



**St. Michael's C of E Primary School**



## **Religious Education Policy**

<b>Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2022</b>
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2024</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Lindsey Vollans</b>

**Vision:**

**We aim to nurture the value and worth of each individual's distinctive character, gifts and abilities as God given gifts in all of us by providing a high standard of education and opportunities for growth mentally, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually for life in all its fullness.**

**Genesis 1:26**

In accordance with the legal requirements R.E. is provided at St. Michael's as part of each child's entitlement to a broad and balanced education contributing to their spiritual, social, cultural and moral development. We are an Aided Primary School with a Christian foundation and, as such, Christianity forms the basis of all the teaching in the school and how we treat each other. All RE taught at St. Michael's C of E Primary School will be in accordance with the Trust Deed which established this Aided School and states that RE "shall always be conducted upon the principles of the Established Church".

R.E. is taught in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England. The school follows the requirements of the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle R.E. Syllabus for Church Aided Schools and the core concepts of Christian Belief in 'Understanding Christianity' which has been adopted by the Governing Body. The syllabus reflects the National Framework for RE, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. R.E. has a central place in the basic curriculum and it is taught as one of the core subjects contributing to the ethos of the school.

The management of Religious Education is a distinctive role of the governors and Headteacher. It is in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in school.

**Intent****Aims**

RE at St. Michael's explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the major religions of the world. It enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others.

The aims of R.E. from the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle R.E. Syllabus:

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shape British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents.
- To develop understanding of a religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

At this school, RE 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. Religious Education and a 'Christian Ethos' is embedded throughout the school curriculum and everyday life at St Michael's with the focus upon six main Christian values: koinonia, hope, wisdom, endurance, justice, creation and service. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum. Specifically, RE aims to enable pupils of all abilities and stages of development to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world

- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

It is also appropriate that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of these faiths.

Therefore, RE in Church Schools should also help pupils to:

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

## Implementation

### Our Curriculum:

Our RE curriculum design is based on principles derived from evidence through cognitive science:

- Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.
- Retrieval of previously learnt content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

In addition to the principles, we also understand that learning is invisible in the short term and that sustained mastery takes time.

Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema. With the support of schemas, we aim to develop both procedural and semantic long-term memory

Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines and starters to lessons, provides retrieval practice for previously learnt content.

### Teaching and learning style

We recognise that all children in our school have differing learning styles so RE is taught in an engaging and exciting manner meeting the needs of all children. We follow the New Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle R.E. Syllabus (released October 2018) in accordance with the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts. However, the syllabus is adapted to meet the requirements of our school. The scheme provides a continuous and progressive outline for the development of Religious Education across the school making use of the 'Understanding Christianity' scheme of learning.

Teaching of RE is weekly. Visits to local places of worship of different faiths are encouraged so that the children can develop greater understanding of other faiths and cultures. Speakers are also welcomed into our school as a further source of information as appropriate to the development of the RE curriculum.

Religious Education develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. 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. RE encourages pupils to consider questions of meaning and purpose in life. Pupils learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious, moral and social issues. Pupils develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society. Through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy,

RE develops pupils' skills of enquiry and response. RE encourages pupils to reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses. In addition, as a Church School it is important that the teaching of Religious Education is part of a demonstration of the Christian values which are central to the life of St. Michael's C of E Primary School.

RE is not the same as collective worship, which has its own place within school life.

In planning to meet the needs of each individual we will:

- Motivate and stimulate interest and excitement for learning
- Ensure children are given opportunities to develop the knowledge and key skills
- Ensure that we use a range of classroom practice and teaching style appropriate to the needs of the learners in the group.
- Use the full range of differentiation strategies to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to access the curriculum and make progress and adopt teaching methods that reflect the differing learning styles of the individuals in the group.
- Make full use of ICT in the provision of learning opportunities for all learners with additional educational needs, setting appropriate yet challenging targets for improvement.
- Monitor progress against targets and share the information with the learner.
- Seek to overcome potential barriers to effective inclusion.
- Ensure display in the learning environment celebrates the achievement of our children and scaffolds their learning to extend their achievement further.

