

School Policy Document



St Barnabas
CofE Primary School



Green Lane
Pre-School

Title: Religious Education Policy

Purpose: Supporting teaching and learning of Religious Education

Lead Role Responsibility:

RE Subject Leaders – Jennifer Oakley (KS1) and Pauline Spencer (KS2)

Governing Body Team or Head Teacher Responsibility: Curriculum Team

Reference and Source Documents:

[Church of England's Vision for Education](#) (2016)

[Valuing all God's Children](#) (2019)

[SIAMS Evaluation Schedule](#) for schools (2018)

RE support materials, Diocese of Worcester

Approved by Leadership: 11.10.21

Approved by Governing Body: 18.10.21

Reviewing Cycle: Every 2 years

Next Review Due: Autumn Term 2023

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1. Religious Education and the school's Christian Vision:

Inspire, Nurture and Achieve

We believe, as Jesus did, that in our happy, purposeful and welcoming **Christian school** and pre-school **all people** are **valued, encouraged** and **cared for**:

- **Inspire** the school community to think and feel positively about themselves and others.
- **Nurture** each child and adult so that they grow with others in a secure and happy environment; where they enjoy a wealth of opportunity and experience a love of learning.
- A place where **achievements** are celebrated and expectations are high for all.

This is underpinned through the understanding that in Jesus, **all** are welcome and unique and have a God given purpose and place in the world. Jesus inspires us that **all** people can flourish.

Matthew 19 v14

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

We aim to:

Inspire a positive approach to life and learning;

*Value and nurture each child as an individual: developing **resilience, independence,** and an **understanding** of what they bring to the world;*

*Create a rich, stimulating environment where **achievements** are celebrated and **team work** and **co-operation** are expected;*

*Promote **high expectations** and **self-confidence** for each individual;*

*Ensure each child strives towards **excellence** supporting those who find learning difficult and challenging the most able children;*

*Develop and foster **motivation** for learning and **enthusiasm** for life;*

*Promote a sense of **belonging** and build outstanding **relationships** between school, home, church and the wider community.*

*Help every person understand their **unique purpose** and **place in God's world.***

2. Introduction

This policy has been written in the light of the [Church of England's Vision for Education](#) (Autumn 2016), [Valuing all God's Children](#) (Summer 2019) and through reflection on the 2018 [SIAMS Evaluation Schedule](#) for schools.

The Church of England's Vision for Education acknowledges the breadth, depth and richness of an education designed to enable all children to flourish in their potential as unique individuals made in the image of God.

3. Legal Position of Religious Education in School

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core or foundation subject. The 1988 Education Act states 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils'.

St. Barnabas C.E Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and therefore follows the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020 – 2025.

4. The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Church of England's [Statement of Entitlement](#) (February 2019) outlines the aims and expectations for RE in Church of England schools and guides this school's approach to RE.

It begins by stating: 'Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together'. 'Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person'. *Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*

Religious Education is a statutory part of the curriculum and must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools. The requirement for the Foundation Stage is that their programme should include opportunities for spiritual development in order for them to reach their Early Learning Goals. This will prepare pupils for the subject when they reach Key Stage 1.

Religious Education, unlike subjects in the National Curriculum, is determined at a local level.

The Agreed Syllabus, setting out what pupils must be taught, is created by the Agreed Syllabus Conference and is administered by the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

At St. Barnabas CE Primary School, Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum. Religious Education develops learners' knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity, other principal world religions, other religious traditions and

world views. By exploring issues within and across faiths, pupils learn to understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stances), and their influence on individuals, societies, communities and cultures.

Through Religious Education we also encourage children and young people to consider challenging questions of 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.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a global society, as well as developing respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

5. Aims and objectives of Religious Education

The principal aim of Religious Education is to **explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live**, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

R.E. at St. Barnabas supports and strengthens the vision, ethos and values which are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the R.E. curriculum.

The aims of Religious Education:

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim. Our curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- Identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary.
- Explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities.
- Recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation.

Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- Examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways.
- Recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their every day lives, within their communities and in the wider world.

- Appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- Evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses.
- Challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response.
- Discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding.

6. Religious Education Intent

At St. Barnabas, our intention is that our Religious Education curriculum contributes dynamically to children's education in school by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

In RE they learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully. Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities.

