

Religious Education Policy



Policy developed by Mrs Jeffries (Religious Education leader): January 2021

Policy approved by Governors: February 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Taylor".

Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Grogan".

Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: February 2021

'Never settle for less than your best'

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission Statement

St. George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral, and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Introduction

This document is a statement of aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of Religious Education at St. George's Central Church of England Primary School. It is the decision of the Governors and staff to use diocesan agreed syllabus, Questful RE, in conjunction with Understanding Christianity. This complies fully with the 1996 Education Act and is in accordance with 'the principles and practices of the Established Church'. It was revised and amended by the RE leader through the process of:

- a) consultation with staff, clergy and governors.
- b) audit of present provision.
- c) review of present policy.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the RE leader, clergy, governors and all staff.

What is Religious Education?

Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum by developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practices, language and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. It encourages attitudes of openness and sensitivity towards people whose religious beliefs and practices may differ from their own. It enables pupils to consider and respond to a range of important questions related to their own spiritual, moral and cultural development. It fosters awe, respect and wonder and the development of values and attitudes and fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.

Aims

At our school, the aims and objectives of teaching and learning RE are:

- To extend pupils' thinking and awareness of themselves, their place in relation to others, the needs and desires of others, the wonder and complexity of the universe.
- To study Christianity as a living faith and encounter its impact on people through the ages and today.
- To appreciate ways in which faith is conveyed and expressed in the Anglican Church, through liturgy and ritual, corporate and private prayer, story and myth, art and music and Christian community.
- To develop an understanding of other Christian denominations.
- To learn about other major religions and explore issues within and between these faiths to help them understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions and their influence on individuals, societies, communities and cultures.
- To consider questions of meaning and purpose of life.
- To learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling children to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues.
- To develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society.
- To develop enquiry and response skills, through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy.
- To reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses.

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Curriculum and Implementation

All pupils follow the Questful RE syllabus. In Early Years this takes the form of Chatterbox units that link to the element of Understanding the World, whilst other religions are not formally introduced at this stage, pupils still join in celebrating multicultural events like Chinese New Year or Diwali. Recording is in the form of a class floor book. Throughout the rest of the school pupils are taught RE in weekly timetabled lessons and record their work in individual books. During Key Stage 1 pupils will be introduced to Judaism and Islam as major world faiths. In Key Stage 2 this is extended to include Sikhism and the concept of world views that do not rely on a belief in God.

At St. George's Central we explore The Bible, Jesus, Christian Living, The Church and Christian Festivals, Multi- Cultural Christianity and Christian Art and there are opportunities to look at other religious traditions within all key stages. Planning takes the format of long, medium and short term planning, with the long term plans being the basis for medium term planning, provided by the RE leader. Teaching staff then create short term plans to fit the elements of the scheme designed for their year group. These are differentiated to take account of the need to challenge different abilities of children. Through effective planning and teaching, children are given opportunities to develop skills, processes, values and attitudes in Religious Education.

Wherever possible, children are provided with opportunities for first hand experiences, eg: visits to Church or a mosque. Parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their child from RE lessons. However, should this choice be taken, parents must inform the headteacher, in writing, of their decision and make alternative arrangements for their child's Religious Education.

Knowledge Organisers

Knowledge organisers have been developed to help pupils to identify key subject content and specific vocabulary for each topic covered. They also draw pupils' attention to the Key Christian Concepts that are being explored. These are also used as part of pupils' self-assessment. To assist with Home Learning they are also available on the school website.

Skills and processes in Religious Education

The following skills and processes are central to Religious Education and are reflected in Attainment Targets and in learning opportunities:

- **Investigation** - asking relevant questions, using different types of sources as a way of gathering information, identifying the various elements which contribute to an understanding of religious beliefs and practices.
- **Interpreting** - drawing meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism, understanding religious terminology, interpreting religious language and understanding how people of different faiths derive meaning from their own religious texts.
- **Reflecting** - reflecting on feelings, relationships, experiences, ultimate questions, beliefs and practices.
- **Empathising** - recognising in others, feelings such as: love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow, considering the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others, seeing the world through the eyes of others and seeing issues from their point of view.
- **Evaluating** - using belief, evidence and argument to debate issues of religious significance, assessing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience.
- **Analysing** - distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact, distinguishing the significant features of different religions.
- **Synthesising** - linking significant features of religions together in a coherent pattern.
- **Applying** - applying knowledge and understanding of religions to the interactions between religion, the individual, the community, the nation and international life, identifying the interplay between key religious values and values in a secular society.
- **Expressing** - explaining concepts, rituals and practices, articulating matters of deep conviction and concern, responding to religious issues through a variety of media.

