

St. Mary's Endowed CE VA Primary School



RE Policy

At St. Mary's we take care of each other, aim high, enjoy learning and achieve success within the family of a Church school.

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

The purpose of religious education is to contribute "to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

Aims

At St. Mary's (Endowed) CE VA Primary School, religious education is taught in accordance with the Norwich Diocesan Syllabus and the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2016). The purpose of religious education is to promote religious literacy, ensuring that pupils are able to hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief.

At St. Mary's, we intend that Religious Education will:

- Adopt an enquiry- based approach beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.

- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion. Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Develop children's awareness that religion is a major force in people's lives in all parts of the world and that the world has enormous diversity, even if this diversity is not the experience of our school community.
- Nurture children's own spiritual development.

How is RE organised at St. Mary's?

Our curriculum brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied. Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

Curriculum

The curriculum for RE is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

Theology:

This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

Philosophy:

This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

Human/Social sciences:

This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

As a Voluntary Aided school and in accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2016), 2/3 curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of RE, and through additional RE days which focus on an aspect of the Christian Faith. The use of the resource Understanding Christianity particularly supports the development of the theological perspective.

Learning about Religions

This includes:

- identifying, naming, describing and giving accounts in order to build up a coherent picture of each religion
- explaining the meaning of religious language, stories and symbolism
- explaining similarities and differences between and within religions.

Learning from Religion

This includes:

- giving an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues

- reflecting on what might be learnt from religion in the light of one's own beliefs and experience
- identifying and responding to questions of meaning within religion.

Religious Education in a Church School Context

In recognition of our distinctive context, religious education has a high profile, we emphasise:

- a close link with the local church family
- a Christian ethos which permeates the whole curriculum, but finds particular emphasis in this subject
- the Christian foundation of the school
- a wide range of Christian resources including artefacts,

Foundation stage

Children's learning in religious education will make a variety of contributions to the areas of learning and enables them to work towards the early learning goals. By the end of the Foundation Stage children will have particular opportunities to:

- respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings where appropriate
- have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others
- begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people
- have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Key Stage 1

By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils will increasingly have opportunities to:

- learn about Christianity and one other principal religion in depth (Judaism)
- encounter some special events, places, people and objects connected with the religions studied
- listen and talk about some stories from religious traditions and begin to identify similarities and differences
- reflect on and talk about puzzling questions which arise from their study of religions, their own experiences and their encounters with the natural world
- think about themselves, their feelings and their relationships with others and begin to develop positive attitudes to diversity and difference, giving careful consideration to the views of others.

Key Stage 2

By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils will increasingly have opportunities to:

- learn about and develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least two other principal religions in depth
- encounter key events, places, people and objects connected with the religions studied and discuss their purposes and functions
- consider the meaning of symbols, stories and festivals for members of faith communities
- explore questions of meaning and mystery and use times of stillness to work out their own response to these
- evaluate different points of view and show sensitivity to those whose belief differ from their own
- relate their work in religious education to other areas of the curriculum and their developing knowledge of the world around them.

Assessment

Teachers assess the children's knowledge of religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through written activities, role play, art work, discussion... Progress is tracked using Pupil Asset (from October 2018). Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work. In addition, pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. A comment about their progress is made in the annual report to parents.

The Right of Withdrawal From RE

We recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

We will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. We will make parents aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and give them the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Provision for RE is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. This is achieved by:

- the head teacher / subject leader reviewing and monitoring planning, scrutinising work and talking to children.
- the Head teacher / subject leader monitoring resource provision, identifying shortfalls
- the Foundation Governor/s carrying out Learning Walks in order to monitor RE provision.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Signed and dated by:

The Headteacher
Kathryn Jackson:



Date: 5th March 2019

and

The Chair of Governors
Anne Cottingham :



Date: 5th March 2019