It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society, with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

7. Curriculum Development and Organisation

The Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus 2020 sets the programmes of study and standards expected for learners work in Religious Education in Worcestershire. The agreed syllabus requires that all pupils develop understanding of Christianity in each key stage. In addition, pupils will develop an understanding of some of the principle religions represented in the U.K., in line with the law. Non-religious world views will also be the focus of study in thematic units.



Time Allocation

In accordance with the structure of Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus we have agreed that, as a minimum:

- in the Foundation Stage pupils will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. They will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism or Islam - RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and also consider non-religious worldviews - RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.

8. School Approach to Religious Education

In-line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE. Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the *Statement of Entitlement*, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- a challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework
- an assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts
- a curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide
- a pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place
- the opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.

RE that makes a positive contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development.

Making sense of beliefs: Children are identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions;

recognising how and why sources of authority, such as texts, are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, and developing skills of interpretation.

Understanding the impact: Children examine 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: Pupils evaluate, reflect on and connect the texts and concepts studied; allowing pupils to challenge the ideas studied, and the ideas studied to challenge pupils' thinking; discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

The three core elements are woven together to provide breadth and balance and underpin the aims of the teaching and learning of RE.

At St. Barnabas, we continually strive to find engaging opportunities to develop and deliver excellence in RE by deepening pupils' knowledge about religions and developing their *religious literacy*.

9. Responsibilities for RE in School

The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the legal framework for RE is carried out and that the teaching of RE fits within the school's distinctively Christian vision. At St. Barnabas C.E Primary School some of the responsibilities for RE may be delegated to other members of staff.

The **Subject Leader** is responsible for:

- ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for RE and share good practice
- attending RE clusters / hub meetings
- providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and being able to discuss impact and standards, all in conjunction with the Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team
- contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, including, but not limited to Strand 7.

The **Headteacher and Governors** must ensure:

- RE has a high profile within the curriculum
- that the legal framework for RE is upheld within the school
- that all pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes 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 effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly-appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- that 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 make good progress
- appropriate support is in place to ensure the effective provision of RE.

10. Assessment, Recording & Reporting

The Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020-2025 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 outlined in the syllabus.

As a school we track progress in RE through termly assessments; these are recorded on our on-line assessment system, I-Track. The learning outcomes for each unit are expressed in relation to the three elements of the teaching and learning approach (making sense of beliefs, understanding the impact, making connections).

Whilst the end of key stage outcomes are general, the unit learning outcomes are specifically related to the content (knowledge and skills) required to address the key question.

The spiral nature of the curriculum means that pupils will encounter some of the same concepts in different questions at different key stages. Exploring the same concepts again, from a different perspective and using different materials, is essential to support pupils' ability to connect ideas and develop a coherent understanding of religion and belief, consolidating and embedding learning. The learning outcomes in the WAS support teachers in assessing whether pupils are on track to meet end of phase and end of key expectations.

Assessment requires teachers to know what individual pupils know and can do. The learning outcomes on each key question outline will help teachers to assess this, and to devise appropriate learning activities to enable pupils to secure their understanding and skills.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to assessment records as well as pupils' individual work. Good RE reporting is individual, positive, criterion-referenced, accurate and diagnostic.

10. The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

At St. Barnabas C.E Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from R.E. 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 and citizenship.

Where parents make a request to withdraw their child(ren) from the teaching of RE, the school will, as a matter of courtesy, ensure that the parents are aware of the following:

- the learning objectives covered in RE so that parents can make an informed decision
- what supervision arrangements will be in place for child(ren).

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of RE at our school.

We see the relationship with parents as very important in supporting their child's learning. We involve the parents in their child's learning by:

- Providing regular parent's evenings which give them verbal and written information on their child's progress and their targets for the future.
- Providing half termly curriculum letters informing the parents on the areas of the curriculum that are being taught.
- Providing an end of year report which outlines progress and attainment.

12. Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the governing body every two years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- a change in Agreed Syllabus
- a change in legal position framework for RE

Approval / review by Governing Body:**Headteacher signed:****Date: 11.10.21****Chair of Governors signed:****Date: 18.10.21****Date of next review: October 2023**