

St Mary's Church of England Primary School



Learn. Achieve. Grow. Flourish.

Religious Education (RE) Policy

POLICY: Religious Education
APPROVED BY: Headteacher
APPROVED DATE: 24.02.2024
REVIEW DATE: February 2025
This policy is a non-statutory policy.

School Vision

As a Church of England school, we value and are ambitious for all children and are committed to providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment for them to enjoy and excel in their learning; grow in confidence, resilience and independence; achieve their full potential and flourish as individuals.

'I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths' (Proverbs 4:11)

BACKGROUND TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) AT OUR SCHOOL

RE alongside the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that: “Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which: Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and: Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.” And: “All state schools... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.” (DfE National Curriculum Framework).

As RE is not nationally determined, St Mary’s Church of England primary school follows a locally agreed syllabus of RE prepared by a local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and adopted by the Local Authority. It is this Oxford Diocese Discovery RE Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2017, which we use for the delivery of RE.

It is a requirement on schools and governing bodies to ensure that all learners gain their statutory entitlement to RE throughout all years of compulsory education. This has been part of statute since 1944, it was reinforced in the 1988 Education Reform Act, and it remains so today.

PURPOSE OF STUDY AND AIMS

We believe at St Mary’s that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. It supports the school values and vision and links with the fundamental British values. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum.

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Purpose of Study:

At this school we aim to achieve high quality RE for all pupils. RE teaching provides pupils with a systematic knowledge and understanding about Christianity, principal religions and worldviews which give life value.

RE aims to enable pupils to become religiously and theologically literate so they can engage in life in an increasingly diverse society. It does not involve advising pupils about what religious views they should have but rather to assist them to gain shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints.

Aims of the RE Curriculum

RE teaching and learning should allow children to:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.
- Describe and make connections between different features of religions, discovering more about celebrations worship, pilgrimages, rituals which mark important parts in life to reflect on their significance.

- Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.
- Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols, and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and expressing meaning. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance, and impact of religious worldviews.
- Observe and understand varied examples of religious worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.
- Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.
- Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.
- Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms, including (eg) reasoning, music, art and poetry.
- Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the wellbeing of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.
- Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.

CONTENT AND APPROACH

From Reception classes to Year 6 pupils must:

- follow a coherent and systematic study of the principal religion of Christianity across each key stage and
- be introduced to the other five principal religions represented in Great Britain by the end of key stage 2

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School, we follow the *Discovery RE*[®] approach to Religious Education. This is an enquiry-based learning approach from Foundation Stage to Year 6. Through Discovery RE and during their time at Primary School, children investigate 59 enquiry modules covering Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. These enquiry-based learning sessions support the teacher to deliver engaging and challenging RE lessons which are taught half termly during special RE weeks. (*See appendix 1*).

Christianity is taught in every year group and develops children's learning, building on their knowledge and skills in a progressive way.

Time Allocation for RE

The current governmental requirement for number of hours of RE is as follows:

- 4-5 years – 50 minutes per week or run as a block, to equate to 36 hours per year.
- 5-7 years – 1 hour per week or taught as a block, to equate to 45 hours per year.
- 7-11 years – 1 hour per week or taught as blocks, to equate to 45 hours per year.

WITHDRAWAL

At St Mary's it is our practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of the RE curriculum before honouring the right of withdrawal from RE. Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from RE. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child is expected to consult the headteacher.

At St Mary's, teachers will either block RE units or teach as weekly slots. RE is further enriched via RE Discovery days, including exploring festivals for times of the year (such as Easter and Diwali), celebrating special people as well as exploring Sacred Texts.

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. Through a range of strategies, such as: enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and visitors of faith and belief, pupils are actively engaged in learning.

Teaching the programmes of study contributes to developing religious and theological literacy through religions and worldviews. Key Themes for Teaching RE at Orchard Primary (linked to the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus). We explore 3 key ideas when teaching RE at St Mary's. These are:

- Believing (exploring belief, teachings, sources, questions about meaning and purpose and truth).
- Expressing (religious and spiritual forms of expression, questions about identity and diversity).
- Living (Religious practices and ways of living, questions about values and commitments).

RE in EYFS

Children in EYFS should encounter religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories. Children can be introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices, and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The Discovery RE Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as a requirement outlined in the syllabus. Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing. Through activities for example, discussion with pupils, group activities, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against expected learning outcomes for RE.

At St Mary's we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

PLANNING

In order to ensure that our aims are met, and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the school follows the Discovery RE Scheme of Work and the planning ideas linked to it. Our schemes of work ensure that pupils have encountered and explored the religions through the EYFS and Key Stage/s 1 and 2. We have used a combination of teaching RE through the creative curriculum, RE days and as a separate subject, depending on the material which must be covered. The RE Subject Leader is available to help with planning.


LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The RE subject leader manages this area of the curriculum and is line managed by the curriculum senior leader. This policy is reviewed by the subject leader each year to ensure it still represents the values, vision and practice of the school.

