

St Michael's CE VC Primary School
Let Your Light Shine

Policy for Religious Education
January 2019

Rationale

St Michael's Primary School is committed to providing an excellent education, both academic and social, within a Christian context for all its pupils. **Our school vision is: Let your light shine.** Our RE teaching is centred on providing high quality RE based on Christian values and principles, with four core values: love, joy, hope and forgiveness. As a local community school, we welcome all children from the neighbourhood whatever their family faith, and our teaching, whilst built around these Christian values, aims to get children to be aware of and empathise with a wide variety of religious beliefs and practices.

Aims

- To help children move towards an understanding of the nature of religious beliefs and practices and the importance and influence of these on the lives of believers.
- To introduce children to the key beliefs and practises of Christianity and other world religions, making comparisons between them.
- To develop an awareness of the many ways that religion influences the world.
- To provide for Denominational ('Reserved') RE where parents request this.
- To encourage and extend the children's awareness of and response to the spiritual dimension both in their lives and experiences and in those of other human beings.
- To reflect upon and respond to questions on the origins and meaning of life.
- To develop respect for other people's right to follow different religions.
- To develop a positive attitude towards living in a society of diverse religions.
- To understand that humans have a vast amount in common, we all have feelings of love, friendship, togetherness, forgiveness, peace, happiness, excitement and awe and wonder. To know that feelings of hatred, prejudice, intolerance, anger and fear towards other people are fed by ignorance, and the resulting lack of understanding.

Guidelines

Planning: development of skills and knowledge

The school uses the South Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2016-2021

There are three strands from which the key questions for each unit are taken:

1. Believing - Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth.
2. Expressing - Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.
3. Living - Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments.

Foundation Stage Children follow a programme of study based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

At Key Stage 1, children are required to study Christianity and one other religion (Judaism or Islam) with some references to other religions.

At Key Stage 2, children should study Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism in order to discuss comparisons. The non-religious world view of Humanism is also a focus for study.

Understanding Christianity

The school supplements the Christianity units from the South Gloucestershire agreed syllabus with units from the Understanding Christianity programme of study.

Understanding Christianity introduces eight core concepts and the big story of the Bible across the school.

Key stage 1 are introduced to the concepts of: God, Incarnation, Creation, Salvation and Gospel.

Key stage 2 continue with these concepts and add: The fall, People of God and Kingdom of God.

Each of these core concepts are taught using three elements, to help pupils gain a deeper understanding of what the Bible says about each one:

1. Making sense of the text - Understanding how Christians make sense of Bible stories and texts; developing skills of listening and thinking about what stories and texts mean.
2. Making connections - Thinking and talking about lessons people learn from the Bible; reflecting on questions and puzzles that arise from the texts and concepts, and making links with their own experiences.
3. Understanding the impact - Looking at ways in which Christians respond to Bible stories and texts in the Church community and in their own lives.

1. **Resources** The school has a selection of resources and artefacts to support RE. These should be stored, displayed and handled with due respect, acknowledging their significance to different faith communities.
2. **Display** Display plays a vital role in the promotion of Religious Education. Displays will celebrate the work the children have carried out in Religious Education and will stimulate interest and curiosity in the subject.
3. **Time Allocation** At St Michael's, RE is treated as a core subject, and carries a significant (and ideally regular) time allocation. RE should generally be taught on a weekly basis, but there may be certain topics where the time is blocked together. At various times during the year all classes may spend additional time on RE in connection with a major festival or event (eg Easter; Christmas; Harvest; Diwali; Chinese New Year etc)
4. **Assessment** Children will be assessed at the end of the year against the expectations for the year group (working towards; meeting; exceeding).
5. **Special Educational Needs and More Able children** All children will have equal opportunity to experience the Religious Education curriculum regardless of age, race, gender or ability, including physical. Activities will be differentiated as appropriate to meet individual needs, with suitably differentiated extension activities as appropriate. Children will record work in a variety of ways such as drawings, photographs or writing.
6. **Promoting Equality, tolerance and social cohesion** All children will have opportunities to explore aspects of world religions. These will include visits to places of worship and visits to school from members of faith communities. These experiences form an essential role in developing children's understanding of different faiths and promoting intercultural understanding e.g. understanding different cultural dress and to address any negative information in the media. Class teachers will make use of particular parent knowledge or experiences where possible and use them within the classroom. Visitors welcomed into school, as part of a planned programme, can enrich pupils' experience and broaden their outlook. Members of the various faith communities can bring religious education to life in the classroom as well as help build bridges between the school and those communities. Pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors may themselves be members of these groups and are welcomed into school. A prerequisite is that the visitor is sympathetic to the educational nature of the exercise, and does not see it as an opportunity for proselytising or evangelising. Visiting a place of worship can encourage an attitude of respect; it can also develop an attitude of greater curiosity, and a willingness to find out about religion.
7. **Contribution to Social, Spiritual, Moral and Cultural curriculum.** Religious education plays a considerable part in all of these aspects. For full details please see the detailed SSMC guidelines.
8. **Denominational (Reserved) RE** We are committed to providing a form of denominational RE – RE taught from an explicitly Christian faith perspective – for those parents who request it. The

precise arrangements may vary from year to year, depending on staffing issues, and the number of parents requesting this provision. Details will be sent to parents at the start of each school year. This is facilitated by St. Michael's church.

9. **The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education** If the parent/carer of a pupil asks that she/he be wholly or partly excused from Religious Education, the school must comply (see Education Reform Act 1998). Parents wishing to exercise this right should contact the Headteacher. Alternative work will then be provided. Under certain circumstances, a pupil may be withdrawn from the school premises to receive Religious Education elsewhere if the parent requests this. Teachers retain the right not to participate in the teaching of Religious Education.

15. **Monitoring**

The Religious Education subject leader is responsible for monitoring this policy and the Scheme of Work. Non-contact time will be provided to give the leader the opportunity to monitor planning, teaching and assessment during the year.

The Foundation Governors should also be actively involved in the monitoring and development of RE within the school.

Review This policy will be reviewed at four-yearly intervals, or sooner as required.

Next review: January 2023