



RE Subject Statement

Leigh St. John's CE Primary School

*"The Lord has told you what is good.
He has told you what he wants from you: Do what is right to other people.
Love being kind to others.
And live humbly, trusting your God."*

Micah 6:8

We believe in the principal aim set out in the Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023–2028, commissioned by the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education and written by RE Today:

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Teachers use this principal aim throughout curriculum design, planning, teaching and assessment so that pupils build secure knowledge, encounter a rich diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and learn to think with increasing depth, accuracy and independence.

As a Voluntary Aided Church of England school, we follow the Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023–2028. Our governing body retains responsibility for ensuring that RE is taught in accordance with the school's trust deed and reflects the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The aims and purposes of RE reflect the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement and the expectations of the diocesan syllabus.

The Aims of RE:

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim. The curriculum for RE at St. John's ensures that all pupils:

1. make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts within living religions and worldviews, using appropriate and increasingly precise vocabulary
- explain how and why beliefs are understood in different ways by individuals and within communities
- recognise how and why sources of authority, including texts, teachings, traditions and leaders, are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation

2. understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways

- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in everyday life, within their communities and in the wider world
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning

3. make connections between the religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions, responding thoughtfully and creatively and giving well-founded reasons for their responses
- challenge the ideas studied and allow those ideas to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly and respectfully
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity

Time for religious education

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus, sufficient, dedicated curriculum time is given to the clearly identifiable teaching of RE. This time is distinct from collective worship, PSHE and the wider promotion of the school's values.

In practice, this means a starting point of 60 minutes per week in Key Stage 1 and 75 minutes per week in Key Stage 2, or equivalent provision amounting to approximately 36 hours annually in Key Stage 1 and 45 hours annually in Key Stage 2. The regular programme of lessons may be enriched by visits, visitors and focused RE days, but these do not ordinarily replace sequenced weekly teaching.

What religions and worldviews are to be taught?

The Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023–2028 requires pupils to develop a deep understanding of Christianity alongside a rigorous and respectful understanding of other principal religions and non-religious worldviews. Our curriculum balances depth with breadth and reflects both the rich diversity of the United Kingdom and the context of the community we serve.

Christianity forms at least 50% of RE curriculum time in each year group. It is taught as a diverse, living and global faith. Across the remaining curriculum, pupils encounter different religious and non-religious worldviews and diversity within and between traditions, avoiding simplistic generalisations or stereotypes.

Reception: Children encounter Christianity and other faiths and worldviews as they develop their sense of self, their understanding of their community and their place within it.

Key Stage One: Christianity, Judaism and Islam, with appropriate encounters with non-religious worldviews.

Key Stage Two: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, together with non-religious worldviews and other traditions where these strengthen pupils' understanding of the local and wider world.

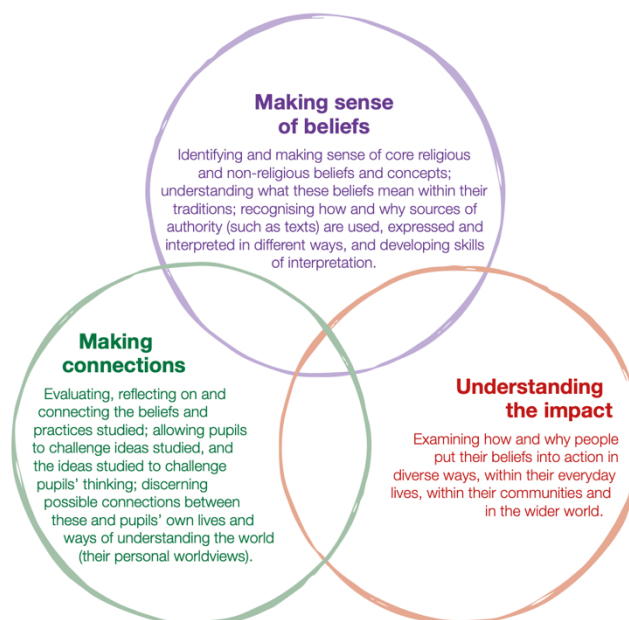
The RE teaching and learning approach in Manchester Diocese

The Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023–2028, written by RE Today, provides the statutory curriculum framework for RE at St. John's. It is designed to deepen pupils' substantive knowledge of religions and worldviews and develop the disciplinary knowledge needed to interpret, compare, question and evaluate what they encounter. Systematic units enable pupils to study one religion or worldview in depth; thematic units then require them to draw carefully on prior learning and make meaningful comparisons.

