



Religious Education Curriculum Statement

Why is Religious Education important?

The main aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live. It enables pupils to gain knowledge, understanding and skills needed to approach questions around religion and belief and provides an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their own ideas and ways of living. RE lessons are a safe space for pupils to explore their understanding of faith through the study of Christianity and other world religions. Through a varied range of activities pupils will be encouraged to explore how God has been revealed to humanity and how this has led humans to respond in a way which exemplifies Christian values such as: justice, forgiveness, compassion and love. The study of RE also enables pupils to explore the Bible's 'Big Story' and 'core concepts' of Christianity as outlined in Understanding Christianity resources. Additionally, through knowledge and understanding of other religions and belief systems pupils will be encouraged to recognise points of similarity and thereby develop respect for and show tolerance of all people. They will be given opportunities to critically reflect upon their own spirituality, beliefs and values, thinking about the ultimate questions facing society today and will begin to get a sense of their own unique place and active role within the world.

What is Religious Education like at St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery?

Intent

Our RE curriculum is delivered with the intent of supporting the distinctively Christian ethos of the school and will:

- enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts.
- enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians.
- develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

Additional aims include:

- To learn about other religions and faiths, including non-faiths, practised in the United Kingdom, (particularly Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Humanist approaches) their traditions, how their followers express their beliefs and what impact this has on their lives.
- To develop pupils' own spirituality by asking and engaging with big questions and providing opportunity for personal reflection.
- To encourage critical thinkers who can approach matters in a mature, thoughtful and balanced way, being able to talk about religion and what it means to them and how it impacts their lives and the lives of others.
- To develop pupils' understanding of our school values and British values, how their learning in RE connects with these and how they might put these values into practice through actions.

Implementation

Throughout the school from Early Years to Y6 all pupils' lessons will be planned in accordance with the Manchester Diocese Syllabus (2023) and will be supported by materials from the Understanding Christianity program which is produced by RE Today (2016) and for thematic units and those pertaining to other faiths supported by materials from RE Today Services (2018). Some shorter units, with a focus on Christmas and Easter are supported by Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education resources. Units of work are organised across a two-year rolling program due to our mixed class system.

'Never settle for less than your best'

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' John 8:12

The shorter units, focusing on Christmas and Easter, have been included on yearly long term plans where a full unit for Christmas and/or Easter did not feature. This is because we felt it was important to ensure there was some focus every single year on these key periods within the church calendar. Units of work will usually be taught through a weekly RE lesson with recording taking place through class floor books in Early Years and individual RE books for Y1-Y6. Each unit of work focuses on a key question which pupils will endeavour to answer on an ongoing basis through their work within that unit.

In line with the Manchester Diocese Syllabus (2023), and materials produced to support it, our curriculum units have three key areas within them which are explored over the course of the unit. These are as follows:

- **Making sense of belief/the text.** This involves identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions; understanding how sources of authority such as texts are used and expressed and interpreted in different ways and developing their own skills in interpretation.
- **Understanding the impact.** This relates to pupils developing an understanding of how the beliefs they have explored in the prior section impact upon individuals' lives, considering how and why people put their beliefs into action in different ways and how this varies between everyday lives, within communities and the wider world.
- **Making connections.** At this point pupils are encouraged to evaluate and reflect on and make connections between the beliefs and practices studied and their own lives, actions and ways of understanding the world.

To support these three areas and to ensure the teaching of RE is implemented well we teach lessons that provide a mixture of teacher input, group and individual work. Content and key concepts are delivered in a range of ways including reading from holy texts or books, storytelling, text study, interpretation of art work, poetry and videos. Work produced takes a variety of different forms including pictorial, written and recording of verbal responses and discussions. Where appropriate artefacts are used and external visits, often to places of worship, further support the curriculum. Additionally, where possible we may have visits to school from people of different faiths. Opportunities to put our school values into action are part of our whole school offer i.e. raising money or resources for charity and links between such occasions, courageous advocacy and our RE curriculum are highlighted.

Impact

Specific outcomes for individual units are shared within long term plans and from published resources and pupils' progress towards these is monitored throughout each unit, mainly through the use of formative assessment approaches. Opportunities are taken to revisit content if needed.

On a broader level the impact of our RE curriculum will be seen through pupils who:

- Have a strong knowledge and understanding of both Christianity and other world religions, faiths and non-faiths
- Can show understanding, respect and kindness towards people of all religious beliefs, faiths and non-faiths.
- Can show understanding of how religions, belief and practices impact on people's lives, their actions and modern society.
- Can consider how their interest in local, national and world issues and their responses to such issues reflect Christian (and other religions') teachings.
- Are able to reflect on their own beliefs and explore and develop their own spirituality.

Opportunities to celebrate Religious Education at St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery

There are various opportunities to celebrate Religious Education available at our school. These include but are not limited to:

- Visits to St George's Church as part of the RE curriculum i.e. to identify features of the church.
- School support at events at St George's Church i.e. Harvest Festival, Mothering Sunday, Christmas Carol Services, choir events.
- Visits from members of St George's Church to school to discuss their experiences and share their knowledge.
- Visits from members of other local faith communities.
- Visits to places of worship connected to religions other than Christianity and those from other denominations of Christianity.
- Provision of reflection areas around school which enable pupils to explore our school values and their own spirituality.

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