



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Developed in consultation with:	Governing Body, SLT, Staff, LA
For use by:	Governors, Staff, parents, volunteers, visitors and external service providers
Reviewed:	Autumn 18
Agreed by:	Full Governing Body
Next policy review date:	Autumn 2020
Signed Chair of Governors:	K Partington
Signed Headteacher:	E Lightfoot
Date:	Dec 2018
Should be read in conjunction with:	Collective Worship Policy Teaching and Learning Policy SEND Policy



1. Introduction:

This document is a statement of aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of Religious Education at St. John's Church of England Primary School.

R.E. at St. John's is provided in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. It is the decision of the Governors and staff to use the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education's Scheme of Work 'Questful R.E. alongside the Understanding Christianity resource. Questful R.E. complies fully with the 1996 Education Act and is in accordance with The Church of England Education Office's 'RE Statement of Entitlement' (2016) and Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE (2018).

This Policy was revised and amended in 2018 through the process of:

- a) Consultation with staff, clergy and governors.
- b) Audit of present provision.
- c) Review of present policy.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the RE Leader, Headteacher, Clergy, Governors and all Staff.

2. Our Mission Statement:

As a Church of England School, we will provide the framework for children to develop within a Christian community, to their full potential.

We will provide the environment to enable the children to acquire and display:

- . A respect for others and themselves.
- . A respect for personal property.
- . Courtesy when dealing with others.
- . Self-discipline to work co-operatively.
- .

3. Intent for R.E:

R.E. lies at the very heart of our curriculum. Our approach to teaching R.E. and the associated resources we use make a positive contribution to the whole life and ethos of the school, including:

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Our safeguarding culture

- Promoting British Values and handling diversity, specifically through developing pupils' skills in interpreting texts and handling controversy
- Developing values, character and virtues.

Our Church of England school serves an area that has historically employed miners and cotton workers. These industries are now non-existent and most pupils' experience of the world of work centres around retail, hospitality and non-skilled work. Thus, our R.E. curriculum, and wider opportunities to transfer R.E. knowledge and skills seeks to open pupils' hearts and minds to what is available to them, encouraging pupils to gain an understanding of the world and their own experience within it. Through the implementation of our R.E. curriculum, we seek to fill the gaps from our pupils' backgrounds and previous life experiences. The curriculum for R.E. coupled with our school charter, drives the aspiration to ensure every child is provided with opportunities to make informed choices about the next stages of their learning and their career. Teachers will promote high aspirations for each child. The school has experienced a significant change in demographic and therefore leaders and staff prioritise the establishment and sustainability of positive relationships alongside children's emotional wellbeing, safety in the community and online safety. At St. John's we believe that through the highest quality RE teaching that we will make the greatest impact on the wellbeing of all of our pupils.

What is Religious Education?

Religious Education enables pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage. It also enables pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling learners to express ideas and insights. R.E. contributes to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values. It fosters awe, respect and wonder and the development of values and attitudes, as well as fundamental questions concerning the purpose of life.

Aims and Objectives:

It is our aim at St. John's Church of England Primary School that RE should enable pupils to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;

- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.;
- develop feelings of awe and wonder, delight and mystery (love)

Teaching and Learning:

The teaching approaches used are varied and engaging, with a mix of individual learning as well as group work taking place each session. Lessons may include:

- hearing religious stories and stories about the natural world
- discussion and writing
- exploring and observing
- visiting places of worship
- visiting speakers
- personal experiences
- drama and role play
- art work and artefacts
- celebration of festivals

- dance and music
- valuing family backgrounds

Curriculum Content and Skills:

At St. John's RE will provide children with rich and stimulating experiences whatever the home religious or philosophical background, as well as helping learners to develop their ability to reflect, respond and think beyond themselves.

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

We also enable pupils to:

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

Planning takes the format of long, medium- and short-term planning, with the long-term plans and basis for medium term planning provided by Questful R.E. alongside the Understanding Christianity resource. Teachers then create short term plans to fit the elements of the scheme designed for their year group. These are differentiated to take account of the need to appropriately and effectively challenge the unique needs of children.

Through meticulous planning and preparations for teaching, children are given opportunities to develop skills, processes, values and attitudes in Religious Education. In accordance with our curriculum intent, children are frequently provided with opportunities for first hand experiences.

Cross Curricular Links:

RE contributes significantly to the distinctive ethos of our Church of England School, which underpins the whole curriculum. It enhances the children's spiritual development and has strong links with the PSHCE curriculum. Opportunities for role-play, drama, dance, plays, music, art, movie making, podcasting and craft are all provided through RE lessons, providing interesting and stimulating learning opportunities.

Inclusion:

At St. John's Church of England Primary School we ensure that RE is carefully planned and differentiated to appropriately and effectively challenge the unique needs of all learners.

Organisation and Management:

The Religious Education Leader is responsible for resourcing and leading RE provision and practice at St John's school. This includes leading the learning in place through sharing teaching strategies and ideas, as well as coaching staff through a rigorous quad approach to lesson study. She is also responsible for suggesting suitable books, posters, videos, websites, movie clips and organising themed days, visits or visitors to enrich Religious Education throughout the school. Teaching strategies will be recommended and the RE Leader will keep abreast of developments through a programme of continuous professional development.

Although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, they are managed separately by two different leaders.

We deliver the R.E. curriculum within the wider experience and context of the school's collective worship in assemblies, singing practice and classroom worship and reflection. The Head Teacher is the Collective Worship Leader and works closely with the RE leader to utilise the curriculum as a vehicle for enhancing pupils' spiritual development.

