

## R.E Policy Autumn 2022



***‘That all may Love, Learn, Flourish’***

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Religious Education (R.E) is seen at the heart of Christian distinctiveness of St. John’s and is central to school effectiveness. As such, R.E is given the priority as a core subject in the

curriculum with the aim for it to be an outstanding specialism of the school. It is intended that the R.E provided will be of the highest quality, aiming for excellence in teaching and learning. The R.E should be innovative, creative, exciting and engaging and its relevance made clear for all.

The aims of this policy are to:

- establish a clear and workable framework for the learning and teaching of Religious Education at St. John's;
- show a common purpose amongst staff and pupils, which may be clearly understood by parents, Governors, Southwark Diocese and External Agencies.

**The main aim of Religious Education** is to develop a strong foundation of the Christian faith through knowledge and understanding that includes Christian Beliefs and Values. Through Biblical references children explore Old Testament Characters, the Life and Teachings of Jesus, Prayer and Worship, Saints, The Local Church, The Christian Community, Living out the Faith, Rites of Passage and Christian Festivals. It gives children the opportunity to:

- ✓ apply an understanding of Christianity to make reasoned and informed responses to life issues and moral choices;
- ✓ develop some knowledge and understanding of the other main world faiths represented in the United Kingdom, applying an understanding of religion to develop respect, empathy and sensitivity towards all people;
- ✓ enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- ✓ develop the ability to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences and communicate issues of faith and truth;
- ✓ develop skills of critical analysis and evaluation and the promotion of understanding of people from different faith backgrounds and none.

### **The R.E Syllabus:**

The **programmes of study** for Religious Education incorporate two components:

- **Attainment Target 1:** Learning about Religion; and
- **Attainment Target 2:** Learning from Religion and Human Experience.

Children receive R.E in accordance with the SDBE agreed syllabus from Reception to Year 6. We base our teaching and learning in R.E on the key principle that good teaching in R.E allows children to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the R.E curriculum.

All children learn about Christianity as a fundamental part of their R.E learning. This forms the majority of the R.E teaching for each year group throughout the year. In order to promote understanding of the multi-cultural and multi-faith society in which we live, from Year 1 in addition to Christianity, children undertake study of other faiths Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam Judaism, Sikhism. The content is based on the idea of developing an awareness of other faiths and cultures in the community in which we live, encouraging interfaith dialogue and giving pupils opportunities to reflect on their own faith through discussions they will have about other faiths.

### **Teaching and Learning School Approach to the Teaching of Religious Education:**

Religious Education is one of the chief building blocks of our life and work in this Voluntary Aided Church of England School. It provides opportunities that enable our children to:

- progress in their personal search for beliefs and values by which to live;

- learn some living belief systems;
- explore, clarify and express insight into human experiences.

As a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing body is responsible for the R.E curriculum. At the present time the school uses a Syllabus devised from Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. Each unit of work details learning objectives (for Attainment Targets 1 and 2), suggested activities and resources and always features a 'Big Question' for children to discuss and think about.

The Syllabus will be delivered mainly through specific Religious Education lessons, but we also recognise that it is not solely a discrete subject. The R.E leader plans annual whole school events which are sometimes linked to other subject or current community/global issues. Where appropriate we will aim to explore links with other areas of the curriculum in order to allow the children to develop their awareness and responses in a variety of ways. Within the school curriculum, each year group has a Context for Learning where R.E has a high focus and a key question that will prompt children's thinking.

We aim to plan work which:

- is achievable but challenging - with differentiation and progression
- raises questions and explores answers
- involves children in their own learning
- emphasises reflective skills and attitudes
- uses a variety of styles and methods of teaching
- is relevant to the needs of all our children
- has integrity, in presenting an authentic and respectful picture of all faiths covered in the Scheme of Work.

### **Teaching and Learning styles**

We believe that a variety of teaching styles should be used in order to provide children with the most inspiring and motivational R.E lessons. Activities could include art, dance, drama, writing, speaking and listening activities such as debate and discussion in order to cater for the different learning styles of all children.

