

# Religious Education Policy

## St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

We believe that 'Everyone is different. Everyone is special'. As Jesus taught us to love unconditionally, so we strive to nurture respect for all; to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that considers the individual; and to care for the intellectual, social and spiritual well-being of our whole school community - encouraging positive engagement with the wider world, as affirmed through our school values and parable of the Good Samaritan.

Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God ..." and, "Love your neighbour as yourself." Luke 10:27



At St Andrew's we are committed to keeping pupils and staff safe. Our school policies are an essential part of the way we safeguard all members of our diverse school. We support democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These principles help us to listen to each other and learn from each other to create a safe and rich learning environment for pupils and staff alike.

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>TLIS/Ethos</b>	<b>Date: 02/10/21</b>
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# **St Andrew's CE Primary School**

## **Religious Education Policy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Religious Education (RE) is a legal entitlement for every pupil and forms part of the basic curriculum as set down in the 1998 Education Act. Its place in the curriculum is an acknowledgement of the fact that religious beliefs and practices play an important part in the lives of many people worldwide, and have done so throughout history. An understanding of religion can help children develop a better appreciation of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

St Andrew's is a local authority VC Primary School. The Education Acts require that the Religious Education should be provided according to the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Oxfordshire Schools 2015-2020. This document is available in school and on the school website.

### **Aims and Objectives of Religious Education**

The school follows the aims and objectives set out in the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus (available in school and on our website) to enable pupils to:

1. understand the nature, role and influence of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles in the world;
2. pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value;
3. formulate reasoned opinions/arguments in relation to controversial issues and truth claims;
4. develop understanding of and respect for different beliefs and lifestyles.

Aims 1–3 are divided into 'stepping-stones' for progression across key stages (see section 5.2 'Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus'). Aim 4 is not included in this progression, as it is achieved through the first three aims.

(The new RE Syllabus has been delayed by the Pandemic and will be available from April 2022 and in use from September 2022).

### **Curriculum**

It is clearly stated in the Agreed Syllabus that RE in school is concerned with educating children about religion and for them to learn from religion. It is not concerned with inducting them in a particular faith; this is the responsibility of the family or the faith community. Pupils will learn about Christianity as the main religious tradition in this country but also about the teaching and practices of some of the other principal world religions represented in this country.

### **Curriculum Organisation**

Religious Education is taught through a combination of classroom work and work linked to assemblies and Collective Worship. This work is co-ordinated to ensure the highest quality of learning experiences for the pupils and to cover the requirements of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus.

The curriculum is planned to deliver RE through a combination of methods.

- Religious Education is taught mainly through weekly lessons, using the Oxford Diocesan RE Scheme. The RE units of work can be linked with cross-curricular school topics and this is encouraged whenever possible.
- The opportunity is taken to deliver identified areas of RE through the assemblies and Collective Worship. The work is carefully planned and followed up in class when appropriate.
- Separately identified RE is found at different times of the year covering Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Advent, Ash Wednesday etc. It also includes some of the significant festivals celebrated by the other main world religions. A biannual 'Festival of Faith' day that encourages exploration of themes across the main world religions e.g. prayer.

Further details can be found in the plans and schemes of work.

### **Curriculum Time**

Religious Education may be taught:

- as a separate subject which might be provided through intensive periods of learning (eg an afternoon a week) for half a term and then no RE for the other half of the term, or:
- in a mixed curriculum model, involving RE as part of an integrated curriculum in which it is sometimes a lead subject and other times a support subject, or:
- as a vehicle for intensive literacy development or:
- occasionally through 'drop down days' focusing on whole curriculum concepts such as community, identity, truth, or:
- as a combination of all these approaches.

In other words, the provision for RE can be flexible to meet the planning and learning needs of the school, so long as the school ensures that pupil learning, progression and assessment are transparent and coherent and that teachers can report meaningfully on progress and attainment in Religious Education.

