

St. Wilfrid's Church of England School

Policy on the Teaching of Religious Education

School Mission Statement

Love God,
Love Each Other,
Love Learning.

As a Voluntary Aided School, we understand that the management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors and the headteacher.

Our Governing body have adopted the Blackburn Diocese Board of Education Syllabus and all its supporting documents for the teaching of Religious Education in our school.

RE in our Church School lies at the very heart of the curriculum.

R.E. plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the school as expressed in the Mission Statement. We aim to provide a curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learning to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Christian faith, as well as understanding and making links between a range of faiths.

We try to ensure that our RE and our collective worship complement each other but they are managed separately. Our RE will be predominantly Christian in basis (around 75%-80%) with the study of aspects of Judaism, Buddhism and Islam to support this. At least 5% of our curriculum teaching time (about 1 hour per week in Foundation and Key Stage 1 and 1.25 hours per week in Key Stage 2) will be devoted to the teaching of Religious Education. We will aim to make our lessons creative and active and to embed our RE within all of our curriculum, not just within our RE lessons.

RE in our Church School should be of the highest standard, we will always strive for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character. In the light of this, we aim to provide:

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year
- study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life
- liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur
- support for the pupils; confident use of religious language
- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts
- the facility to listen to Christian 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence
- a sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection
- encouragement of mutual respect based on Christian values, where pupils and teachers are able to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith
- pupils with no religious background to face the challenge of the Christian faith
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the place of doubt and certainty in a maturing faith.

Pupils will learn about:

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

Pupils will learn from:

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Our RE will help pupils to:

- think theologically and explore the great questions of life and death, meaning and purpose
- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world
- respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

We understand that it is important that RE should equip pupils to recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in RE within our school

Therefore our RE teaching will enable pupils to:

- know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions
- recognise the common human quest for justice, peace and love and the common goal of the survival of life on this planet.
- Develop the pupils own spiritual and philosophical convictions allowing them to explore and enrich their own beliefs and values.

We believe that 'every child matters' and we believe our RE contributes significantly to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of each child.

Spiritual development within RE in a Church School enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice.

Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

British Values

We will provide an RE curriculum that allows children to develop Christian values as well as the the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Where possible we will make links to both and make reference to them in RE teaching.

SEN provision

We will endeavour to ensure that all of our children have access to the whole range of study within our syllabus through the use of differentiation in lessons, support from adults and peers, the use of ICT and the use of a wide range of teaching strategies, methods and resources.

Resources

We will provide our children and our staff with a range of high quality resources in order to enhance their teaching and learning, which will include: DVD's, traditional and contemporary music, Godly Play equipment, artefacts, books, access to the internet, CD roms, photographs and opportunities for visits and visitors.

Assessment, progress and attainment

Our RE will be assessed in the following ways:

- through the scrutiny of work highlighting children working below, at or above the relevant age expectation and given to the RE subject leader 3 times a year.
- Through the use of Thoughts and Reflections books - these will be used to record the children's comments and feelings as well as photographic evidence of the creative nature of our curriculum. Photographic evidence will also be placed on Earwig.
- Through work scrutiny and the observation of lessons by the subject leader.
- Through self assessment and peer assessment by the children

We will report the progress of our children to their parents at parents' evenings twice a year and through a written report at the end of the year.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education in Church Schools is governed by the 1996 and 1998 Education Act as well as by the Trust Deed of the School.

The legislation requires Religious Education to be provided for all pupils.

(1996 Education Act, Section 352) The type of Religious Education provided must be in accordance with the Trust Deed.

Complaints about the provision of Religious Education

It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved informally by the Headteacher. There is also provision for complaints to be heard by a Committee of the Governing Body possibly with advice from the Diocese or District. However, if the complaint is still not satisfactorily resolved, then further procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese, (or in the case of the Methodist Church, the complaint would be referred to the Superintendent Minister and then the Connexional Authorities.)

Parental Rights of Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their children from the Religious Education at St Wilfrid's as they may in any school. However, we will ensure that parents are aware that the removal of their child from RE lessons cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school, as our school is built upon Christian foundations and principles which permeate the whole of school life.

Responsibility for the policy

The responsibility of the implementation and co-ordination of the policy is the R.E. coordinator, Amy Peatman. The policy will be reviewed and agreed by the headteacher (Claire Weymouth) and the governing body.

Agreed By Governors: _____ on _____

To be reviewed: _____