



## Holy Trinity C of E Primary School Religious Education Policy



Religious Education in a Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

In Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided School the Religious Education provided is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the trust deed.

R.E. plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the school as expressed in our Mission Statement:

**'Growing and learning in Christ through, faith, family and friendship.'**

In Voluntary Aided Schools, the management of religious Education is a distinctive role of the governors and Head Teacher. RE has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided within the School.

At Holy Trinity we use the R.E. Syllabus produced by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education and the North Lancashire District of the Methodist Church. This reflects the national framework for RE, the national society statement of entitlement and the requirements of SIAMs.

Religious Education occupies at least 5% of curriculum time. This does not include time spent on worship. At Christmas, Easter or Pentecost more time may be given to Religious Education, reflecting the Christian traditions of the school.

The teaching of Christianity takes up 80% of R.E curriculum time and other 20% of time includes appropriate teaching about other major world faiths and views.

Some elements of Religious Education are delivered through our Collective Worship for example, festivals stories about Jesus and stories Jesus told. Although RE and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich each other they are managed separately.

In RE children discuss religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin their personal choices and behaviour. They can begin to make up their own minds about the Christian faith while being sensitive to the fact that there are people of other faiths around them who are also searching for ultimate truth and a relationship with the divine.

By the time children leave our school it is envisaged that they will have received a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. This will include beliefs about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The children will learn about people of the Bible and more recent followers

of Christianity. They will have had experience of a worshipping community at Saint Matthew's Church.

We have close links with Saint Matthew's Church Burnley Blackburn Cathedral and the Burnley Methodist Circuit. Some festival services and Saints Days are celebrated in Church with the whole school. Parents are invited to join us for these. The Vicar has regular contact with the children through leading acts of worship at school and in Church. He also comes into classes to talk to the children about Holy Communion, faith, being a Christian and his role in the Church.

Our RE curriculum maintains a balanced approach of learning about Religion (Attainment Target 1) and learning from Religion (Attainment target 2)

### Learning about Religion

We learn about:

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

### Learning from Religion

We learn from:

- an emphatic response to the Christian Faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ;
- understanding ourselves and others, celebrating our shared humanity and the breadth of human achievement;
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Religious Education within our Church School should help pupils to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's society;
- develop the skills to navigate their way around the Bible;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens serving their neighbour,
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;

- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for followers of the other major world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths.

Therefore RE in Church Schools should also help pupils to:

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

### Content of the religious education curriculum

Religious education in a Church school includes:

- opportunities to explore and experience the Church's year;
- study the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs;
- visits to places of Worship, especially the local parish Church, Cathedral and to develop understanding of the Church as a living community;
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experiences of Christian belief and life;
- develop skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions;
- have opportunities to listen to psalms, hymns and spiritual songs from a wide variety of traditions;
- have access to Christian artefacts which are used with care, respect and confidence;

Religious Education in Church Schools should enable:

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- pupils from all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

### Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE provides opportunities for pupils of all backgrounds to explore the following in a safe environment:

- Spiritual development within RE in a Church School enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.
- Moral development is based on the teaching of Jesus Christ which offers pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.
- Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love another is put in to practice.
- Cultural development provides opportunities to develop and understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of peoples.

### Content and approaches

The content of RE in our Church school is in accordance with the beliefs and traditions of the Church of England. We follow the Blackburn Diocese syllabus which is supported by Diocesan RE curriculum material on:

Christmas

Palm Sunday Holy week and Easter

God, Prayer and Spirituality

Church Life, Saints and Seasons

Death Grief and Eternal Life

Judaism

Islam

These resources are kept on the shelves in The Oswald room.

Each class teacher is responsible for teaching RE to their year group. A variety of teaching methods are used. They include listening to stories, discussion, dramas and mime, ICT and research tasks, written work including narrative, poetry and prayer. Children also produce art work and models based on RE themes or listen to spiritual music. Each child has an individual (dark blue) RE book and class teachers maintain class RE big books.

### Inclusion

As in all subjects, the class teacher is responsible for meeting the different needs and abilities of every child in the class and therefore activities are differentiated appropriately. More able children are challenged with higher order questions and activities that demand extended thinking skills. Children with SEN are given work that allows them to access the content of the curriculum and may have support from a teaching assistant if this is deemed appropriate. Teachers must be aware that a lack of writing skills does not automatically mean that a child is not capable of working at a high level within this subject.

### Resources

Money is allocated on an annual basis for the purchase of resources.

RE resources are located in classrooms, in the Oswald room and in the shelving and trays immediately outside the Oswald room.

We also have access to artefacts that can be borrowed from the Blackburn Diocese Resources Room at the Cathedral.

### Human resources

The Vicar of Saint Matthew's Church comes to talk to classes and groups of children when requested to do so. Members of the Church have also spoken to groups of children both in school and on visits to the Church. The Bishop of Burnley comes in to Church to talk to Year 6 on an annual basis about 'Pilgrimage' as he was previously based at the Shrine at Walsingham. The Diocesan Adviser for RE comes into school termly and leads the district RE subject leaders cluster meeting.

Links have been established with staff from the Burnley Methodist circuit and CASCOT who are working in the local area.

### Assessment

To ensure progression during the children's time at Holy Trinity teachers have been introduced to the eight level scale which is based on the scale of National Expectations in RE. This also helps to ensure quality tasks are used with the children and planning is at a correct level for the age group and experience of the children. RE subject leader monitors pupils' work throughout the school and reports back to staff and governors about presentation of work, marking, content, differentiation and how the work matches to the diocesan syllabus and planning and standards throughout the School.

The assessment guidelines are structured around the two attainment targets from the syllabus 'AT1 Learning about religions' and 'AT2 Learning from Religions.' The eight level scale mentioned above will further enable the class teacher to assess the children's abilities.

Assessment takes place through written work, discussion, tests, observation and creative work. Suggested assessment ideas from the units in the syllabus can be used by class teachers as part of the on-going assessment for learning cycle. Children self-assess their work using self-assessment leaders which are provided to staff by the subject leader and link to the topics/syllabus.

- The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work.
- The RE subject leader keeps photographs of RE week/displays around the School.
- Oral reports are given to parents at two parents' evenings a year and a written report is sent to parents towards the end of the summer term.

Additionally, all classes keep 'big books' to provide a record of the work undertaken and to inform the assessment process.

### Responsibility for the Policy

Sally Smith (RE subject leader/Head teacher) is the person responsible for the co-ordination of this policy.

The Diocesan Syllabus is fully implemented in our school and when guidance is given from the Diocese any planned changes will be implemented (changes planned for September 2017).

The RE subject leader observes class RE lessons, interviews children and looks at RE books as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation cycle.

The subject leader for RE and governor with responsibility for RE meet regularly and report to the governing body.

The subject leader attends 'cluster' group meetings each term to be up-dated on developments in the subject.

The subject leader attends courses run by the Diocese when applicable to our school or arranges INSET for the whole staff as appropriate.

### Parents' right to withdraw a child from Religious Education in a Voluntary Aided School

Parents may request the governing body to provide Religious Education for their child according to the Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience arrange for their children to attend another school where RE is provided according to the Agreed Syllabus. The governing body should make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing body be unable to make such arrangements for religious education to be delivered in accordance to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the local authority. The local authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any School and this opportunity is published in our School prospectus.

**The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and /or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.**

If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Head Teacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

This policy was approved by the governing body on February 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 and will be reviewed in the Spring Term 2019.

RE Subject leader - Sally Smith (Head Teacher)

