower KS2	St Mary's Church, a local Mosque,
Upper KS2	St Mary's Church, a local Mosque or Gurdwara

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits and to invite visitors into our school. All visitors must have a valid DBS certificate.

Due to COVID restrictions all visits are limited to virtual tours and meetings with faith leaders via Zoom or Teams. This will continue until all restrictions are lifted by UK Government.





## **Health and Safety**

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to the guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances and ensure that risk assessments are written and given to the Head Teacher before trips.

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure that RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure that all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure that there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Academy Counsellors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.



- Monitor RE resources to ensure that they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.

### **Matching Work to Pupils' Needs**

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Be directly related to the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus for Religious Education.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes that the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review.**

We intend that this policy should operate for the next three years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and academy counsellors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to share a copy of the planning for RE with the subject leader each term.

The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a "self-evaluation" of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.





## **Self-Evaluation**

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review.

## **Staff Training and CPD**

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development.

This is either "in house" or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

## **Resources**

We have a wide range of resources to support our RE teaching that we continue to develop. We maintain a RE story shelf in the library which offers many stories from different traditions. We are members of the Religious Resources centre where we can borrow books, DVDs, CDs, posters, and topic boxes.

## **Legal Requirements**

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parent's request (or their own request if aged 18 or over).

(DfE Circular 1/94. Paragraphs 44 & 49. And Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The law relating to pupils not yet in Key Stage 1 is different from that relating to the subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught "to all registered pupils at the school", it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted would participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the Head Teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Head Teacher before making their decision.



Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the Head teacher and a record kept of them.

This policy has been adopted by the Academy Counsellors in consultation with the Head Teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Head Teacher

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Academy Council

Date \_\_\_\_\_

This policy will be reviewed in March 2022