Equal Opportunities

St John's Church of England Primary School is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all pupils. It is not the task of the school to press for any conversion to a particular faith but to instill in pupils a reflective attitude to life, a tolerance and respect for others and to help them. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, however, Christianity is central to all of our work, however we appreciate similarities and differences between people's religions, values and customs. Themed days, visits, visitors, charity fundraisers and family craft events are effective in enabling us to reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community, consistent with the policy of the Church of England to affirm other religions.

Assessment, Reporting and Recording:

Teachers carry out formative and summative assessment in line with that embedded within the Questful R.E Scheme. The R.E. Leader is responsible for collating and analysing assessment data for all pupil groups, including those for whom the PPG is providing support, and is responsible for identifying areas of strength and those in need of improvement. The annual report to parents has a comment on the pupil's attitude and achievement in the subject as well as his/her contribution to the work. Work sampling and pupil discussions are used by teachers to inform their assessment judgements. Moderation of RE work across the school is overseen by the RE Leader who works with all staff to guide this process. Progress made by all pupils in Foundation Stage in 'people and communities' is closely monitored and scrutinised by the Early Years Leader and RE Leader to effectively monitor the achievement and progress of Reception pupils. This data is shared with the RE Leader and Headteacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The RE Leader monitors the termly plans of RE. The Headteacher and RE Leader also conducts routine planning scrutiny and provides feedback. The teaching of RE at the school and its impact on learning is monitored by senior leaders and the RE Leader through a rigorous triangulation approach, considering; lesson observations, pupil discussions, work scrutiny, analysing progress data, feedback from pupils & parents and learning walks. An effective 'quad' approach to lesson study and coaching involving both teachers and teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to the further enhancements of RE teaching across the school, particularly its effectiveness in developing pupils spirituality. Staff and governors review the policy regularly.

Visits, Visitors and Other Enrichment Opportunities:

Visits and visitors play an important part in the Religious Education curriculum at St. John's. We have very close links with 'The Parish Church of St. Mary the

Virgin', Leigh and its parish priest Father Kevin Crinks, as well as other members of the clergy. Our pupils and families visit the church frequently throughout the year attending Christian festivals and events. The vicar also brings the Church into the life of the school each week through his deliverance of collective worship, as well as through his attendance and involvement in curriculum experiences e.g. Our Wedding Day, and through his collaborative teaching of R.E. At St. John's we also enrich the curriculum in rich and unusual ways as a vehicle to further develop pupils' spirituality. Such experiences include after school clubs, themed days, family craft days and visits to e.g. Manchester Cathedral, local Mosque.

Computing and the Use of Communication Technology:

Pupils are given frequent opportunity to apply their computing and technology skills to enhance their learning in Religious Education. For example iPads may be utilised to create collaborative e-books, podcasts or iMovies. Pupils may use animation software and green screen technology to re-tell key biblical stories. They may use the internet to carry out research about the big stories of the bible as contained within God's Big Plan.

Resources:

As a Church of England School, we are committed to annual investment in expanding the wide range of supportive resources to deliver outstanding teaching which leads to outstanding learning in RE. The school has a budget of approx. £500- £1000 to develop these resources annually and it is the responsibility of the RE Leader to oversee this spending. Books are kept in classrooms as well as stored centrally in the school library and in the storage cupboard. Themed resource boxes are located in the resource stock cupboard. The Church is always willing to help with resources. ICT is used innovatively to support RE teaching through iPads, Movies, IWB programmes and websites. Resources are monitored by the RE Leader.

The role of the RE Leader:

- a) Their role is to the RE Curriculum across the school. Ensuring that every member of staff has access to the RE Curriculum and knowledge of which units are for their year group. The RE Leader is responsible for creating a curriculum grid that meets legal requirements and the National Statement of Entitlement. They must also produce a School Policy for RE to be approved by the Governing Board. The RE Leader must then ensure the implementation of the policy and curriculum across the school and secure high standards of learning and achievement through lesson observations and book scrutinies.
- b) The RE Leader is expected to have a thorough knowledge of the ladder of expectations of achievement in RE. All lesson content, delivery and outcomes are to be measured against this ladder. The Ladder of Expectation and Achievement can be found in the assessment section of

the Questful RE syllabus and clear statements of achievement indicate what pupils are expected to know and be able to do at the end of each Key Stage. Specific statements of achievement are also included in each curriculum unit. The RE Leader can use the ladder to compile a portfolio of briefly annotated RE work from across the Key Stages highlighting achievement and progress in the school.

- c) The RE Leader is responsible to the headteacher and governors. However, ensuring the provision of quality RE is ultimately the responsibility of the Governing Board. Therefore, the RE Leader regularly reports the outcomes of monitoring and new developments to the school senior leadership team and Governing Board.
- d) The RE Leader is the voice of RE in the school and should encourage and every member of staff to provide the best RE learning experiences for every pupil in school. The RE Leader is responsible for updating the RE resources and making them accessible to all.

The role of the Governing Body:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- a) There is a current policy statement and curriculum for the teaching of Religious Education that is in line with the “principles and practices of the established church.”
- b) Religious Education is included in the basic curriculum.
- c) Sufficient time and resources are devoted to Religious Education to enable the school to meet its legal obligations and to deliver a quality RE curriculum.

The role of the Headteacher:

It is the Headteacher’s duty to ensure that:

- a) Religious Education is provided in accordance with the Governors’ agreed syllabus for all registered pupils at the school.
- b) Appropriate staffing and resources are made available to meet the aims and objectives of Religious Education within the school.
- c) Parents/carers receive an annual written report which includes details of their child’s progress in relation to RE.
- d) Requests from parents/carers for the withdrawal of their child from RE are responded to and alternative arrangements are made, so long as it does not incur additional costs to the school.

Right of Withdrawal:

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or

Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.'

If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

Parents may request the governing board to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing board **should** make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing board be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

Reviewed: December 2018 by, (Foundation Governor)

RE Leader: Miss L Corbett

