



ST JAMES' C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

'With exploring minds, and faith; we grow and learn together'
'Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light to my path' ~ Psalm 119: v105

Our vision is to ensure children enjoy learning and, with exploring minds, are actively engaged in their studies. At St James' our curriculum will provide them with skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that enable them to make the most of their lives and take the opportunities they encounter. This approach is mirrored by the staff who reflect and adapt in order to develop their practice as the dedicated professionals that they are. In this way we grow and learn together as we follow the St James Way: Be Kind, Be Respectful and to always Give Your All.

From the foundation offered by our infant counterparts, where they: 'teach the children to choose the right path', Proverbs 22:6. Our vision is to follow on that journey. We teach that the Lord's word is a lamp to their feet, a light to such path. ~ Psalm 119: v105. This Christian vision is underpinned by our teaching of the Christian faith and our school values of: Peace, Compassion, Friendship, Forgiveness, Thankfulness and Endurance.

Introduction

Religious Education (also referred to as RE) is central to the purpose of St James' C of E Junior school because, as a church school, we see that the Christian faith informs all aspects of our life together and commits us to a search for truth.

As a Church of England school, we follow the 2017 Cumbria Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Within this framework we cover all the major world religions but focus specifically on Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. We incorporate units of work from Understanding Christianity and use Questful for non-Christianity units. Both schemes are advocated by Carlisle Diocese.

RE at St James' CE Junior School 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. Values education permeates the RE curriculum at St James' CE Junior School.

Aims

At this school, Religious Education 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 RE curriculum.

Religious Education aims to enable pupils to be:

Informed: Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews;
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Expressive: Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including spiritual and ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview

Enquiring and Reflective: Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all;

- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other's lives.

Legal Framework

As a voluntary controlled school, the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education is our statutory document for teaching of RE. Parents have a legal right in accordance with the Education act 1996 to withdraw their children from religious education. But as RE is central to the life and identity of St James' Church of England School, we would ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

Teaching & Learning

- The teaching of RE will focus on 3 main strands: Theology, sociology and philosophy. There will be appropriate balance offered to the 3 strands.
- There will be clear learning outcomes for all units of work, based on the appropriate expectations as set out in the RE syllabus.
- The scheme of work will ensure that there is continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment in both attainment targets.
- Pupil progress and attainment in RE will be tracked and recorded half termly and the school will keep an up to date file of evidence to support assessment data.
- Progress in RE is included in each child's annual report to parents.
- Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEND and EAL are an integral part of RE planning and teaching
- RE will be taught either as a discrete subject or as part of a cross- curricular approach where appropriate.
- A range of visitors will be invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship.
- In this school the faiths taught in RE are Christianity, Buddhism and Islam.
- Other religions and worldviews may be taught implicitly or when comparing ideas or as thematic studies. Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects
- RE will be given at least 5% of curriculum time i.e. 1 hour per week in key stage 2.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development/ British Values

- Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. We invite pupils to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider those of others, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.
- We encourage pupils to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society as well as their own experiences
- Religious education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider community, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice. This includes work on British values.

Assessment & Achievement

Appropriate to age, at the end of their education in our Church school the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and (as a minimum) they 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 worldviews in their search for God and meaning.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.

National Society RE Statement of Entitlement 2016

Subject Leadership

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE subject leader, (in close collaboration with wider senior leaders) to ensure that the principles set out in the National Society's Statement of Entitlement for RE are implemented.

- The RE subject leader will support and monitor the subject across the school and will have an annual budget to do this
- The RE subject leader will ensure that relevant and regular CPD is in place to keep his/her subject knowledge and expertise up to date.
- The RE subject leader will ensure that staff receive adequate training in the teaching and assessment of RE.
- The RE subject leader will liaise with the governor who holds responsibility for RE and they will report regularly to the governing body so that everyone has an overview about progress and attainment in RE.
- The RE subject leader and head teacher will ensure that RE provision reflects diocesan advice and recommendations.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE, including how RE contribute to SIAMS School Self Evaluation

The Head and RE subject Leader will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, observation, lesson studies, learning walks, planning analysis, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils. The Head and RE subject are responsible for contributing to the Church school self-evaluation process by reviewing each area of the SEF, monitoring and evaluation as above, followed by plans to move forward.

Review - This policy will be reviewed regularly. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the RE co-ordinator and will be based upon discussions with other members of staff, monitoring of children's work and teaching plans. The outcome of the review will influence the future school development plan.

Date of policy: January 2025

Approved by Reverend Alison Dobell of St James' Church- Foundation/Ex Officio School Governor

Review date: *January 2027 (or when significant changes are made if prior to review date)*