



St Nicholas Church of England
Primary School
Child Okeford

Friendship · Respect · Curiosity · Community

Exploring possibilities together

Love one another, as I have loved you

(John 13:34)

Religious Education Policy

Policy adopted:	December 2022
Approval Level:	Governors
Last Review:	December 2022
Policy review period:	2 years
Next Review:	December 2024

Curriculum Statement

At St Nicholas CE Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths and world views, and we address some of the fundamental questions in life.

Children reflect on what it means to have a faith or world view and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions and world views (exploring and responding to human experience) as well as about religions and world views (developing knowledge and understanding). Good teaching in RE allows children to learn about different religions and world views and also to reflect on what these ideas and concepts mean to them. This encourages children to think about and reflect on their own views and values in relation to the themes studied in the RE curriculum.

We experience religious traditions in the Christian and other world faiths including; Easter, Christmas, Harvest and Diwali. We organise visits to local churches and invite visitors into school. In order to make RE a vibrant, 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.

Curriculum Intent

At St Nicholas school, we intend to provide high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is challenging, rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum.

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, religious education in this school aims:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Objectives

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, the following objectives are age appropriate at the end of our pupils' education in school. The expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Curriculum Implementation

RE has a high profile within our school curriculum and is comparable with other core curriculum areas. Quality teaching in RE helps generate respect for different views and interpretations where real dialogue takes place. Learners develop and use a wide range of higher level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and world views as lived by believers. Key cross-curricular skills such as reading, writing, observation, and discussion are practised.

Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy.

Using the Dorset Agreed Syllabus, we learn about other religions and world views, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian values and vision, and support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

RE offers a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences, understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Listening to the teacher and each other.
- Asking and discussing 'big' questions
- Reading of texts.
- Seeking information for themselves in books and on computers.
- Taking part in discussion with the teacher and other pupils.
- Pair and group work.
- Using a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Visitors.
- Artwork.
- Outdoor learning.
- Time for reflection.

Differentiation and Special Educational Needs

Policy and practice in religious education reflects whole school policy and encompasses the full range and ability of all pupils. All pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs. A range of teaching and learning strategies to achieve differentiated learning are used including task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping. There is particular concern to ensure that all tasks are challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils whilst extending the most able.

Breadth and balance

Although work on Christianity will predominate, there will be in-depth work on the major world religions and on other world views as appropriate. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes, and develop respect for diversity.

Equal Opportunities

Religious education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. It seeks to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.

Relevance

Teachers will establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching will enable pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives. This will be done through engaging pupils in an enquiry based style of learning and by posing challenging questions to and by pupils.

Cross-curricular links

Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, drama and history, geography, computing and music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education. (Statement of Entitlement June 2016 The Church of England Education Office)
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date
- Ensure all teachers are aware of what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Support colleagues and help develop their subject expertise.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy, schemes of work, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of RE, pupils' progress and standards.
- Liaise periodically with the HT and Governors.
- Seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff.
- Order resources.
- Monitor end of term assessments.
- Observe the teaching of RE in school, providing support and guidance for teachers.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Resources

Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; online resources and artefacts. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff.

Legal Requirements

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their children from religious education. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the headteacher before making this decision.

Curriculum Impact

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Rigorous assessment based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts shows that attainment is high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a range of other world religions and on other world views as appropriate.

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well-defined criteria for assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupils' knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.