

Religious Education Policy

The Richard Crosse Church of England Primary School

The St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Author	Harriet Jennings
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At The Richard Crosse and St. Mary's Church of England Primary Schools, Religious Education plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The subject is central to the school's understanding of education, and our motto "Believe and Achieve" supports us in ensuring that the Church at national, diocesan and local level is called to work towards every child and young person having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian Faith and Jesus Christ. As a school we recognise that spiritual development lies at the heart of the curriculum. All members of the school community should experience Christianity through the life of the school, as well as through the taught curriculum.

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools, published by the National Society and adopted by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education (2012). Christianity will, therefore, be the majority study in RE as understanding Christianity as a living religion is the foundation of Religious Education in church schools. It is important that this draws on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms. The encounter must be an open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations and in which real dialogue and education takes place.

Church schools have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and world views. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also be able to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice.

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 of all pupils. The school bases its RE provision on the Guilford and Telford and Wrekin Agreed Syllabus. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan RE Resource Handbook, materials from the National Society, and other appropriate units to enhance teaching and offer the extra dimension of its Church foundation. The school recognises the right of withdrawal of teachers, and of pupils at the request of their parents. This is stated in the school brochure.

RE is taught discretely once a week, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation at least two thirds 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.

The Aims of Religious Education

The principal aim of Religious Education is to help young people to achieve a knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights, beliefs and practices. This will enable them to deepen or realise their own beliefs, and respect the freedom of other people to hold beliefs different from their own.

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- To offer a full and positive presentation of living Christianity in an opportunity for encountering the Christian life in Anglican and other contexts, and 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 other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents.
- 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 contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faiths and beliefs.

The outcomes 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 and worship.
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make – including believers – and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others – including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression
- Explore the Bible as the foundation document of Christianity, especially its accounts of the life, teaching and significance of Jesus Christ and of the early Christian community.
- Encourage children to experience Christian life and worship including the use of the Church's year and links with the local Christian community.

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 development.

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 in our society.

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

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with Citizenship and PSHE. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

Objectives of Religious Education

Through their learning in KS1, pupils should:

- learn what Christians believe about God and the world around them, and be introduced to what Jews & Hindus believe;
- encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials, such as art & music;
- learn to recognise that peoples' beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use subject specific vocabulary;
- begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children, their families and the communities they belong to;
- ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imagination;
- ask questions and express their own views about what is important to themselves and to others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging;
- Be given opportunities to explore and talk about the local religious buildings;
- Have an initial introduction to the Church's year, in particular Easter and Christmas and the simple principles associated with them;
- Be encouraged to share in their own experience of worship;
- Be introduced to some religious practices associated with birth, marriage and death through sharing personal and school based experiences and gain knowledge of key beliefs and rules.

**so that by the end of
KS1, most pupils can...**

- identify similarities in features of religions and beliefs;
- retell religious, spiritual and moral stories;
- identify possible meanings for stories, symbols and other forms of religious expression;
- identify how religion and belief is expressed in different ways;
- respond sensitively and imaginatively to questions about their own and others' ideas, experiences and feelings;
- ask questions about their own and others' ideas, feelings and experiences;
- give a reason why something may be valued by themselves and others.

Through their learning in KS2, pupils should:

- Know the main features of the life of Jesus and explore the ways people responded to his words and actions both as his contemporaries and today and explore own ideas and experiences;
- Have an introduction to the Bible as a historical and spiritual document and have knowledge of which books are important to particular faith groups;
- Have some experience of the local Christian community; by experiencing the church's year, visiting of church buildings, exploring artefacts, symbols and festivals;
- Explore the practice of communal prayer/worship, including the use of drama, music and art;
- Express their own ideas in response to the material they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views;
- Make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression;
- Consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion;
- Be introduced to an extended range of sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings;
- Recognise diversity, learning about similarities & differences both within and between religions & beliefs, and the importance of dialogue between them;
- Extend the range and use of subject specific vocabulary;
- Recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true;
- Communicate their ideas, recognizing other people's viewpoints;
- Consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

**so that by the end of
KS2**

...by the end of lower KS2 (year 4), pupils should be able to:

- investigate and connect features of religions and beliefs;
- make links between beliefs, stories and practices;
- identify similarities and differences between religions and beliefs;
- describe and suggest meanings for symbols and other forms of religious expression;
- identify the impact of beliefs and practices on people's lives;
- identify what influences and inspires them, and why;
- compare their own ideas and feelings about what pupils think is important;
- make links between what they and other people think is important in life, giving reasons for beliefs, attitudes and actions;
- ask significant questions about religions and beliefs.