In Early Years Foundation Stage, the children develop their understanding of the world, through practical activities, by learning about religion by doing, talking, listening, acting out and experiencing through their senses. All children are encouraged to make sense of their world by being given opportunities to explore and observe three of the core concepts of 'The Big Story' – creation, salvation and incarnation.

In Key Stage One, the children continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions whilst identifying features of religion and becoming more familiar with religions influence on their own community. They are beginning to identify features of religion and how these may influence themselves and others through five of the core concepts of 'The Big Story' – creation, incarnation, salvation, God and gospel.

In Key Stage Two, the children aim to extend their knowledge and understanding of religions locally and worldwide. All children are encouraged to use specific vocabulary when exploring their curiosity and must create increasingly challenging higher-order questions about religious beliefs, values and human life. They make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour, as well as making links between religions and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They are given the opportunity to express their own ideas and opinions in the response to the religious materials they come across. The ability to 'dig deep' and give reasons for their beliefs and opinions is vital at this stage of learning to ensure all children are challenged through six of the core concepts of 'The Big Story' – creation, incarnation, salvation, God of Kingdom, People of God and gospel.

### **Allocation of Time**

Throughout the school year we aim to seek a balance between all subject areas. As a Church Aided School at least 80% of R.E. teaching time is to be devoted to Christianity. The Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus suggests studying two world faiths and other aspects of other faiths will be brought into the teaching of R.E. The allocation of time for R.E. is a minimum of 70 minutes per week (or equivalent over school year). This is recommended by the Board of Education and excludes collective worship. This works out as 5% of curriculum time and is in line with the General Synod Board of Education for County Schools.

### **RE and inclusion**

We live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society and encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We intend to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another so that all may be included, regardless of race & culture. We believe that all children irrespective of race, ability and gender should have equal access to the RE curriculum. Children with special educational needs will work on the same content but there will be differentiation in accordance with the Inclusion policy.

## **Study of other faiths**

Although the scheme of work is mainly Christian, we believe that it is important for all children to learn about a range of different faiths. At St. Michael's C of E Primary School we explore the major world religions. This multi-faith coverage is shown below

EYFS and Key Stage 1 – Judaism

Lower Key Stage 2 – Hinduism

Upper Key Stage 2 – Islam

The content will be based on the idea of developing an awareness of other faiths and cultures in the community in which we live and encouraging interfaith dialogue. Each class will share their learning with other classes during assemblies and whole school faith days. Each term the school will come together to learn and celebrate the multi-faiths of the world they live in. They will explore the similarities and differences of these faiths to Christianity.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Learning through Religious Education plays a significant contribution to the children's spiritual development. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions what is right and wrong. Children learn how society has changed and develop skills to become good citizens. They study their own rich cultural heritage and developing an understanding of how this culture is enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today, based on British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **Impact**

### **Assessment for learning**

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. We do this informally during the lessons, and also by ongoing assessment to evaluate what the children have learned. Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and inform future planning. The RE teacher assesses the children's progress based on their achievement of the learning objectives in lessons. All written work is produced, it is marked in line with the school policy on marking.

### **Monitoring and review**

We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all other subjects that we teach in the school. The RE Subject Leader monitors planning and delivery on a termly basis and findings are shared with SLT and teachers. The Head Teacher and Subject Leader also reports to the governing body on the progress of children in RE like any other core subject. The governors' curriculum committee has the responsibility of monitoring the success of our teaching of RE.

### **Legal Requirements**

The provision of religious education is governed by both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts and the Academy Funding Agreement 2012 replacing the School Trust Deed. It is a legal requirement that Religious Education must be provided for all pupils.

### **Right to Withdrawal**

The recent Education Acts establish the parent's right to withdraw their children from Religious Education if they wish. However, by the fact that the parents have opted to send their children to a church school it is hoped that this will not be necessary.