St. James
C. of E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

Updated February 2024 in line with the latest Statement for Entitlement guidance (2019), the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (2023) &Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023-24

Opening Statement

Religious Education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help 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. *(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)*

Our Vision and Values

"Let your light shine"

At St James we are a welcoming inclusive church school community. Collectively, we spark a love of life-long learning and ignite enquiring minds to explore life in all its fullness. All are inspired to recognise, develop and appreciate our talents and use them to illuminate the path for ourselves and one another. We kindle courage to share our light in the world.

Our vision is inspired by Jesus' words in **Matthew 5:16**.

We live out our vision through our values of **Love, Unity, Respect** and **Courage.**

Religious Education

Religious education is an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. *(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)*

Curriculum Intent

Religious Education contributes dynamically to pupils' education by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs (religious and non-religious), issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE they **learn about and from worldviews**, including Christianity and other principal religions and beliefs (including non-religious perspectives such as Humanism) in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions.

Pupils 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 them with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of worldviews, beliefs, concepts and practices, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities (personal knowledge). Religious Education should also develop in pupils and students an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diversity of beliefs. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences, whilst respecting the right of others to differ. Religious Education supports pupils and students in developing their sense of identity and belonging and enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a diverse world.

At St James make links between Religious Education, our teaching of life skills and our school values. Our core values of **Love, Unity, Respect and Courage** are rooted in Christianity and are embedded into the everyday life of our school.

Aims and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

• To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.

• To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.

• To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.

• To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.

• To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

• To demonstrate an appreciation of the nature of worldviews and the important contribution of religion and belief, spiritual insights and values to the individual's search for meaning in life.

• To develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of worldviews and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;

• To develop the ability to make reasoned, informed and creative responses to religious and moral issues;

• To recognise the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on the individual, on culture and on communities throughout the World.

Religious Education Curriculum

Religious Education is taught according to the Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023-2028. **For a detailed St James RE Curriculum Overview, please see our webpage.**

RE - Curriculum Balance and Time

Reflecting the Church of England Statement of Entitlement, pupils are entitled to expect that Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. A minimum 5% of weekly curriculum time, but ideally more, meeting explicitly RE objectives, is committed to the delivery of RE.

RE lessons are **generally taught on a weekly basis** but there are many times where a topic is based around a whole week's work or may well be a day's worth of activities.

At certain times across the year, pupils participate in longer projects or **Pause Days**, providing a deeper experience and enabling pupils to engage in a meaningful level with key Christian festivals.

Our RE curriculum is designed to ensure a balance of theology, sociology and philosophy.

We have identified these as three Golden Threads:



- 'God': relating to theological approaches;
- 'Identity': relating to more philosophical approaches;
- 'Community': relating to sociological approaches.

These 'Golden Threads' are threaded throughout the units of work as part of the syllabus progression model in the way that they develop children's knowledge, understanding and skills in age-appropriate ways.

Pupils' own perspectives form a part of their learning within the syllabus as part of the development of their personal knowledge. Using pupils' starting points is one of the ways in which the syllabus strives to be inclusive of the wide spectrum of religious and non-religious beliefs that are a part of our community.

As an inclusive school, our curriculum is adapted so that all children can access the core learning. As part of our inclusive charter, children are supported.

Religious Education in EYFS

The RE curriculum for the EYFS always starts from where the children are, often taking a child's-eye view and drawing upon their personal experiences. The curriculum allows children to explore the world around them from this starting point.

Religious Education in Key Stage One

Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the worldviews, beliefs and 'lived experience' of some Christian, Jewish and Muslim people, and some non-religious people.

Pupils become more aware of other peoples' worldviews and are encouraged to develop important subject-specific and cross-curricular skills.

Religious Education in Lower Key Stage Two

Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and lived experience of some Christian, Jewish and Muslim people and are introduced to the importance of equality to Sikhs, and the Golden Rule to Humanists, recognising the impact of religion and belief on people's worldviews, locally (including within their own school), nationally and globally. Pupils make connections across their learning in the thematic units and deepen their understanding of concepts within and across religions / beliefs.

Pupils are encouraged to become more self-reflective in the way that they understand their own personal worldview and the things that may have influenced it. They will also continue to develop important subject-specific and cross-curricular skills.

Religious Education in Upper Key Stage Two

Pupils further develop their understanding of the beliefs and lived experience of some Christian, Jewish, Muslim & non-religious people, and are introduced to Hindu (Sanatana) Dharma and Buddhism. As learning develops across this phase, pupils will increasingly become aware of the factors that might account for diversity within and across communities, including opportunities to consider how some sacred texts can be interpreted in different ways e.g. creation stories.

Pupils continue to explore their own personal worldview and begin to articulate some of the factors that may have influenced it, also applying their thinking to help them to understand the worldviews of others.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in Religious Education will:

- Be directly related to the expectations of the Surrey Agreed Syllabus
- Recognise the importance of Religious Education in a Church school, while also recognising that the taught time is considerably less than that of English and Maths.
- Seek to identify pupils' development of factual knowledge, skills and attitudes. "Sticky Knowledge" will be checked by the CT teacher following each unit of Study and by the RE lead at various points across the year.
- Inform next steps in teaching and learning both for individual pupils and class groups.
- Inform whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Monitoring

The Learning and Welfare committee together with Father Damian have responsibility for the monitoring of RE.
The Religious Education subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's learning and the quality of teaching in religious education. The RE subject leaders are supported by Father Damian in his role as RE Governor.

Role of the RE subject leaders

The subject leaders will:

- support colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education.
- be informed about any current developments in the subject, locally and nationally.
- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- attend termly RE network meetings at Guildford Diocese.
- ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- produce and review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- ensure all teachers know 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.
- monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- ensure there are assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the impact of RE across the school.
- support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.

Resources

There is a section in the school library for RE books about Christianity and World Faiths.

Further resources: Prayer space materials, displays, maps, puppets, props, pictures and artefacts are kept in the large marked RE cupboard.

We have purchased two Complete Sets of *Belonging and Believing* a wonderful set of books about families of different faiths for use in Reception and kS1. – (8 x hardbacks per set)

A set of 30 New International Version of The Holy Bible, produced by The Gideons were donated to us, these are kept in the Junior library and an additional set of 30 are available in the Year 6 block.

Each class has their own copy of The Lion Storyteller Bible: by Bob Hartman and Krisztina Kallai Nagy. Artefacts boxes from Guildford Cathedral Resources Library can be borrowed to support the Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamic and Sikhism units of study.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child from all, or part of Religious Education, 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 head teacher before making this decision.

Where pupils are withdrawn from all or parts of the RE curriculum, they will engage in a personal project linked to the wider curriculum.

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