

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School



With faith, hope and love we can achieve greater things.

Religious Education Policy

September 2021 - 23

Rationale for RE at St Andrew's

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The SIAMS schedule 2018 (Strand 7) makes it clear that RE should reflect the school's Christian vision.

The family of St Andrew's enable each other to **experience life in all its fullness** (John 10:10) aspiring to **do all things through Christ who gives us strength.**
(Philippians 4:13.)

As an inclusive Christian school, St Andrew's Church of England (Controlled) Primary School values everyone as a child of God and rejoices in its diversity. Our vision is to have **a school filled with happy, motivated children and adults.** To be a place where **behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary and model our motto and values** - **"With Faith, Hope and Love we can achieve greater things."** And, where **children and adults attain well and make outstanding progress, aspiring to be the best they can be.**

The subject has a vital role in developing religious literacy and deepening pupils understanding of Christianity, in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions. RE is non-confessional and should be treated as an academic subject in its own right.

As the Church of England document, '**Making a difference? A review of Religious Education in Church of England schools 2014**' recommends that the RE curriculum in all schools should,

"...ensure it provides a more coherent, progressive and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world"

"...explore ways of extending pupils' ability to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning in RE"

RE Statement of Entitlement

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the **Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools**, published by the Church of England Education Office (Feb 2019), see link:

<http://smartfile.s3.amazonaws.com/d57a4d93b010f2ac6f24bc8cee2d789e/uploads/2019/02/NEW-RE-Statement-of-Entitlement-for-Church-schools.pdf>

Christianity will, therefore, be at least 50% of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to the teaching of RE in this Church of England school. However, as a Church school we have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and worldviews. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also learn to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice and discrimination.

The RE curriculum

RE teaching also follows the legal requirements of the **Education Reform Act (1988)**, which places RE as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement for all pupils. The school bases its RE provision on the Wolverhampton Locally Agreed Syllabus. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity resources and other appropriate materials to enhance teaching and learning.

At least 5% (closer to 10%) of curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation at least 50% of subject content will be allocated to an exploration of the Christian faith, and the concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart.

The Intent & Aims of Religious Education in our school

Intent

At St Andrew's RE teaching covers knowledge about a range of World Religions commonly represented in our setting and provides children with opportunities to reflect on how the beliefs and practices of these religions impact believers and themselves. Lessons encourage children to share their own experiences of life and faith through learning from each other's experiences and religious cultures using creative activities. RE also provides our children with opportunities to ask and assemble answers to some of Life's Big Questions. It makes links with SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural) teaching and British Values.

Aims

- To help pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text?
- To help pupils consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide?
- To enable all pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and world views and their impact on society and culture?
- To give pupils a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions - exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs?
- To help pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings and understanding their impact on the lives of believers.
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief, of themselves, the world and human experience.
- To develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, and so to consider important human questions, values and concerns.
- To nurture understanding, respect and open-mindedness and inspire lifelong engagement with the study of religions and beliefs.

The Impact & Outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school

Impact

We know RE is impactful when our children participate in lessons with interest, and respect and with confidence about their own beliefs. They acquire knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of the religions studied and learn about themselves and the world in which they live through these. In turn our children take their place as members of a cohesive and compassionate society.

Outcomes

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion - symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship and persons (eg Jesus Christ, Mohammad, Guru Nanak)
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make - including believers - and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others - including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC)

In addition, the subject contributes to other areas of education and experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

- Spiritual - widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.
- Moral - helping each pupil develop their own informed values.
- Social - helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values in our society.

- Cultural - aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and in developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with **Jigsaw -Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE), Health & Relationship & Education (HRE) and British Values**. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

The Management of RE

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects. Teachers should share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development (SIAMS 2018).

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

Role of the RE Subject Leader

- producing a scheme of work for the school
- reviewing the RE Policy and guidelines on a regular basis
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision - overseeing the implementation of The Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus
- ensuring Religious Education has status within the school
- keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff INSET
- monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- ensuring rigorous systems of assessment are in place (SIAMS 2018) and are in line with the Local Agreed Syllabus
- creating the RE Action Plan and ensuring its regular review
- accountability for RE standards in the school
- meet with member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

Teaching & Planning

RE, is taught as discrete lessons as well as across the curriculum when appropriate. The C of E Statement of Entitlement states that the amount of time spent teaching RE should be close to 10% of curriculum time but no less than 5%.

During each phase of school children engage in a variety of visits to places of worship and where relevant participation in workshops and interviewing people from different faiths. RE is enhanced by learning that takes place in *Collective Worship* and celebrations of religious festivals in school and church.

Our Long Term Plan is made up of units of work from the *W-ton Agreed Syllabus* and from "Understanding Christianity." Each unit comprises of a series of lessons that begin with a question that in turn all lead to answering an overall Big Question. Lessons encourage learning something new so that children improve their Religious Literacy (Windows) understanding of the impact of faith and belief on those that follow a specific religion (Mirrors) and reflection on how this knowledge teaches them something about themselves (Mirrors) and the wider world (Doors).

Teaching methods may include:

- E-learning resources e.g. websites, cameras, DVDs
- Role Play/Drama/Speaking and Listening Activities
- Art Work/Model Making
- Writing
- Presentations/Group Work/Research Projects
- Visits/Visitors
- Circle time/Discussions
- Artefacts/Music
- Pupil's own experience

Assessment

Assessment is carried out against the intended learning outcomes for each unit of work - these are detailed in assessment sheets to be found in pupil's RE books. At the end of each unit teachers use their professional judgement and evidence from pupils' work/ lesson participation against these learning outcomes to judge pupils as working "At", "Above" or "Below" Expectations.

Right to Withdrawal

The school recognises the right of withdrawal of teachers, and of pupils at the request of their parents. This is stated in the school brochure. This right of withdrawal is on the understanding that the parents provide suitable alternative education for their children during school RE lessons.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed biannually or sooner if required.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the *Governing Body* September 2020

It is due for review in September 2023

Signature Date

Head Teacher

Signature Date

Chair of *Governors*

Section 48 SIAMS inspections will give a judgment on the progress, achievement, teaching, learning and overall effectiveness of RE in aided schools. Refer to Strand 7 of the SIAMS schedule 2018. However, in all schools the contribution of RE to the school's distinctive Christian character will be assessed as will the impact of RE on SMSC and the way in which the subject is meeting the needs of learners and moving them forward in their personal spiritual journey.