...by the end of upper KS2 (year 6), pupils should be able to:

- gather, select, and organise ideas about religion and belief;
- describe similarities and differences within and between religions and beliefs;
- comment on connections between questions, beliefs, values and practices;
- suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression, using appropriate vocabulary;
- describe the impact of beliefs and practices on individuals, groups and communities;
- describe how sources of inspiration and influence make a difference to themselves and others;
- apply ideas and reflections to issues raised by religion and belief in the context of their own and others' lives;
- suggest what might happen as a result of their own and others' attitudes and actions;
- suggest answers to some questions raised by the study of religions and beliefs.

What is Religious Education?

There are a variety of opinions about what R.E. is but for our purpose we can 'identify' two elements:-

1. RE is concerned with children's personal feelings, experiences and questions about life;-

personal identity

relationships with others

Learning From

questioning the purpose of life, death, awe, wonder

reflecting on the natural world

2. RE is concerned with a body of knowledge, most of which is beyond children's personal experiences. Much of this material would be concerned with the ways in which religious communities express their feelings and beliefs;-

How people of different cultures have responded to the Mysteries of life and death expressed in religion through:

writing

rituals

Learning About

beliefs

behaviour and moral codes

organisation within the faith community

religious experiences

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.

As a church Academy we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

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 assessment strategies are in place and in line with the agreed syllabus.
- Creating the RE development Plan and ensuring its regular review.
- Accountability for the RE standards within the Academy
- Meet with a member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible.

Role of the Teacher

Pupils should be introduced to religious concepts in a way which allows for progressive development so that at Key Stage 1 children will be introduced to certain religious terms relating to their personal experiences and those of their peers. By the end of Key Stage 2 children should be able to link concepts and classify them into groups e.g. places of worship or sacred books.

The teacher should be open to the ideas and opinions of their pupils and should be willing to encourage them to explore ways in which people express their religious feelings.

The teacher should:-

1. Ensure that the child is offered the opportunity to study R.E. for an appropriate time in order to achieve the aims/attainment targets.
2. Provide a rich environment in which the child can explore the place and significance of religion in human life.
3. Encourage children to ask questions.
4. Give access to books and relevant resources.
5. Encourage a mutual feeling of respect and equality for all.
6. Give the children the 'whole picture' allowing the child to decide for themselves what they feel is right.

Church Involvement

It is hoped that at some time during the year every child will work towards some form of Church/School liaison. This may be through direct involvement with a service, or celebration, or indirectly through display of art work / written work. There continues to be a close relationship with church and school.

The school is actively involved in the major events of the Christian calendar as shown below;

Harvest – Both EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are involved in the Harvest Festival, with the all children contributing or leading parts of the service.

Christmas – Year 5 and 6 lead the Christmas Service in Church with all year groups contributing work, prayers or readings. Also the school is responsible for leading the Christingle Service in Church which happens outside of school time.

Mothering Sunday – Children from across the school volunteer to contribute to or lead this service which happens outside of school time.

Easter – All key Stages come to Church to celebrate Easter with all children contributing to or leading parts of the service.

Leaver's Service - years 5 and 6 lead a formal service in Church at the end of term, with all Key Stages attending.

Visits to the local Church are made as opportunities arise/ are planned within the curriculum.

Worship

There is a separate policy for both collective Worship and Spirituality.

Other opportunities for celebrations are discussed in the worship policy.

Current Practices

Our School has adopted Long Term Planning from a variety of sources, including:

- Lichfield Diocese Board of Education,
- Guilford Diocese
- Telford and Wrekin SACRE.
- Entrust Scheme of work

The Academy holds themselves accountable for the development of six religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism.

At KS1 two of these religions are taught with Christianity = 80% and Hinduism/ Judaism = 20%.

At KS2 Christianity = 80%, Sikhism/Judaism/ Buddhism/ Islam 20%

Within the Academy, and through the units of the LTP, we show progression through the main aspects of Christianity, which include: The Bible, Jesus, God, Church, Christmas and Easter.

