



St. Anne's CE Primary and Nursery School

Religious Education Policy

Reviewed and updated

June 2023

Minds to learn, hearts to care.



Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." *Matthew 22:37-39*



Our school vision is to be the best version of ourselves that God created us to be - with minds to learn and hearts to care.

Our values are the building blocks for strong foundations for lifelong learning and lifelong faith.



Vision and Values

Our school vision is to be the best version of ourselves that God created us to be – with minds to learn and hearts to care.

Who are we as a school? This is our deeply Christian vision which is firmly rooted in the bible.

Jesus summed up his most important teaching by quoting the greatest commandment – love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul with all your mind. And love your neighbour as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39) At St Anne's our vision is for everyone who is part of our school community to live life to the full and to treat everyone with compassion and respect.

This vision shapes all we do and helps us understand who we are as a school, why we are here, and then how we live. Our values are the building blocks for strong foundations for lifelong learning and lifelong faith.

Why are we here? These are our values:

Loving God with all of our heart

We want everyone at St Anne's to be the best version of themselves. We believe this is about everyone being authentic, open and honest.

We are dedicated to continuous improvement, challenging ourselves, celebrating our successes and always aspiring to be "the best we can be" to enable each child and adult to flourish and achieve.

Loving God with all our soul

We want to nurture the spiritual life of everyone in our school family recognising that “spirituality is like a bird; if you hold it too tightly, it chokes; if you hold it too loosely, it flies away. Fundamental to spirituality is the absence of force.” Rabbi Hugo Gryn

To promote our Christian ethos and values through lively, intelligent and creative participation.

To provide an inviting, inclusive school environment where all members of the school community, of all faiths or none, are valued, respected and care for one another.

To encourage and develop links between the school, home, our parishes and the local, national and global community.

Loving God with all our mind

To provide a high quality and nurturing learning environment.

To be dedicated to continuous improvement, challenging ourselves, celebrating our successes and always aspiring to be “the best we can be”.

To enable each child and adult to flourish and achieve.

How then do we live? All of this shapes our school life.

Daily collective worship is at the centre of school life and enables children to experience the diversity of Christian practice and tradition.

High quality, effective, academic religious education allows pupils and adults alike to flourish.

Throughout all our school life our Christian vision and values promote social and cultural development through the practice of forgiveness and reconciliation. They encourage good mental health and enable children and adults, whatever their background or ability, to flourish and live well together.

The vision is used to ensure our policies, curriculum and extracurricular opportunities meet the academic and spiritual needs of all learners.

We describe all our activities in terms of how the vision and values inspire our whole school community, children and adults, to engage in social action and to be courageous advocates for change in their local, national and global communities

Our Christian vision supports the character and moral development of all pupils and adults, giving them aspiration for themselves and hope for the communities of which they are a part. It fosters dignity and respect, enabling everyone to be the person God created them to be, to achieve the most they can, and to inspire hope for others in the local community and beyond.

St. Anne's Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Policy

At St. Anne's CE Primary School, Religious Education is an integral part of our school life. We are a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with a Christian foundation and, as such, Christianity forms the basis of all teaching in the school and how we treat each other.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and workable framework for the learning and teaching of RE at St. Anne's and to establish a common purpose amongst staff and pupils, which may be clearly understood by parents, Governors, Diocese and external agencies.

At St Anne's school, pupils and their families can expect a high-quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We teach according to the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Philosophy

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

Aims and objectives

Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St. Anne's C.E. Primary School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other religions and non-religious worldviews beyond the six principle religions, providing the foundation for pupils to know about and understand the diversity of beliefs and practices in the world in which we live. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
 - To develop deepening knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and nonreligious worldviews so that they can:
 - describe and explain beliefs and theological concepts
 - describe and explain some sources of authority and teachings within and across religious and non-religious traditions
 - describe and explain ways in which beliefs are expressed
 - know and understand the significance and impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, communities and societies - connect these together into a coherent framework of beliefs and practices
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- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
 - To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
 - To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.
 - gain and deploy deepening understanding of specialist vocabulary and terms
 - know and understand about religious diversity within the region
 - gain and deploy skills that enable critical thinking and enquiry in relation to the material they study
 - reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences, ideas, values and beliefs with increasing discernment

The teaching of RE underpins the aims of the school: we have a positive, caring ethos founded on Christian beliefs, where all children are valued and respected and encouraged to maximise their potential; every child matters and every success is celebrated; our children will leave us as good citizens, feeling fulfilled, challenged and inspired, and with a solid Christian foundation.

