



Religious Education Policy

Let your light shine Matthew 5:16

Record of Changes	
Christian Values Committee	
Review Oct 2018	Revised school vision and values reference

Introduction

RE is central to the purpose of St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School because as a church school we see that the Christian faith informs all aspects of our life together and commits us to a search for truth. RE in St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the major religions of the world. It enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. It is not the practice of this school to preach to or seek to convert children. Values education permeates the RE curriculum at St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School.

The Church of England Education Office publish a 'Statement of Entitlement' for RE which has been considered in the formation of this policy. This policy supports and reinforces the vision and values of St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School.

Our vision is for **every unique individual**, within our school community **to grow** in mind, body and soul in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and **to flourish**, encouraging 'the fruit of the spirit' **to shine** in all that they do.

The policy is underpinned by the core values of the school:

Love and respect and 'the fruit of the spirit' *Galatians 5: 22-23* (Love), Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control

This is encapsulated by our motto:

Let your light shine *Matthew 5:16*

Legal Framework

In a Voluntary Aided (VA) school the governors determine the RE policy and syllabus in consultation with the headteacher, teaching staff and Diocesan Board of Education. In a Voluntary Controlled (VC) school, the Locally Agreed Syllabus is a statutory document for the teaching of RE. Academies, under the terms of their funding agreements with the Secretary of State, must provide RE for their pupils.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons, but as RE is central to the life and identity of St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School, we would ask parents to discuss with the headteacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and 'Christian Values'. It also promotes education for citizenship linked to social and emotional aspects of learning and British Values.

The St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School RE curriculum, agreed by Governors, reflects the school's Trust Deeds and is bespoke, but draws from the locally agreed syllabus. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

The aims of the syllabus are for pupils:

- to develop religious literacy;
- to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and world views represented in the United Kingdom;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- to develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

Religions deal with some of the most profound and difficult questions in human life, questions such as:

- What is the purpose of life?
- How should people treat each other?
- How do we explain and cope with death and suffering?

We refer to the Peterborough Diocese/Rutland 2018 Agreed Syllabus for Education and also the Understanding Christianity resource in planning our religious education curriculum. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. We plan a creative religious education curriculum that is a lively, active and relevant, employing a variety of teaching methods including reading, direct instruction, inquiry, discussion, recording, group work, visiting speakers, trips, film, art, music, role play and drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Rationale

The teaching of RE allows all pupils to explore, understand and express their own response to spiritual and religious approaches to life through the study of Christianity and other principal world religions. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain and British Values. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. At St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School we help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

RE makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and development of pupils. The study of world religions, their stories, traditions, history, philosophies and ethics is an essential part of a broad, rich and well-rounded education. Religious literacy, knowledge and understanding make an important contribution to community cohesion, the instilling of British and moral values and our ability to empathise with the viewpoints and beliefs of our

neighbours. Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Teaching and Learning

1. The scheme of work for RE will maintain a balance between learning about religions and learning from religions.
2. There will be clear learning outcomes for all units of work.
3. The scheme of work will ensure that there is continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment in both attainment targets.
4. A range of teaching and learning activities will ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest.
5. Pupil progress and attainment in RE will be tracked.
6. RE will be taught either as a discrete subject and where appropriate as part of a cross curricular approach.
7. Visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship.
8. At St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School Christianity is taught through weekly lessons focusing on Christianity, whilst a major world religion is taught through a whole school 'World Religion Days' each (big) term, on a rolling programme.
10. RE will be prioritised within the organisation of the curriculum. We aim to dedicate 10% of curriculum time to RE and not less than 5%.

Approaches to teaching RE

At St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School we base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about and reflect on their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their different religious festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

We have a close relationship with our local church of St John the Baptist and regularly work closely with our local vicars, Foundation Governors and other members of the parish to enhance and deepen our RE lessons and our understanding of the Christian faith through Collective Worship and special events at church.

Strong connections are made with literacy, the Arts, Humanities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). Christian teaching also continues throughout the year as part of Collective Worship.

Pupils record their learning in their 'RE' books, which move up with the child building a portfolio of RE learning as they progress through the school, as well as in the class 'Big RE books' which stay with each class.

RE in the EYFS

RE in the EYFS sits within the areas of personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. RE enables children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others, and to learn how to form positive and respectful relationships.

Assessment

Formative assessment strategies are embedded in teaching and learning in RE as in all subjects. Teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies and informal tasks and tests to assess pupil learning and to inform further teaching. A mastery approach to summative assessment is adopted. Teachers use evidence from formative assessments conducted throughout the year to make a summative judgement of pupil attainment at the end of each year.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation of Religious Education is the responsibility of the Subject Leader for RE and the Governors' Christian Values Committee.

Monitoring activities include: • work scrutiny • lesson observation • pupil interviews • learning walks

The Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader will monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in RE by:

observing teaching and learning in RE;
analysing assessment data in order to plan whole school improvement in RE;
conducting work scrutiny to inform evaluation of progress;
conducting pupil interviews.

The RE subject leader will:

- liaise with the Link governor for RE and they will report regularly to the governing body on progress and attainment in RE.
- will ensure that his/her subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by means of regular training.
- will ensure that staff receive adequate training in the teaching and assessment of RE.
- will ensure that the principles set out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement for RE are implemented.
- will work in close partnership with the school's SENDCo to ensure the learning needs of all pupils in RE are met effectively.
- keep the school's policy for RE under regular review.