

St. Andrew's Church of England (VA) Primary School Religious Education (RE) Policy

***I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
John 10.10***

Introduction

Religious Education (RE) has always played a central role in the life of our school, not only because of its status as a Church of England Voluntary Aided School but also by its original founding in October 1861 following a meeting of the congregation of St Andrew's Church.

How we ensure that this ethos continues to be reflected in our school into the 21st century is summarised below.

Aims and Objectives

RE enables our children to develop their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. By helping them understand what being a Christian means they are enabled to put this into practice within the daily life of our school community through prayer and their relationships with those around them.

We enable our children to develop a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage. We enable our pupils to know and understand about other world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights. We encourage all our children to share their own worldviews and choices. Our children are encouraged to reflect on what it means to have a faith, to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We also help them to learn from other religions as well as learning about them.

Our approach to the RE curriculum and its delivery provides an effective means of addressing issues pertinent to cultural diversity and exploring the implications for individual and collective values and norms of behaviour.

Parental Rights and the Legal Position of RE

Our RE curriculum is at the core of our school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. As such, it promotes education for citizenship and reflects our Christian Values.

Legal Requirements

St Andrew's is a Church of England Primary, therefore Religious Education must be taught in accordance with the Trust Deed and should reflect the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The governing board is responsible for the subject in the school. This is delegated to the Headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader on a daily basis.

Following the Diocese of Bristol advice about Religious Education, and the Statement of Entitlement 2016, teaching about the Christian faith will take up 60% of RE curriculum time and will use materials that will encourage theological literacy such as "Understanding Christianity". For the teaching and learning about other World Faiths the school will follow the locally agreed syllabus.

Religious Education will be allocated not less than 5% of the timetable.

As a Church of England school serving a diverse city centre community, we are aware of the importance of recognising and respecting the alternative beliefs of people. We aim to equip our children with the skills to speak wisely about religion. We want our children to have understanding and empathy of all cultural backgrounds and religions in order to thrive as respectful 21st century citizens. We do acknowledge that parents have the legal right to withdraw their child(ren) from RE classes if they so wish following a meeting with the Headteacher. In this event appropriate arrangements are made for withdrawn children to be adequately supervised during RE lessons. We would discourage a family from withdrawing their child(ren) solely on the grounds that they are not practising Christians, because in RE we do not seek to indoctrinate children. Rather, we teach our children about religions and worldviews so that they can make informed choices about their own beliefs and we discuss different beliefs and teach tolerance and respect of them.

Teaching and Learning Style

We base our RE teaching and learning style on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our approach to teaching enables our children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage our children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable our children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We draw upon their personal experiences at religious festivals such as, Easter, Diwali, Passover in enhancing their religious thinking. We have strong links with other places of worship in the city as well as representatives of local religious groups. We draw upon resources and visitors from The Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity. We engage in visits to the Piety Centre and the Jewish Synagogue, as well as The Minster Church of St Andrew's as part of learning about Christianity.

Our children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage, and festivals. They discuss religious and moral issues, working in groups and individually and by making use of our computing facilities. They may also prepare their own presentations which they share with the rest of the school during Collective Worship or whole school celebrations e.g. Y5 contribution to Harvest Festival.

We recognise that all classes in our school comprise children of diverse abilities and take care to provide suitable learning opportunities for them all by matching the challenge of tasks to the ability of the individual child. This we achieve in a variety of ways including, for example:

- setting common tasks that are open-ended and, as such, can have a range of appropriate responses;
- identifying tasks of increasing difficulty, recognising that we do not expect all children to complete all tasks;
- if appropriate, grouping children by ability and establishing tasks that provide support and challenge each ability group;

- providing resources of varying complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.

Curriculum Planning in RE

Part of our RE curriculum is delivered using *Understanding Christianity* plans recommended by the Diocese of Exeter. These plans are delivered alongside and in conjunction with the *RE Agreed Syllabus for Devon, Torbay and Plymouth Schools* and these ensure that the topics of study consolidate and build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each study unit and ensure that the planned progression built in offers challenge and learning opportunities as they progress through their school careers.

Class teachers draw upon the RE Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity resources to plan stimulating and relevant lessons. These are reviewed informally in staff meetings and are discussed with the RE Subject Leader and colleagues. An annual overview of topics to be covered is provided for staff to ensure thorough coverage of the Christianity themes and other World Religions and World Views.

We also plan in creative RE days and additional lessons throughout the year, for example to allow children to plan the Harvest Service, respond to the Christmas bible story with a piece of artwork to be printed on cards for families to purchase as well as whole school 'Spirituality Days' to allow children the time and space to reflect on their own spiritual journeys and produce wonderful displays to share their ideas. In recent years, we have entered the 'Spirited Art and Poetry' national competition, providing a platform for children to make a creative response to Big Questions in RE. One of our most creative projects was an innovative RE trail with parents joining children on a journey around the school to explore religious and worldviews. Another example is our 'Nobody Stands Nowhere' day exploring beliefs and worldviews. These varied and creative experiences help to enrich children's understanding of RE, arouse curiosity and support the development of children's sense of identity.