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

Teachers use a variety of means of assessing pupils' work in line with the whole-school assessment policy and the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This will include:

- the regular reviewing of pupils' work in their RE books;
- observing the work of groups and individuals and recording the outcomes
- termly assessments against objectives for that term.

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is reported in the annual report to parents, including an assessment level.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The school's Single Equalities Policy is used throughout the curriculum and must be adhered to at all times. In addition, it is important in Religious Education to ensure that the work being covered is appropriate to pupils who come from any religious background or none.

## **Foundation Stage**

As the 1988 Education Reform Act clearly states, all registered pupils in maintained schools have an entitlement to Religious Education and thus it must be taught to Reception classes. However, the way learning here is structured is through the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and not through the Agreed Syllabus itself. Teachers should use the Early Learning Goals (or equivalent if the Government changes these) as the basis of their assessment and planning, and what follows is suggested guidance on what RE can contribute to learning in the EYFS. Remember, this is only statutory for registered pupils (YR), but it is good practice to provide for all EYFS some context of belief, belonging and relationships from different cultural and global contexts.

In planning and guiding children's activities for RE in Reception classes, as with for all learning in the EYFS, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

RE provides excellent opportunities for children to develop and practise their learning through role play, story, speaking and listening and developing and expressing their own views and opinions whilst listening to and learning from the views of others.

## **Promoting Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Religious Education provides opportunities for:

- spiritual development, through helping pupils to consider and respond to questions of meaning and purpose in life, and questions about the nature and values in human society;
- moral development, through helping pupils to consider and respond to areas of morality using their knowledge and understanding or religious and ethical teachings. This enables them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;
- social development, through helping pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;
- cultural development, through fostering pupils' awareness and understanding in a range of beliefs, practices and values in their own society and in the wider world. Pupils explore within and between faiths, developing their understanding of the cultural contexts within which they live.

## **Inclusion**

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Planning in Religious Education must ensure that it meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. The statutory Inclusion statement on providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils outlines how teachers can provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage.

In planning and teaching Religious Education, teachers are required to have due regard to the following principles:

- setting suitable learning challenges

- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.

A minority of pupils will have particular learning and assessment requirements which, if not addressed, could create barriers to learning. These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a pupil having a special educational need or disability or may be linked to a pupil's progress in learning English as an additional language. Teachers must take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate effectively in the curriculum and assessment activities.

Curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs must take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language have diverse needs in terms of support necessary in English language learning. Planning should take account of such factors as the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and skills in other languages. The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in religious education may be ahead of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan learning opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part.

### **Leadership**

The day-to-day support for Religious Education is provided by the Co-ordinator, who is responsible to the Headteacher for:

- supporting teachers in their medium and short-term planning;
- working alongside the governors and Headteacher in self-evaluating the school's performance as a church school;
- developing and maintaining evidence for SIAMS inspections;
- attending relevant in-service courses to keep up to date on Religious Education and reporting to staff;
- managing the resources for Religious Education;
- producing a development plan setting out the priorities for Religious Education;
- co-ordinating the links with our Parish church, St Andrew's, and also Churches Together in Headington.

### **Withdrawal**

When parents request that their child be withdrawn from Religious Education/Collective Worship, parents are interviewed by the Headteacher to clarify the beliefs and practices that they wish their child to be excluded from.

### **Resources**

Books, artefacts and other resources for classroom use are available from the RE resource cupboard. A range of RE books can be found in the library and group readers are available in the learning base.

### **Community**

The school has good links with St Andrew's church, the Diocese and other church groups in Headington. Father Darren, Vicar of St Andrew's, supports the school and the church is used regularly.

A range of special occasions is planned throughout the year to which parents and friends are invited. These include The Nativity at Christmas; the Harvest Festival; the Easter Service and the Leavers' Service. When school assemblies are held in church, family and friends are invited.

**Date of next review (every 3 years):** October 2024