

Policy for Religious Education Bolton-on-Swale St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School



'To love, live and learn together'

Our vision is for all in our school family to:

Love themselves and others as children of God

'Love one another as I have loved you.' (John 15:12)

Live life to the full in all aspects of their development; academically, spiritually, physically, mentally and culturally

'Jesus said 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Jesus calls us to a full life in mind, body, heart and spirit. Therefore we believe the purpose of education is to nurture and enable every child to thrive and to be the person they are fully capable of being.

Learn to be the best they can be

'And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom...' (Luke 2:40)

Our Vision Statement:

At Bolton-on-Swale St Mary's Church of England Primary School we welcome everyone to a school community where all can flourish. Underpinned by our Christian values, everyone belongs and is valued as a child of God. We promote academic excellence and the development of character, knowledge and skills to enjoy being our best selves now and in the future.

Introduction

Our RE Policy is underpinned by our theologically rooted Christian vision:

'To love, live and learn together'

As a Church of England Aided School, Bolton-on-Swale St Mary's follows **the Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education 2022 from the Dioceses of Leeds and York**, including the Understanding Christianity resources: Text, Impact, Connections and the thematic units. Our long term and medium term RE plans reflect this.

Aims

We understand the driving purpose of RE in Church of England schools to be the development of secure religious literacy. The aim of this is to ensure that our pupils are able to hold informed and balanced conversations about different religions and beliefs.

Key Principles

- RE is an academic subject: This means that RE is taught in a way that is rigorous and intellectually stimulating. It requires pupils to think critically about religious beliefs and practices, and to develop their own understanding of the world.

- It provides pupils with the opportunity to understand what it means to be a religious believer in the world today: This means that RE helps children to understand the different ways in which people around the world express their religious beliefs. It also helps them to understand the challenges and opportunities that religious believers face in the modern world.
- RE encourages pupils to encounter the values of the Christian community of the school that they are a part of: This means that RE helps children to understand the values that are important to the Christian community of their school.
- It supports pupils in recognising and acting on the insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes, and values that should influence, inspire, or guide them in life.

General Information

- Religious education (RE) is part of the basic curriculum entitlement for all registered pupils in all schools.
- In Church schools, which are open to pupils of all religious traditions and those of no religious background, RE has a central place within a distinctive curriculum and is seen as a core subject.
- RE is not the same as religious instruction – it does not seek to impose any one set of beliefs or doctrine.
- RE is about developing a religious and theological literacy so that pupils will be able to engage with some of the big questions of meaning and purpose in life and develop an understanding of what followers of a religion believe and how those beliefs shape the lives of individuals, communities and wider society.
- All schools are required to teach about Christianity, and in Church schools this will be **at least** 50% of the RE curriculum. This is reflected in the Diocesan Syllabus for RE 2022 from the Dioceses of Leeds and York, which we follow, and in our own curriculum planning.

Statement of Entitlement Religious Education in Church Schools 2019

This document outlines the expectations of the Church of England Education Office in relation to Religious Education. This document is used by SIAMS (Section 48) inspectors when they are assessing the quality of RE in church schools and academies.

- [Statement of Entitlement](#)

Approach

All the units of teaching follow the same approach and incorporate the following three aspects:

Making sense of the text

- Identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious concepts and beliefs; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions; recognising how and why sources of authority are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, and developing skills of interpretation.

Understanding the impact

- Examining how and why people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, within their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.

Making connections

- Reasoning about, reflecting on, evaluating and connecting the concepts, beliefs and practices studied; allowing pupils to challenge ideas and the ideas to challenge pupils' thinking; discerning possible connections between these ideas and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

The three aspects link together as can be seen in this diagram (from the Understanding Christianity resource).



Curriculum content

Pupils in **Reception** will study Christians and other world views represented in the local area.

In **Key Stage One** children will study Christians for over 50% of study time and Jewish and Muslim people. They may also learn from other religions and non-religious worldviews in thematic units.

In **Key Stage Two** children will study Christians for over 50% of study time. In Years 3 and 4 they will also learn about Jewish and Hindu people. In Years 5 and 6 will also learn about Muslim, Jewish and Hindu people.

They may also learn from other religions and non-religious worldviews in thematic units.

Through the study of religions, pupils will learn skills and processes including:

- reflection, thinking about what it means to belong to a faith community;
- application, making connections between differences in religions;
- empathy, considering their own beliefs and those of others;
- analysis, learning about sacred texts and meanings;
- interpretation; understanding and valuing what is good and true;

They should also begin to develop their attitudes of curiosity, understanding, respect, reflection, commitment and consideration.

