



All Saints CE (VC) First School, Busy Bees
Nursery & Kingfisher Club

Curriculum Policy on
Religious Education

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By: Full GB

Reviewed: February 2019

Reviewed: February 2021

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Religious Education (RE) Policy

Introduction (Rationale)

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The SIAMS schedule 2021 (Strand 7) makes it clear that RE should reflect the school's Christian vision. The subject is regarded as a core subject within the school's curriculum. It 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 below:

<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.

Our School Vision

At All Saints CE (VC) First School and Busy Bees Pre-School, 'Caring for each other, succeeding together' is our school motto. We are committed to providing a happy, caring and stimulating environment for our pupils, where they will be encouraged to learn independently, develop their own Christian spirituality and to seek high standards. Our children will meet a range of quality learning experiences that are enjoyable and will help them grow into independent and highly motivated global learners.

We aim to promote a positive learning environment where children are respected and nurtured.

All Saints is a cornerstone of the community, together with the church, providing the children and adults of the locality with a place to meet, greet, care and succeed together, just as the school motto says.

School Values

We focus on one Christian Value each half term. Our values are: Hope, Endurance, Acceptance, Reverence, Thankfulness and Service

At All Saints First School & Busy Bees Pre-School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of all major world religions, and we address the fundamental questions in life. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as *about* religions.

All Saints CE (VC) First School & Busy Bees Pre-School and its Governors are committed to the teaching of Religious Education as an important subject in its own right and because of the contribution it makes to other aspects of the school's curriculum and ethos.

We recognise that spiritual development is a key, standout feature of what makes us distinctive as a church school and the provision of opportunities for spiritual development is thoughtful, deliberate and intentional.

- RE has been made a school priority.
- RE Focus ensures half termly topics are planned into the school's long-term planning (LTP).
- Displays and Reflection Areas around school show links to relevant themes throughout the year. For example, School Values and ethos at the start of the year, age-appropriate events during the Christian calendar and reference to other faiths.
- RE-based Assemblies/Worships.
- 'Star Awards' each half term for excellent RE work or contributions to worships.
- The school liaises closely with the local Vicar.
- The school has an active Worship committee, including Foundation Governor representation.

The aims (Intent) of Religious Education (RE) are to help children:

- 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?
- 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 Principles of Teaching and Learning (Implementation):

Entitlement

All pupils on the school roll will receive RE as their entitlement in accordance with legal requirements.

The whole school LTP will be followed by all staff, incorporating the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus 2016 and showing continuity between each Key Stage.

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 Staffordshire 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.

Planning

Our key resource will be the Understanding Christianity tool kit developed by the Church of England Education Office and RE Today.

The school will ensure long-term planning shows how the Agreed Syllabus is being delivered. Medium-term planning will indicate how the Assessment Framework is being addressed

- Evidence in class RE floorbooks.
- LTP for Key Stages re-written in January 2017 to incorporate the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus 2016 with the support of the Staffordshire Advisor for RE.
- School will also liaise with the Diocesan Advisor in relation to LTP.
- LTPs are written in accordance with the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus age-related expectations so that lessons are pitched correctly.

Teaching and Staffing

The school will ensure that all staff involved in the delivery of RE are aware of subject requirements and are appropriately supported to teach the subject in an interesting and challenging way.

- Staff have been updated and offered support and shown interesting and inspiring ways of teaching RE.

- New resources have been researched and provided to all staff via the RE co-ordinator.
- Support staff currently teaching RE will be provided with appropriate lesson planning and MTPs for the classes they teach.

Management

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. The school will appoint a subject leader for RE and will ensure that the subject leader is appropriately supported to manage subject developments effectively. The RE subject leader is responsible for:

- producing a scheme of work for the school.
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision.
- 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 Development Plan and ensuring its regular review.
- accountability for RE standards in the school.
- meeting with a member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible.

Monitoring

The subject leader will be supported to monitor and develop the subject in keeping with the school's policy

- RE books/folders demonstrate evidence of the class RE work.
- Staff meetings: regular RE updates given and staff have time to reflect on practice or ask questions.
- Christian Distinctiveness is an agenda item at leadership meetings and Governor meetings.
- All age-related expectation descriptors will be shared with all staff.
- Observations, book looks, performance management, pupil voice will be used to assess and monitor the quality of RE.