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Values and attitudes in Religious Education

Attitudes such as respect, care and concern are promoted through all areas of school life. However, there are some attitudes that are fundamental to Religious Education:

- **Commitment** - understanding the importance of commitment to a set of beliefs or values by which to live their life, willingness to develop a positive approach to life, the ability to learn about and from other faiths whilst maintaining their own beliefs and practices.
- **Respect** - respecting those who have different beliefs and customs from their own, recognising the rights of others to hold their own views, avoiding the use of ridicule, discerning what is worthy of respect, appreciating that people's religious convictions are often deeply held, recognising the needs and concerns of others.
- **Fairness** - listening to the views of others without prejudice, careful consideration of other views, willingness to consider evidence and argument, readiness to look beyond surface impressions.
- **Self-Understanding** - developing a mature sense of self-worth and value, discerning the personal relevance of religious questions.
- **Enquiry** - curiosity and a desire to seek the truth, an ability to recognise ambiguities and paradox, the desire to search for the meaning of life, being prepared to recognise bias and prejudice in themselves, willingness to value insight, imagination and rationality as ways of perceiving reality.

Cross Curricular links

RE contributes significantly to the ethos of the school, which underpins the whole curriculum. It enhances the children's spiritual development and has strong links with the PSHE curriculum's core themes 2 and 3: Relationships and Living in the Wider World. Creative RE provides opportunities for pupils to further develop their skills through art, music, dance and drama, it should also strongly support the school's desire to develop pupils who can articulate their opinions and beliefs in a thoughtful and coherent way.

Resources

A range of resources are stored in the cupboards leading into the Key Stage 2 area which include a wide variety of artefacts and age appropriate texts including a class set of Bibles. All staff have access to the Questful RE and Understanding RE resources via the staff server for planning purposes.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Children's learning is assessed across a number of units of work throughout the year. Copies of these assessments are recorded by the RE teacher and placed on the staff server where they can be accessed by the RE leader or senior management. They feed into and end of year judgement about each child's position in relation to age related expectations. Appropriate progression and standards are also monitored during a block subject monitoring time by the RE leader through work scrutiny, pupil interviews, lesson observations and monitoring of planning. Parents/carers are kept informed of the RE covered each half term via the school website curriculum overviews. End of year reports keep parents/carers informed of their child's progress in RE. **Please see the 'How we assess children's learning in RE' document, within the RE section of our school website for more information.**

The role of the RE leader

- To write an RE policy in consultation with other members of staff, governors and clergy.
- To provide a scheme of work that will show expectations of what children may achieve at each stage and monitor planning once a term.
- To write an annual action plan showing key areas of development for RE.
- To advise teachers on the RE curriculum.
- To ensure the adequate and appropriate provision of resources, and that teachers are aware of how to use the resources available.
- To arrange the purchase of RE resources within an agreed budget.
- To keep up to date with recent educational thinking about the teaching of RE and to attend courses and relevant training.
- To advise the Headteacher of strengths and areas for development in the RE curriculum and resources within the school.
- To monitor the RE curriculum within school and to have a clear understanding of standards compared with national expectations.
- To address any issues relating to pupil progress in consultation with the Headteacher and member of staff.

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The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- There is a current policy statement and curriculum for the teaching of Religious Education that is in line with the “principles and practices of the established Church”.
- Religious Education is included in the basic curriculum.
- Sufficient time and resources are devoted to Religious Education to enable the school to meet its legal obligations and to deliver a quality Religious Education curriculum.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's duty to ensure that:

- Religious Education is provided in accordance with the Governors' Agreed Syllabus for all registered pupils at the school.
- Appropriate staffing and resources are made available to meet the aims and objectives of Religious Education within the school.
- Parents/carers receive an annual written report and mid year graded report on their child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education.
- Requests from parents/carers for the withdrawal of their child from Religious Education are responded to.

Conclusion

At St. George's Central we believe that it is our professional duty to share this policy with all new members of staff, parents and carers on request. The policy will be reviewed in the light of experiences, new developments or requirements. The leader will discuss any aspect of this policy on request.

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