Teaching and Organisation

RE is taught in weekly sessions. The long term plan sets out which units are allocated to each year group. Each unit is taught from the ideas set out in the Understanding Christianity resource and the RE Syllabus (other religions and thematic units). Each unit follows the same approach as detailed above and includes learning outcomes which form the basis of our assessment procedures.

Work should be planned 'with the end in mind', and should be informed by previous planning.

Pupils' learning should be enhanced by first-hand experiences wherever possible (a visit, a debate, a visitor, an artefact, role play, music) or draw on pupils' own personal experiences.

Resources

We are fortunate to have a wide range of RE resources and artefacts, in addition to electronic resources and educational websites. Artefacts are stored in themed boxes in the staff room and books in the RE section of the library.

Visits

Visits to places of worship are an important and integral part of the children's experiences for RE. They are sequentially planned in our medium term plans and support children's learning of the religion in question. When teachers arrange a visit for RE they must take into consideration the guidelines set out in the school educational visits policy and fill in the EVOLVE online form and the appropriate risk assessments. As a school we aim for each phase to visit a place of worship, in line with their curriculum plan.

We have close links for visits with our local parish and visit St Mary's Church; with our Diocesan Cathedral, Ripon and with the interfaith centre in Bradford where we visit the Hindu Mandir.

Provision for equal opportunities and differentiation

Strategies must be adopted to ensure that all children have access to high quality Religious Education regardless of gender, race, age, sexual orientation physical or intellectual ability. As with all curriculum areas, work should be differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.

Assessment, record keeping and reporting

Assessment in RE is used to inform teaching and learning. The learning outcomes from each teaching unit form the basis of our assessment system. There are outcomes for each of the three different aspects: **making sense of the text**, **understanding the impact**, **making connections**.

Teachers also assess the children against the end of phase (e.g. KS1) outcomes, giving an indication when a child has secured an understanding of the content taught. Each unit has learning outcomes that feed into the end of phase outcomes. The end of year report contains a teacher assessment judgement for RE against age related expectations. This judgement is also recorded in Sonar our online tracker.

See below an example of end of learning key outcomes for a Year 5/6 unit.

Thematic Unit UKS2 What would make our town/village a more respectful place?
Making connections
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs and practices related to living with difference in community.• Reflect on and articulate lessons people might gain from the experience of living in communities of diverse beliefs and practices, including their own responses.• Talk about how and why people think differently about diversity and interfaith, giving good reasons for their own views.• Consider and weigh up the ways in which the ideas studied relate to their own experiences and views of the world today.
Understanding the Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make clear connections between what different people believe and the way they live (e.g. involvement in community, in interfaith projects etc.)• Explain how and why people respond differently to diversity and interfaith issues (e.g. inclusivism, exclusivism etc).
Making sense of the text
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the religions and beliefs represented locally and regionally, and explain some of their key beliefs.• Describe examples of how different communities deal with diversity and interfaith issues.

Assessment is formative and draws on a wide range of evidence: written work, discussions, questioning, drama, observations and photographs all contribute to the assessment process.

The role of the RE subject leader, in collaboration with other staff:

Policy knowledge and development:

- prepare a School Policy; a whole school plan and schemes of work with progression; decide which religions and worldviews are to be included at which key stage and the substantive and disciplinary knowledge that shapes the curriculum
- Ensure and monitor the curriculum time with reference to The Statement of Entitlement

- Devise planning, assessment, recording and reporting procedures in line with school policy
- Ensure inclusion for all and the needs of SEN, EAL and gifted and talented are met
- Promote RE with staff, pupils and governors
- Promote displays of pupils work in RE
- Audit available resources, and buy new ones as required
- Keep up to date with local and national developments (attend Diocesan training and networks for RE subject leaders)

Monitoring

- Review, monitor and evaluate the provision and practice of RE
- Know about the progress of different groups
- Monitor planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation
- Provide observation feedback and report on findings
- Sample pupil's work
- Evaluate outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment

Supporting and Advising

- Prepare a subject action plan which builds on existing practice and strives for continuous improvement
- Lead curriculum development and ensure staff development through courses, in-school meetings and training
- Keep up to date with new developments and resources
- Support non-specialist staff and teachers
- Work alongside colleagues to share good practice
- Prepare, share and meet with governors on a regular basis

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