The legal position of Religious Education

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Teaching and learning

Organisation

Allocation of time for RE recommended as the **minimum** entitlement is 36 hours for KS1 and 45 hours for KS2, which approximates to 5% of curriculum time, or roughly one hour per week.

Religious Education contributes dynamically to pupils' education by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE pupils learn about religious and non-religious worldviews in order to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to interpret, analyse, evaluate and critically respond to the claims that religious and non-religious worldviews make. Pupils learn to express their insights and to agree or disagree respectfully.

At St Anne's, Religious Education offers opportunities for personal reflection and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as it encourages pupils to examine the significance of their learning in relation to themselves and others. It enables pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or not), ideas, feelings, experiences and values in the light of what they learn. Religious Education encourages empathy and respect. It enables pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging. It also promotes respect for the right of others to hold different beliefs, values and ideas.

Religious Education at St Anne's makes a significant contribution to the active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance of others' faiths and beliefs, a fundamental British value. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Teaching in Religious Education promotes openness, respect for others, religious literacy and critical enquiry.

Curriculum planning in Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy. (Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief.) (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in according to the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

EYFS

During the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Religious Education may be taught as part of whole class topics or themes. At St Anne's, we use the following themes to explore religion: Special and Belonging. Children could explore these ideas through topics such as special times, special objects, special people, special books, how we show belonging, the natural world, new life, new places, and stories provide excellent opportunities for RE foundation work in Nursery and Reception and can be successfully built on at Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1

- Christianity - introduction to beliefs and practices and their impact.
- Buddhism – introduction to some beliefs and practices and their impact.
- Religious diversity - introduction to the diverse religious and non-religious landscape in the local area.

Key Stage 2

- Christianity – beliefs and practices across the denominations and the impact of these for individuals and communities.
- Hinduism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities
- Judaism – some beliefs and practices and the impact of these for individuals and communities
- religious diversity - the diverse religious and non-religious landscape across the region, including a special study of a local Muslim community
- similarities and differences within and between religious and non-religious worldviews through at least one thematic study e.g. about ritual, the environment, care for others

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry- based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Equal Opportunities

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

Resources

We are committed to using high quality resources to support the teaching of RE. We are developing sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for Religious Education in boxes of equipment for each world religion to be studied. There is a set of Bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. We have access to the Understanding Christianity resource, including the digital resource. The school library has a supply of RE topic books and we are increasing the range of computer software available to support the children's individual research. In addition, we have a subscription to the Durham Learning Resources library for schools within Durham and the Religious Resources Centre in Durham, both of which provide a range of books, artefacts and religious resources to enhance learning opportunities. Websites and opportunities to extend learning using video clips and online materials are made available through NATRE.

Visits and visitors

We are able to visit places of worship in our local area, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship or participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class. Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school.

Year 1 -Christianity: Visit to a local church

Buddhism: Visitor to school

Year 2- Christianity: Visit to Durham Cathedral

Buddhism: Visitor to school

Year 3- Christianity: Visit to a local church

Hinduism: Visit to a temple

Year 4- Christianity: Visit to Durham Cathedral

Year 5- Judaism: Visit to synagogue or visitor to school

Year 6- Islam: Visitor to school

The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.

- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.
- for presenting the Head teacher with an annual action plan and report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. This report is used to inform the School Development Plan.
- for ensuring parents are informed of any developments concerning RE.
- for working with Foundation Governors and the Vicar of St. Anne's and St. Andrew's and ensuring that they are informed of any changes in RE provision and amendments to school policy, which is to be made available to them for discussion and approval.
- for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- Liaising with school chaplain regarding whole school initiatives and enhancement opportunities.
- Attending and contributing to cluster and local hub meetings to share knowledge, ideas and expertise as well as shared opportunities to enhance learning across key stages.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation, applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep

experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Assessment

Assessment of children's progress in RE is ongoing. As a piece of work is completed, it is marked and teachers give written feedback to pupils, often with an opportunity to respond and improve or extend their knowledge or critical analysis. If an opportunity for personal reflection is given, this is not marked. At the end of each unit, children undertake one of a range of formative, age-related assessment tasks or tests. Teachers use this, together with their informal judgements made during lesson observations and marking, to inform their judgement against the benchmark expectations within the syllabus, 2020. Recording of assessment is termly.

Assessment in RE will:

- Be directly related to the expectations of the Durham Agreed Syllabus benchmark expectations.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Monitoring and review

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff. It was approved by governors _____ and will be reviewed _____

Signed: _____ **Head Teacher**

Date: _____

Signed: _____ **Governor**

Date: _____