

St. Peter's C of E Primary School



Religious Education (RE) Policy

'Unlocking the gates to a lifelong love of learning and faithfulness'

"Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" Proverbs 22:6

Adopted: July 2023

To be reviewed: July 2026

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Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.' St Peter's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. The Governors, in consultation with the Head teacher and R.E Lead have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt teaching material from the Diocese 'Understanding Christianity' and supplement this with the Nottinghamshire Local Agreed Syllabus.

Religious Education is central to the church's understanding of education and mission. 'The National Society Statement of Entitlement' outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England School.

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

St. Peter's Vision Statement:

At St Peter's C of E Primary School, the growth and development of children and adults is central to everything we do. As a church school, we aim to serve and take care of our community by providing an education which inspires every child to be the best they can be. This is within a framework which is rooted in distinctive Christian beliefs and values whilst embracing diversity, respecting other faiths and worshipping together. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promote Christian values through the experiences we offer to all our school community.

In recognising and accepting these responsibilities our curriculum intention is to:

Through the teaching of Religious Education, we aim to provide an engaging and safe environment for pupils to explore a range of world faiths. As a Church of England School, our long term curriculum reflects our take care ethos allowing time for children to reflect, question and explore Christianity through the Understanding Christianity units we teach. We have also chosen specific units from the Local Agreed Syllabus which we feel reflect the demographic needs of our children. We aim to educate our children to gain and deepen a solid understanding and have respect for all religions as well as learning from them. In line with our ethos, our children have the opportunity to organise a charitable act. This enables them to 'live out' our deep Christian values and Beyond Expectation attitudes and those that underpin so many world religions. Our culture of acceptance and tolerance provides a safe environment for children to ask and reflect on questions that arise from studying world religion and gives them space to develop their own spiritual beliefs.

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The Aim of RE in Nottinghamshire:

The curriculum for religious education aims to ensure that all pupils:

A

Know about and understand a range of religions and world views, so that they can: Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities; Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and world views; Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

B

Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and world views, so that they can: Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression, influence individuals and communities; Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value; Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

C

Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and world views, so that they can: Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively; Enquire into what enables different communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all; Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims, in particular to SMSC, promotion of the schools Christian values and the promotion of 'British Values'

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

SMSC prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

The school's Christian values

RE should contribute to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values. Making connections between the values and learning in RE will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

Respect for All & Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of

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diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination and extremism.

The school community – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored to enable our children to live together well.

The community within which the school is located – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches. Through RE, our children have the opportunity to find out about and support local charities.

The UK community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life, including great charity work done throughout the UK.

The global community – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues. This is also links to our work with the charity 'Raise a Smile' where we support a school in Zambia.

The promotion of 'British Values'

RE provides opportunities to promote the 'British Values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty & mutual respect. (See Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2015 'Religious Education for All' and the supporting document 'Guidance for delivering Religious Education in church schools' which we fully uphold).

1. Approaches to teaching RE

- R.E has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled.
- High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the diocesan materials 'Understanding Christianity' and locally agreed syllabus. We also use other materials to support teaching such as individual and topical resources provided by the diocese.
- In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.
- Where possible, we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities. We plan these within the long term plan and take other opportunities when they arise, to organise faith experiences as part of a whole school or individual class.

We use, as a basis for our planning, the 'Understanding Christianity' materials from the Diocese and the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

2. How RE is organised

RE is delivered as a discrete subject for at least 1 hour each week.

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A long term plan has been mapped out for the whole school including EYFS.

We have a two year rolling programme due to mixed aged year groups. Where 'Understanding Christianity' units are taught in both years, the teachers will use both the core learning and digging deeper material in medium and short term planning to ensure coverage and progression across the two years.

At EYFS pupils study R.E through exploring 'understanding the world' and 'people and communities' in the Early learning goals

At KS1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism

At LKS2 pupils study Christianity and Hinduism

At Upper KS2 pupils study Christianity and Islam

Other religions may come into teaching across the whole school when studying festivals, celebrations and other cultures as well as experience days that are planned.

Within the long term plan, an opportunity for acts of charity have been outlined for each class once a year. This enables the children to actually plan, carry out and evaluate a charitable act of their choice. This enables them to put into action the morals and values of so many world religions and puts into action our 'Take Care', 'Beyond Expectation' and Christian ethos.

3. Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording, staff evaluate children's attainment and progress in RE. From week to week, staff assess children's learning and depth of understanding through written outcomes, discussion and creative responses. Assessment for learning is used and children are given the opportunity to reflect on their learning in a number of ways such as in their books, through quiet period of reflection, discussion and responses recorded in the Class Reflection Book.

We have also introduced formal assessment of R.E as per the new requirement for VA Church schools. Based on the recommendation of the Diocese, we have outlined in our long term plan, three units of R.E teaching per year to be assessed across the whole school. Of that, two are 'Understanding Christianity' Units and the last, a Locally Agreed Syllabus unit. The assessment is done through that of a 'cold' task at the beginning of a unit followed by 'hot' task as the end of the unit in order to assess the learning that has been gained by pupils. Teachers are supported in this with ideas for tasks to be set in line with progression and assessment recording sheets. Assessment has been planned being mindful of teacher workload and so is intended to be manageable and have impact on future learning. This information is passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

4. Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE, including how RE contribute to SIAMS School Self Evaluation

The R.E co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, observations, learning walks, planning analysis, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils. The co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the Church school self-evaluation process by reviewing each area of the SEF, monitoring and evaluation as above, followed by plans to move forward. The

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SEF is used as a working document throughout each school year in order to be rigorous in the teaching and impact of R.E as well as the development of our Christian ethos throughout the school.

5. Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teacher, R.E co-ordinator & Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body, head teacher and co-ordinator also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE Curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At St Peter's C of E Primary School, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that 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 occasions, 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. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St Peter's C of E Primary School.

6. Date of policy review: July 2023

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