Professional Development

The school will ensure that all teachers involved in the delivery of RE will receive professional development matched to their needs.

- Staff meetings: RE updates shared.



- ‘Understanding Christianity’ courses, as well as other relevant training provided by Lichfield Diocese, attended when possible.
- PD-Courses provided for staff/RE co-ordinator.

Accommodation

Where relevant, appropriate accommodation will be provided to secure the delivery of high quality RE

- All teachers have RE floorbooks with up to-date information and support, LTPs, class MTPs, and resources and teaching ideas for that MTP.
- The floorbooks are collected in at the end of every half term to monitor the evidence each teacher has provided of their half termly topic and to put in the next half terms RE topic.

The outcomes (Impact) for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:

- 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
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean.
- Ask questions sensitively and suggest appropriate answers.
- Develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply the Bible text.
- Analyse and explain the varied nature and traditions of the Christian community.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Reflect sensitively on areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths.
- Reflect on the decisions people make and suggest possible outcomes.
- Compare their own experiences and identity with others.
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights.
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality, and in expressing and nurturing their own faith journey.
- Value the religious journey of faith.
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression.
- Express religious ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology.

Assessment

The school will make use of the Staffordshire Assessment Framework to give a ‘best fit’ assessment of each pupil at the end of each year/key stage

Through activities such as discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils’ achievements. At this school we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

- Teachers make informal judgements on pupils’ work within lessons.

- Work is marked once it has been completed using the school’s agreed marking policy and comments made as necessary.
- Floor books are utilised effectively to show the three strands of RE, including digging deeper.

Excellence in RE is celebrated by

- Class books demonstrating the ongoing activities taught in classes.
- Displays in the classroom and around the school;
- Presentation of RE work/ideas to whole class, whole school or parents;
- Role play or drama.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

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

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

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with **personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), Relationship & Sex Education (RSE)** and **British values**. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

Right to withdrawal - see appendix

At All Saints CE (VC) First School & Busy Bees Pre-School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without giving a reason. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the headteacher / Principal who will then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided by the school and set out the options open to the parents as set out in education law. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects. Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE and do not take part in alternative religious education they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff whilst doing work set by their parents which will seek to further their knowledge and understanding of their parents beliefs and values.

Other things to note

- **Section 48 SIAMS** inspections will give a judgment on the progress, achievement, teaching, learning and overall effectiveness of RE in aided schools. The SIAMS schedule 2021 (Strand 7) 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.

Approved and signed off by

Headteacher/Principal.....

Chair of
Governors.....

Appendix

Guidance for schools and academies on the right to withdrawal from Religious Education March 2017

Religious Education

The government guidance ***Religious Education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*** states that:

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those who withdraw by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over)

In voluntary controlled schools and academies, religious education must be provided in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus provided by the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) of the local authority in which the school is situated.

In voluntary aided schools and academies, the decision on the content of religious education rests with the Governing Body, and should be in line with the Trust Deeds of the school.

In all forms of church school, the religious education provided should contribute to the Christian character of the school, and this is in respect of the school's work which is subject to the ***Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)***, whether VC, VA or academy.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, ***the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. (Non-statutory Guidance 2010)***

Any parent considering withdrawal must contact the Headteacher / Principal to discuss any concerns relating to the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the school.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

It is important that the school makes clear on its website and through other forms of communication, the RE syllabus being taught in school. There needs to be a clear understanding of the relevance of the RE curriculum and how it respects pupils own

beliefs. It is good practice to review requests to withdraw from RE and collective worship annually.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Whether the parents wish their children to be withdrawn from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it.
- Parents can withdraw their child from a specific activity, such as a visit to a place of worship, and not withdraw their child from the remainder of the RE.
- Where pupils are withdrawn from RE or collective worship, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or incur extra cost.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn from RE, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This could be provided at the school or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided. Outside arrangements are permitted providing the necessary safeguarding procedures are in place and the LA or Trust Board is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from withdrawal will only affect the start or end of a school session (***Non-statutory Guidance 2010***)

It is important that schools are fully aware of issues surrounding religion, race and culture and ensure that parental right to withdrawal requests do not hamper their responsibilities to ensure equality for all and the promotion of British Values.