Assessment and Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious Education within our school. It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for Religious Education within the school, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress.

Evaluation includes a regular evaluation of the content of the Religious Education Curriculum to ensure that the Agreed Syllabus requirements are being fulfilled in the best possible way. Monitoring of teachers' planning is carried out to check that plans are actively put into action in the classroom. Pupils' progress and performance is evaluated. The effectiveness of any INSET for Religious Education provided from within the school, or by an external agency, is evaluated either by means of a written evaluation sheet completed by staff after a course, or by verbal feedback at a staff meeting.

Evaluation may take place by means of a number of methods including:

- Looking at children's work – using the agreed pro-forma for book trawls
- The analysis of teachers' planning as seen in Long and Short Term Plans
- Discussion among groups of staff or the whole staff
- Classroom observation
- External inspection and advice
- Discussion with the children

Formal assessment takes place every half term, with two assessment activities being planned into each unit. These assessment activities relate to both “Learning about” and “Learning from” religion, teachers will use the objectives given to identify whether a child is below, at or above expected. This is then monitored by the RE Coordinator. In addition RE assessment takes place informally through verbal and written feedback in each lesson. Classrooms have also got a floor book which contains quotes from the children that they have made throughout the term to keep record of their involvement and their own beliefs and values.

Special Educational Needs:-

Pupils with special needs have the same entitlement as all other pupils and the nature of religious education means that it should be accessible to all. Teaching and learning should be structured so that each learner has every opportunity to realise personal potential.

Equal Opportunities:

It is important that all pupils irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic or cultural origins have equal access to all parts of the curriculum.

APPENDIX

1. Long Term Planning

Appendix 1 –

RE Curriculum

Key concepts covered throughout the curriculum:

- Beliefs, teachings, sources of wisdom and authority (Founders, sacred writing and beliefs)
- Practices and ways of life (Special occasions – to include rituals, festivals and traditions)
- Expressing meaning (Worship and symbolism)
- Belonging to a community (Identity, diversity and belonging)
- Responding to the natural world (Questions of meaning, purpose and truth)
- Values and commitments (Thinking about God)

Religions Studied:

Key stage 1 -

Christianity and 1 other religion

Year 1 – Hinduism

Year 2 – Judaism

Key Stage 2 –

Christianity and 2 other religions

Year 3/ Year 4 – Sikhism and Judaism

Year 5 / Year 6 – Buddhism and Islam

YEAR A	<u>Autumn Term 1</u>	<u>Autumn Term 2</u>	<u>Spring Term 1</u>	<u>Spring Term 2</u>	<u>Summer Term 1</u>	<u>Summer Term 2</u>
Year 1/2 (A)	What is a Christian?	Why do people give presents at Christmas?	What do Hindus celebrate?	Is Easter happy / sad?	What is a church? Why do Christians go to church?	What is the Bible about?
Year 3/4 (A)	Why do Christians worship Jesus Christ?	What might Jesus think of Christmas today?	Pilgrimages and sacred places	What happened during Holy Week and what matters most to Christians?	How does the Bible reveal God's plan?	How can a synagogue help us to understand the Jewish faith?
Year 5/6 (A)	How is God Three – <u>and</u> One?	Why is light an important sign at Christmas?	How did Jesus' teaching challenge people? What would Jesus do?	How do we know what happened at Easter?	What will make our community more respectful?	Buddhist worship and beliefs

YEAR B	<u>Autumn Term 1</u>	<u>Autumn Term 2</u>	<u>Spring Term 1</u>	<u>Spring Term 2</u>	<u>Summer Term 1</u>	<u>Summer Term 2</u>
Year 1/2 (B)	Christian rites of passage	Why did Angels announce the birth of Jesus?	Why is the Bible an important book?	What is Easter really about?	Our Wonderful World	Why do Jewish families celebrate Shabbat?
Year 3/4 (B)	How have Christians changed the world?	How can artists help us to understand Christmas	Is Christian worship the same all around the world?	How does Lent help Christians prepare for Easter	How did the Church begin?	Sikh Rites of Passage
Year 5/6 (B)		What do the Gospels say about the birth of Jesus and why it is good news?	What can we learn from Christian Religious Buildings?	Adam, Eve, Christmas and Easter – what are the connections?	What does the Bible say about moving on?	What are the pillars of Islam?