

# St Mary & St Pancras Church of England School

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies  
Teaching & Learning Policy

Policy Reviewed by LMT December (LH)  
Policy Reviewed by Governors January 2017  
Review due: Autumn 2018

### Statement of intent.

As a church school what and how we teach, what and how our pupils learn within and beyond the classroom are and must be rooted in Christian values:

**Friendship, Respect, Endurance, Thankfulness and Forgiveness.**

These values are fundamental in the implementation of this policy to ensure that we maintain our distinctive Christian character of which we are proud.

### 1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St Mary & St Pancras School we aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. We address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

1.2 The aims of religious education are to help children :

- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and **other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;**
- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be **committed to a religious tradition;**

- be able to reflect on **their own** experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of Anglican and **other religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;**
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgments about religious issues;
- **to have respect for other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society;**
- **appreciate the ways that religion is conveyed in stories, myths, rituals, symbols, artefacts, art, music and drama.**

## 2 The legal position of religious education

- 2.1 Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children. At St Mary and St Pancras we teach RE to children from age 3 upwards. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. **However as our parents have chosen to place their child in a church school we hope that no one will exercise this right.** The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. We believe the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, **take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions as well as our local community.**

## 3 Teaching and learning style

- 3.1 We follow the LDBS scheme of work for RE. We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.
- 3.2 Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover, etc to develop their religious thinking. Each class visits at least one place of worship per year and we invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children. The clergy from St Mary's and St Pancras Churches head school assemblies on a weekly basis and support class teaching regularly.
- 3.3 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 or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues both working individually and in groups. Sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies. Also they visit

St Mary's & St Pancras Churches to celebrate key events in the Christian calendar.

**3.4** RE teaching focuses in on teaching the children RE skills that are appropriate to their age range. We use the RE Today 'I can statements' to ensure all lessons are pitched appropriately and children are learning skills based on learning from and about religion. Using these statements also ensures there is progression in RE across the school.

**3.5** We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example by :

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- grouping the children in the room by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children;
- using the RE Today I can statements to make sure lessons are pitched appropriately for all abilities.

#### **4 Curriculum planning in religious education**

**4.1** In Reception and Key stages 1 and 2 the children are taught through particular RE topics each year to ensure progression and breadth (see Curriculum Study Units for RE). These are taught in accordance with our school long term plan, which follows the LDBS scheme of work.

**4.2** The class teacher annotates the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson including learning about religion and learning from religion.

#### **5 Foundation Stage**

**5.1** We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the Nursery and Reception class through appropriate aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Reception follow the LDBS scheme of work and Nursery have weekly bible stories and reflection times.

**5.2** In the foundation stage religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the Developmental Matters set out in the *Early Years Foundation Stage document*.

## **5 Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects**

### **6.1 Literacy**

Religious education 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 Literacy have religious themes or content which encourages discussion and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability. Whenever writing is used as a way to record the children's learning we make sure that an RE skill is the basis of the teaching so the children are not just developing Literacy skills.

### **6.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)**

Information and communication technology enhances the teaching of Religious Education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children find, select and analyse information using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

### **6.3 Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and citizenship**

Through our religious education lessons we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. 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.

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

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. Each RE lesson includes a reflection period so the children can reflect on their learning and own beliefs.

## **7 Teaching religious education to children with special needs**

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Pupil Centred Plans (PCP's).

## **8 Assessment and recording**

- 8.1.1** We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgments as we observe them during lessons. At the end of each lesson we mark the children's work. We report this information to parents in the pupils' annual reports and pass the information on to the next class teacher.
- 8.1.2** Often the work completed in RE lessons is not recorded as it is executed through drama, discussion or ICT research based (as examples). In such cases we use Floor Books to display a range of the learning from the lesson. Children are encouraged to post it note their feedback as a form of this.
- 8.1.3** Each half class teachers complete an RE assessment tracker to track the children's attainment in relation to each unit of work.

## **9 Resources**

- 9.1** We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school and Camden schools' library service has a supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.
- 9.2** Each class has an interactive display (in addition to their worship area) that relates to the current unit of work in class. These include high quality resources and artefacts. Children's work is added to the interactive display as each class progresses through their unit.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1** The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- 10.2** The school monitoring programme in the main dictates when we review the Religious Education curriculum, standards and quality of teaching and learning. During the identified term for review a curriculum team is formed to review the policy, resources, staff training and development needs and the schemes of work.
- 10.3** During the review term displays in communal areas are RE based and illustrate standards, continuity and progression in the teaching and learning of RE.
- 10.4** Also during the review term a comprehensive audit of the quality of teaching is conducted by the LDBS link inspector. The feedback report is used as an evaluative measure of the RE provision in the school detailing key areas of strength and /or areas for development or improvement.
- 10.5** A member of the governing body has responsibility for keeping the governing body informed of the developments in the RE curriculum and standards.

Following meetings with the RE co-ordinator and observations of a selection of RE lessons the governor is expected to provide a written record of his/her monitoring visits – which forms part of our Self Review and Self Evaluation Record - and a verbal report to the governing body at a Governing Body meeting.