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage Religious Education will be delivered through the RE Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. Children will learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, communities and traditions as set out in the Early Learning Goals. Children also celebrate and learn about religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. They will begin to understand our school's Christian Values and put these into practise.

Role of the RE Subject Leader

The RE Leader's role includes:

- taking the lead in policy development and ensuring progression and continuity in RE throughout the school;

- supporting colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the RE Agreed Syllabus, Understanding Christianity and assessment and record keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in RE and advising colleagues;
- taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for RE;
- keeping up-to-date with developments in RE education through attendance at local HUB meetings and LTLRE conferences and disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate;
- working with our Vicar and Board of Governors regarding planning and RE teaching throughout the school.

Contribution of RE to the Teaching of Other Subjects

English

RE contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in English have religious themes or content, which encourage discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write thank you letters following visits and record information in order to develop their writing ability. Some teachers now plan outcomes which provide opportunities for children to write extended pieces in response to RE objectives, incorporating class English targets.

Computing

We use computing where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the Internet. When appropriate, they also use computing to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve presentation.

Values and Citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about our Christian Values and the moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Teaching RE to Children with Special Educational Needs

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our curriculum policy, which commits us to providing a broad and balanced education for all our children. We place emphasis on ensuring that learning opportunities are provided

that match the needs of children with special needs. This is a key component of our approach to determining targets for individual children in their Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).

Pupils with special needs are supported by work that is differentiated either by task or by outcome. Pupils with particular ability and flair for RE who work more quickly are extended in many ways, including; being group leaders, recording group work, undertaking more extensive research work.

Excellence in RE is celebrated in display and performance including; contributing to church services, displays, collective worship and community celebrations of religious festivals.

Assessment and Recording

Each class has their own RE portfolio. These contain post-its of children's comments, photographs and contributions towards whole school events e.g. our Easter Service. These may evidence discussion based lessons with no pupil written outcomes. There is also a whole school RE portfolio to celebrate special displays, projects, collaborations with other C of E Schools e.g. the Big Crib Project as well as whole school festivals / services such as St. Andrew's Day and Harvest.

We assess our children's work in RE by making informal formative assessments as we observe them during lessons. This is used to guide the progress of individual pupils and involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what should be expected in the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Illustrative assessment tasks include:

- small group discussions perhaps in the context of a practical task;
- specific assignments for individual pupils;
- individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress.

Summative assessment involves the marking of work once it has been completed and feedback comments are provided to each pupil after completion of key pieces of work. Upon completion of a unit of work, we aim to make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil, which is then used as a basis for assessing the progress of each child and determining new goals. This information is then recorded on the whole school assessment sheets on Google Drive and judgements are shared and reported to parents at the end of each year. In addition, each class uses the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay schools RE assessment template at least twice a year in order to assess each child at the end of a lesson/unit.

Reporting to Parents

This is done through consultations at Parents' Evenings when relevant and annually through a written report. Reporting in RE focuses on each child's contribution towards discussion, their ability to reflect, spirituality and knowledge and understanding of the topics covered.

Resources particular to RE

The Minster Church of St. Andrew is a vital resource in the teaching of RE. We regularly worship there, learn about the life of the congregation and study the building and its artefacts.

Other RE specific resources include:

- RE Agreed Syllabus plans and resources with specific related links
- Understanding Christianity plans and resources with specific related links
- Class set of Bibles to support the teaching of 'Bible and Verse' Y1-Y6 (sourced through the registered charity biblesforchildren.org.uk and The Jerusalem Trust)
- books, including a variety of Bibles and Bible story books; many freely donated by The Christian Resources Project in Plymouth
- National Society website
- artefacts relating to, for example, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism;
- resources and visitors from The Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity
- Art, Craft, Drama and English resources used to explore and record RE work.
- RE online
- NATRE membership and website
- audio/video and IT materials, both commercially available and those we have produced 'in house'.

This policy was updated in November 2021 and in keeping with our commitment to continuous improvement, this policy will next be reviewed in the autumn term of 2022.

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Headteacher:

Date:

Devon, Plymouth and Torbay schools

RE assessment template

This document is designed to support the summative assessment of RE in line with the Devon, Torbay and Plymouth Agreed Syllabi. This is not intended to be used as a planning tool; it is a flexible resource to be edited and customized for individual teachers in their own classroom contexts, responding to the material and content that they have taught.

This template should be used in addition to other forms of formative assessment.

Key Stage (adapt according to the year group)	Unit Title:	
	Core concept:	
	Learning Outcome:	
	Assessment Question:	
Suggested assessment tasks		
	Assessment outcomes	
This question assesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembering • Understanding • Applying • Analysing • Evaluating • Creating (Choose as appropriate)*	Secure/Expected	
Pupils		
Developing/Emerging	Excelling	
Pupils		
	Pupils with additional needs have made the following responses	

*For more guidance on how to assess different cognitive processes please refer to Assessment Without Levels using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy <http://tlre.org/projects/assessment-without-levels-in-re/>

If you would like to contribute any examples of assessment overviews, please email them to Ed Pawson on efpawson@gmail.com

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