



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Policy

St. Mary's Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Be the best I can in the love of Christ

At St. Mary's School we aim to:

1. Create a caring Christian community in which everyone is valued and able to learn and grow together in the love of Christ;
2. Inspire all our children to develop enquiring minds and a lifelong love of learning;
3. Release potential through a broad and creative curriculum;
4. Sustain an environment in which independence, respect and resilience will flourish;
5. Nurture strong relationships between home, school, church and the wider community;
6. Empower the children to become responsible local, national and global citizens.

1. Introduction

In our Anglican school RE lies at the heart of our curriculum and has an important role in reflecting and conveying the distinctively Christian character of the school.

R.E. is taught according to the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus, the National Society's Excellence and Distinctiveness and Diocesan guidance on RE.

Religious education has a distinctive character that needs to be recognised and safeguarded. It makes its own contribution to the school curriculum in terms of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes, as well as sharing common ground with other subjects in contributing to the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and mental development of pupils and preparing them for adult life. The subject is concerned to promote, through an encounter with Christianity and other religions, the pupil's search for values, meaning and purpose. Therefore any form of integration of the subject with other areas of the curriculum must not only ensure that the distinctive subject matter of Christianity and other religions and beliefs is adequately covered by the joint syllabus, but also that this specific concern with meaning and purpose finds adequate expression. Care must be taken, too, to ensure that pupils develop the ability to perceive and appreciate the use of simile, metaphor and other forms of both verbal and non-verbal expression used in religious communication.

West Sussex Agreed Syllabus 2015

2. Aims of RE

- RE should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and mental well being of the pupils with a clear understanding of right and wrong
- RE should seek to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity, as the predominant religion of Great Britain, and other principal religions represented in the country, and to encourage respect for those holding different beliefs
- RE should offer explicit opportunities for pupils to consider responses of religion to fundamental questions about the purpose of being, morality and ethical standards and develop their own responses to such questions
- RE should enable pupils to look beyond self and recognise the contribution of religion in the establishment of relationships and responsibilities in the family, among friends, in schools, the community and the world at large
- RE along with other areas of the curriculum should offer opportunities for reflective aesthetic experiences and the discussion of questions about meaning and purpose

3. The school's approach to the teaching of the subject

We recognise the importance of RE in the education of children in our Church of England Aided Primary School not just as an academic subject, but as one of the core subjects, lying at the very heart of the curriculum, reflecting and conveying the distinctively Christian character of the school.

RE is a statutory subject of the school curriculum of maintained schools.

In developing this distinctive approach to RE, shaped by The West Sussex Agreed Syllabus, diocesan guidance on RE and the National Society's *Excellence and Distinctiveness* material, we consider what lies at the heart of the Christian faith.

We also introduce other principal religions represented in the country, and encourage

respect for the great world faiths, a respect based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

4. Aims for Religious Education

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews;
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues;
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.

Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage purposefully with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all;
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

5. Scheme of Work

Our scheme of work for Religious Education is based on the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus and diocesan guidance. It relates to the mission statement and aims of the school.

In order to provide a broad and balanced religious education curriculum and to ensure statutory requirements are met this syllabus requires that:

- Christianity should be studied throughout each key stage
- the other principal religions represented in Great Britain (here regarded as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) should be studied across the key stages as set out below.
- Other religious traditions represented in Great Britain such as the Bah'ai Faith, Jainism and Zoroastrianism may also be studied at various stages

In order to aid progression and continuity and to avoid repetition this syllabus requires that:

- Christianity should be taught at each Key Stage and shall comprise more than half the content;
- Introductory courses on Hinduism, Islam and Judaism shall be taught during Key Stages 1 and 2;

The intention of this syllabus is to ensure that all pupils gain a basic understanding of the principal religions in Great Britain by the time they leave school.

Religious education will also provide opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

6. Time Allocation

The time allocated to the teaching of Religious Knowledge is at least 5% of the curriculum time which is at least an hour a week. Work may be blocked to allow longer lesson times, for example when visiting a place of worship.

RE is sometimes linked with other subject areas, for example literacy, art and ICT, where this will enhance the children's learning. It is necessary to teach some areas of RE discretely.

7. Planning for Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Teaching Religious Education requires that teachers:

- should plan what they are going to teach with clear learning intentions
- should plan the success criteria to be met within a lesson
- should assess whether the pupils have learnt what was expected

Further information regarding learning and teaching can be found in the Learning and Teaching Policy and Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy.

Assessment

Assessing achievement at the end of a key stage:

- Teacher assessment is an essential part of the assessment of religious education and is the sole means of statutory assessment throughout key stage 1, 2 and 3.
- It is important to note that not all aspects of religious education can be assessed. For example, pupils may express personal views and ideas that, although integral to teaching and learning, would not be appropriate for formal assessment.

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

There is a clear expectation that pupils' achievements will continue to be weighed up by teachers using criteria arising from the programmes of study.

The core principles are that assessment should:

1. set out steps so that pupils reach or exceed the end of key stage expectations;
2. enable teachers to measure whether pupils are on track to meet end of key stage expectations;
3. enable teachers to pinpoint the aspects of the curriculum in which pupils are falling behind, and recognise exceptional performance;
4. support teachers' planning for all pupils;
5. enable the teacher to report regularly to parents and, where pupils move to other schools, providing clear information about each pupil's strengths, weaknesses and progress towards the end of key stage expectations.

Teachers will assess RE at the end of each unit of work using the progression grids provided in the Agreed Syllabus.

At the end of the year, teachers make an end of year assessment which is shared with the subject leader, the Headteacher and the next class teacher.

The subject leader may use this information to analyse standards in the subject.

Teachers will report to parents on their child's progress in the Annual Report to Parents.

Further information regarding assessment will be found in the Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy.

8. Children with Special Educational Needs

Where appropriate, work may be differentiated to meet the needs of particular children. See Inclusion Policy.

9. Provision of Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

See Inclusion Policy.

10. Resources

Resources are stored centrally in topic boxes.

R.E. resources are also available from the West Sussex R.E. Adviser.

11. Developing and monitoring the subject curriculum

The subject leader will:

- Manage R.E. resources;
- Monitor planning to ensure that the scheme of work is covered;
- Audit standards at the end of each academic year; needs are noted and met according to the priorities in the School Development Plan.
- Ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed in consultation with staff and governors.
- Maintain good links with the local parish, involving clergy and lay people in the delivery of the curriculum, where appropriate.

See subject leader's file.