Learning is coherently sequenced through the school's long-term plan. Each unit begins with a key question and identifies the essential knowledge, vocabulary and concepts pupils need to learn. Teachers revisit prior learning, explicitly teach new content, address misconceptions and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss, reason, interpret sources and communicate informed responses.

The three core elements of the syllabus—making sense of belief, understanding the impact and making connections—are woven together across teaching and assessment. They ensure that pupils know what people believe, understand how belief may influence lived experience and develop their own reasoned responses to significant questions.

Pupils encounter diversity within religions as well as between them. They learn that members of the same tradition may understand and practise their faith differently and that personal worldviews are shaped by many influences. Teaching draws appropriately on theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences, treating religious and non-religious positions with accuracy, integrity and respect.



The syllabus is organised through a key-question approach. Detailed unit outlines and the school's progressive long-term plan secure appropriate coverage, coherence and progression. The supporting RE Today materials are used purposefully to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge and lesson design; they do not replace teachers' professional judgement or responsiveness to pupils. The suite of materials includes:

- Learning pathways and unit outlines
- Knowledge organisers
- Classroom-ready presentations and teaching resources
- Assessment materials
- Low-stakes 'sticky knowledge' quizzes
- Progressive key vocabulary

RE in the wider curriculum

Our RE curriculum is rooted in the school's theologically grounded Christian vision and is responsive to the Leigh community. It contributes directly to our mission to help every pupil to 'Be a decent human being'. Through RE, pupils encounter and critically explore our six values—justice, humility, love, kindness, responsibility and respect—as expressions of our Christian foundation and as qualities that shape how members of our community live, learn and treat others.

Meaningful connections are made with the wider curriculum when these strengthen pupils' understanding without diluting the distinct disciplinary character of RE. For example, history may illuminate the experiences of faith communities and responses to discrimination; geography may explore religious diversity and place; and art may enable pupils to examine how belief, identity and spirituality are expressed. RE remains clearly identifiable, with its own curriculum objectives, vocabulary and assessment.

Spirituality

RE makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' spiritual development by creating space to encounter significant ideas, ask and explore big questions, attend to wonder, consider experiences beyond themselves and reflect on their own developing worldview. Spirituality at Leigh St. John's is the capacity to be stopped, moved and changed. Pupils describe 'wow moments': experiences that help them notice something greater than themselves and lead them to think, feel or act differently. We make space for spiritual opportunities:

- awe, wonder and attentiveness
- connection with nature, people, place and the wider world
- emotional response, stillness and reflection
- questioning, meaning-making and ethical reflection
- creative expression and visualisation

All staff receive appropriate professional development so that they can recognise, plan for and respond to spiritual opportunities. Leaders ensure that these opportunities are authentic, inclusive and appropriate to the subject content and the pupils being taught.

Collective Worship

RE and collective worship are distinct, although each contributes to the flourishing of pupils and adults. Collective worship at St. John's is invitational, inclusive and inspiring: it offers opportunities to worship God, encounter biblical teaching, reflect, pray or remain respectfully still, and respond in ways appropriate to individual belief. Worship makes the school's Christian vision visible and

supports pupils and adults to live out justice, humility, love, kindness, responsibility and respect. RE lessons may make meaningful links to worship themes, but RE curriculum time and objectives remain separate.

Repetition and Retrieval

Our RE curriculum is deliberately cumulative. Key concepts, stories, vocabulary and disciplinary approaches are revisited at increasing levels of complexity so that pupils connect new learning to secure prior knowledge. Retrieval is purposeful rather than repetitive: it helps pupils remember essential content, recognise patterns across and within worldviews and develop an increasingly coherent understanding of Christianity, other religions and non-religious worldviews. Particular attention is given to Christianity as a living global faith and to the ways belief influences people's lives, worship, choices and communities.

Assessment

Assessment is integral to planning and teaching. Teachers use carefully selected questions, discussion, written and creative responses, observation and low-stakes retrieval to identify what pupils know, understand and can do. Assessment considers all three syllabus elements: making sense of belief, understanding the impact and making connections. It checks secure and durable knowledge as well as pupils' growing capacity to use evidence, vocabulary and reasoned argument.

Teachers use assessment information to revisit misconceptions, adapt teaching and ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, can access ambitious RE and demonstrate their understanding. Leaders evaluate implementation and impact through planning and work scrutiny, lesson visits, pupil voice, assessment information and professional dialogue. Monitoring considers curriculum coverage and balance, progression, the quality of lived-religion teaching, pupils' recall and application of knowledge, spiritual development and the effectiveness of staff training. Findings inform subject development priorities and are reported to governors.



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