### **Differentiation**

We believe that all children should be given the same entitlement and access to learning and opportunities in Religious Education. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- ensuring children who may find Literacy more challenging are not impeded in their learning of R.E by being constrained by a Literacy focussed task.
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

### **Time Allocation**

The school fulfils the requirement that Religious Education should be given approximately 5% of overall teaching time. This can be delivered in a single session or over several sessions, depending on the aspect of Religious Education being undertaken. Time taken for visits will be included within the time allocation.

### **Resources**

We believe that first-hand experiences play an important part in all aspects of the curriculum we offer. We will make use of the rich resources provided through being part of the parish of St. John's, the local community of Shirley and the Diocese of Southwark. Where appropriate, our work will be enriched through inviting visitors to school and arranging visits, particularly to places of worship. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a place of worship, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

The use of artefacts can make a topic real and meaningful for children. At St. John's, we encourage the use of objects and artefacts to enable children to interact with and experience religious practises first hand. We understand that using artefacts involves treating items with respect and will ensure that teachers and children show care and consideration when handling objects.

The use of artefacts will also be supplemented by other resources including books, posters, video clips, web sites etc in order to make R.E relevant and immediate for the children.

Resource boxes are available in school containing artefacts and teaching materials. Additional advice can also be obtained from the Advisory Teacher for R.E. and the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education.

The school supports the use of I.C.T within Religious Education, where it provides an appropriate vehicle for gaining or recording information. It encourages the use of ICT and the internet which provide opportunities which would otherwise not be possible – virtual tours of places of worship etc.

### **The school and classroom environment**

As a Church of England Primary School, we believe that the school and classroom environments should reflect the Christian ethos of the school. Each classroom will have a visual stimulus for R.E including a display and artefacts of a bible, a cross and a candle to provide opportunities for reflection. Teachers may choose to create a distinct classroom environment during R.E lessons through the use of visual or audio resources such as pictures or music.

#### **Prayer and Reflection points**

Prayer and reflection points in the communal corridors which reflect the current theme for Collective Worship. These displays also include some element where the children can interact with the display, with prompts for them to either think about or something for them to do. This is to encourage personal reflection by children throughout the day and to allow them to interact with a religious/spiritual theme in their own way.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Through teaching Religious Education, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and

ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

### **Assessment and reporting**

We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and comment as necessary, wherever possible linking comments to the R.E learning objective using a WILF (What I'm Looking For) grid in line with other core subjects. This enables children to self-assess against the success criteria of the lesson and for the teacher to respond. On completion of a unit of work, teachers will make a summary judgement about the learning of each pupil in relation to the expectations of the unit. Teachers will use the school assessment sheets which is related to the unit to record children's attainment. It is not anticipated that teachers will report on all aspects of the two attainment targets at any one time, but will be selective, commenting on the range of statements of attainment so that throughout the Key Stages each aspect of the attainment target will have been assessed. We recognise that sometimes R.E activities can take place as part of a group and may be based around practical or discussion tasks, therefore individual written work may not be produced. In such cases we will keep evidence such as photographs/ objects. The termly assessment is collated to form a best fit level for each pupil at the end of the year so that individual progress can be monitored across the school. The school's Annual Report for each child contains a section on their development in Religious Education.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring of R.E will take place as part of the general monitoring cycle of the whole school. The R.E subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject. Each year, the School Development Plan contains objectives regarding the distinctiveness of the school as a church school. The R.E leader develops a comprehensive action plan.

The R.E subject leader makes reports to the Ethos Committee regarding the teaching and learning of R.E. The Ethos group exists to contribute to ensuring the distinctiveness of the school as a church school. This includes monitoring the provision and impact of R.E.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

We live in a multi-cultural, multi racial society and encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We intend to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another, regardless of race and culture. The school will respect faith traditions of all children attending the school.

### **Right of withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship as identified in the Education Act of 1944 and in subsequent legislation. St. John's is a Church of England Primary School where Christian values underpin the whole curriculum. In order to preserve the distinctiveness of this church school community, we encourage everyone to be involved in the Religious Education and Collective Worship. Parents/carers who have concerns about this should discuss it with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors before their children are admitted.

