

# St Paul's Church of England Primary School

## Religious Education (RE) Policy



Adopted by Governing Body – September 2023

Review schedule- Every 3 years (or as necessary)

Next review- Autumn 2026

### School Vision

*At St Paul's, we will nurture and inspire all children to enjoy a life-long journey of discovery and friendship. Through God's love and Jesus' teachings, our school community will support each child to flourish as curious, compassionate and resilient citizens with a love of learning.*

*"Start children off on the way they should go, and even  
when they are old they will not turn from it."*

*Proverbs 22:6*

In order to fulfil this vision, the governing body have agreed the following policy.

### Introduction

Religious Education in Church Schools is a subject of excellence through which we can express our distinctive Christian ethos. It allows a deep spiritual engagement with others which leads to greater understanding of the Christian values which underpin the curriculum.

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### 1 Aims and Objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St Paul's Church of England Primary School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children

to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. 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.

The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to help children to:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition
- be able to reflect on own experiences and develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today
- develop investigative and research skills, and make reasoned judgements about religious issues
- have respect for other people's views, and celebrate the diversity in society.

## **2 The Legal Position of Religious Education**

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, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from Religious Education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship and community cohesion. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Leicester Diocesan Board of Education's Syllabus – Understanding Christianity, supplemented by the revised Leicestershire Agreed RE Syllabus for RE (2021-26). The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that 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.

## **3 Teaching and Learning**

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.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

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 investigate religious and moral issues either individually, in pairs or in groups.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of differing abilities, 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 by differentiation, as detailed in our Teaching and Learning Policy.

#### **4 Curriculum Planning in Religious Education**

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Understanding Christianity Syllabus and the revised Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus for RE (2021-26). We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

The long-term RE plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term. The RE leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term.

#### **5 Foundation Stage**

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

In our reception class, religious education is an integral part of the theme work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five, to achieve by the end of their reception year.

#### **6 Contribution of RE to other Curriculum Areas**

Religious Education contributes to English learning significantly by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in English have religious themes or content.

RE contributes to Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and citizenship, including British Values. We teach the children about the values and beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. For example, the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and healthy eating. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship and community cohesion 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 in modern Britain.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) is strengthened by 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 children's 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.

## **7 Inclusion**

Religious Education forms part of the school's purpose to provide a broad, balanced and rigorous education to all children. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language. We take all reasonable steps to achieve this, as detailed in our SEND Policy. We are particularly keen that children with SEND are supported to access all visits to places of worship.

## **8 Assessment for Learning**

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child feedback, in accordance with the Teaching and Learning Policy. Children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new learning objectives and for passing information on to the next teacher and the RE leader.

## **9 Resources**

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for Religious Education centrally, in the large library area and the display shelves opposite the cooking area. There is a set of bibles for both key stages, a set of religious persona dolls for use with EYFS and KS1, non-fiction books detailing different religions, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching.

## **10 Monitoring and Review**

The RE subject leader, is responsible for supporting the Headteacher in monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in RE. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. The RE leader produces an action plan, closely linked to the School Development Plan. They review the action plan regularly and share its progress with key stakeholders, including the Headteacher and the Governors. The RE leader's Performance Management targets include mention of whole-school impact of RE teaching.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a 3-yearly basis.