Ratified by the Headteacher: Mrs Pamela O'Brien




February 2024



Overview Years F1/2 to Year 6

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
F1/2	Theme: Special People Key Question: What makes people special? Religions: Christianity, Judaism	Theme: Christmas Concept: Incarnation Key Question: What is Christmas? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Celebrations Key Question: How do people celebrate? Religions: Hinduism	Theme: Easter Concept: Salvation Key Question: What is Easter? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Stories Key Question: What can we learn from stories? Religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism	Theme: Special Places Key Question: What makes places special? Religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism
1	Theme: Creation Story Concept: God/Creation Key Question: Does God want Christians to look after the world? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Christmas Concept: Incarnation Key Question: What gifts might Christians in my town have given Jesus if he had been born here rather than in Bethlehem? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Jesus as a friend Concept: Incarnation Key Question: Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Easter - Palm Sunday Concept: Salvation Key Question: Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity by the crowds on Palm Sunday? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Shabbat Key Question: Is Shabbat important to Jewish children? Religion: Judaism	Theme: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Key Question: Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children? Religion: Judaism
There is an additional optional Judaism enquiry at the end of the Year 1 section: Does celebrating Chanukah make Jewish children feel closer to God?						
2	Theme: What did Jesus teach? Key Question: Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Christmas - Jesus as gift from God Concept: Incarnation Key Question: Why do Christians believe God gave Jesus to the world? Religion: Christianity	Theme: Passover Key Question: How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? Religion: Judaism Theme: Prayer at home Key Question: Does praying at regular intervals help a Muslim in his/her everyday life? Religion: Islam	Theme: Easter - Resurrection Concept: Salvation Key Question: How important is it to Christians that Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion? Religion: Christianity	Theme: The Covenant Key Question: How special is the relationship Jews have with God? Religion: Judaism Theme: Community and Belonging Key Question: Does going to a Mosque give Muslims a sense of belonging? Religion: Islam	Theme: Rites of Passage and good works Key Question: What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? Religion: Judaism Theme: Hajj Key Question: Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim? Religion: Islam





Overview Years F1/2 to Year 6

3	<p>Theme: Diwali</p> <p>Key Question: Would celebrating Diwali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>	<p>Theme: Christmas</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: Has Christmas lost its true meaning?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Jesus' Miracles</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: Could Jesus heal people? Were these miracles or is there some other explanation?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Easter - Forgiveness</p> <p>Concept: Salvation</p> <p>Key Question: What is 'good' about Good Friday?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>*Theme: Hindu Beliefs</p> <p>Key Question: How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>	<p>*Theme: Pilgrimage to the River Ganges</p> <p>Key Question: Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>
	<p>*Theme: The Amrit Ceremony and the Khalsa</p> <p>Key Question: Does joining the Khalsa make a person a better Sikh?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>				<p>*Theme: Sharing and Community</p> <p>Key Question: Do Sikhs think it is important to share?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>	<p>*Theme: Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>

© Jan Lever 2017

2

4	<p>Theme: Beliefs and Practices</p> <p>Key Question: How special is the relationship Jews have with God?</p> <p>Religion: Judaism</p>	<p>Theme: Christmas</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: What is the most significant part of the nativity story for Christians today?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Passover</p> <p>Key Question: How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?</p> <p>Religion: Judaism</p>	<p>Theme: Easter</p> <p>Concept: Salvation</p> <p>Key Question: Is forgiveness always possible for Christians?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Rites of Passage and good works</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Judaism</p>	<p>Theme: Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Key Question: Do people need to go to church to show they are Christians?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>
	<p>Theme: Buddha's teachings</p> <p>Key Question: Is it possible for everyone to be happy?</p> <p>Religion: Buddhism</p>		<p>Theme: The 8-fold path</p> <p>Key Question: Can the Buddha's teachings make the world a better place?</p> <p>Religion: Buddhism</p>		<p>Theme: The 8-fold path</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Buddhist to lead a good life?</p> <p>Religion: Buddhism</p>	

There is an additional optional Christianity enquiry at the end of the Year 4 section: Why are there four Gospels and how are they relevant to Christians today?



Overview Years F1/2 to Year 6

5	<p>*Theme: Belief in action</p> <p>Key Question: How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>	<p>Theme: Christmas</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: Is the Christmas story true?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>*Theme: Beliefs and moral values</p> <p>Key Question: Are Sikh stories important today?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>	<p>Theme: Easter</p> <p>Concept: Salvation</p> <p>Key Question: How significant is it for Christians to believe God intended Jesus to die?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>*Theme: Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Sikhism</p>	<p>Theme: Beliefs and Practices</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Christian to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>
	<p>*Theme: Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>		<p>*Theme: Hindu Beliefs</p> <p>Key Question: How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>		<p>*Theme: Beliefs and moral values</p> <p>Key Question: Do beliefs in Karma, Samsara and Moksha help Hindus lead good lives?</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism</p>	

There is an additional optional Christianity enquiry at the end of the Year 5 section: Does belief in the Trinity help Christians make better sense of God as a whole?

6	<p>Theme: Beliefs and Practices</p> <p>Key Question: What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?</p> <p>Religion: Islam</p>	<p>Theme: Christmas</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: How significant is it that Mary was Jesus' mother?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Beliefs and Meaning</p> <p>Concept: Salvation</p> <p>Key Question: Is anything ever eternal?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Easter</p> <p>Concept: Gospel</p> <p>Key Question: Is Christianity still a strong religion 2000 years after Jesus was on Earth?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>	<p>Theme: Beliefs and moral values</p> <p>Key Question: Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives?</p> <p>Religion: Islam</p> <p><i>NB: This enquiry is taught in 2 sections over the term</i></p>
		<p>Theme: Christmas</p> <p>Concept: Incarnation</p> <p>Key Question: Do Christmas celebrations and traditions help Christians understand who Jesus was and why he was born?</p> <p>Religion: Christianity</p>			

There is an additional optional Christianity enquiry at the end of the Year 6 section: How did Jesus create a 'New Covenant' and what does that mean to Christians today?

