

St Mary & St Paul's CE Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Autumn 2024

‘Life in all its fullness through Learning and Love.’

At St Mary and St Paul's, our Core Values of **Aspire, Joy, Hope, Serve**, and our Christian Ethos define all we do. Our vision Statement underpins our curriculum intent by enabling children to have '**Life in all its fullness through Learning and Love.**'

We aim to provide opportunities for our children to develop as independent, confident and successful learners with high **aspiration**, a sense of **hope** and **joy** and with a positive contribution to their community and wider society through **service**.

We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values with a vision to prepare them for secondary school and beyond. We provide enrichment opportunities throughout the curriculum to support engagement in learning. Throughout a child's experience in school, we believe children should be safe and happy, where there are no limits to curiosity and develop a thirst for experiences and knowledge.

The Governing Body adopted this updated policy in May 2021.

At St Mary & St Paul's religious education has a high profile and reflects the distinctive and inclusive ethos of our Anglican foundation. In recognition of this context we emphasise:

- the close links with the local church family and wider community
- the Christian foundation of the school
- a Christian ethos which permeates the whole life of our school, not just in religious education
- the use of a range of Christian resources including artefacts.

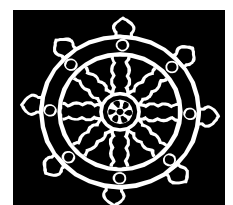
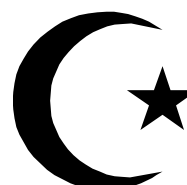
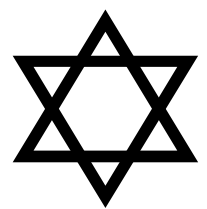
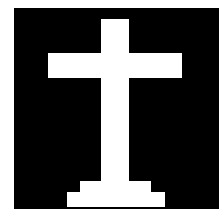
Religious education contributes to the development of each child and has an equal standing with other subjects in the national curriculum. Religious education enables pupils to explore the meaning and purpose in their lives and provides a reminder that education concerns the whole person: *body, mind and spirit*.

RE plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of our school. The Governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education's syllabus for RE, 'Questful RE'. This syllabus fulfils all legal requirements and the RE statement of entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2016.

Approximately 5% of curriculum time has been allocated to the teaching of RE, proportionately divided between the study of Christianity (80%) and other faiths. Although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally complement and enrich one another, they are both given their own special time within the curriculum. Collective Worship takes place daily, either in class or as part of a whole school Collective Worship. Please refer to the Collective Worship Policy

The importance of Religious Education:

Religious education provokes challenging questions....It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views... It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own (Religious education: non- statutory national framework 2004)



Intent

Religious Education at St Mary & St Paul's lies at the very heart of the curriculum.

"In Church of England schools the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Church schools should provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied. Church schools should use some form of enquiry approach that engages with, for example biblical text, and helps develop religious and theological literacy. Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners." RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

Aims:

We expect children to develop concepts, attitudes and skills to continually improve their knowledge and understanding of RE. We shall achieve this by:

- Exploring the beliefs and practices of Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- Celebrating the major festivals of the Christian faith
- Building on each child's past experiences of life and help them to continue developing an awareness of themselves and consideration for others. This will promote their spiritual and moral growth.
- Making the ethos of the school one in which care and consideration for others is very important.
- Developing in the children an appreciation of the natural world.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding of the main world faiths.
- Celebrating the similarities and differences of the different religions/ faiths and an appreciation of our part in a multicultural society.
- Making their own spiritual journey.
- Building strong school church links with St Mary's and St Paul's churches showing children the active part they play in the local community.

We 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.

We 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.

At the end of their education at St Mary & St Paul's the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.

- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Implementation:

Learning and Teaching:

At St Mary & St Paul’s we ensure that between 5% and 10% of the timetable is devoted directly to the teaching of RE.

This translates into approximately 1 afternoon each week. This does not include collective worship time which is extra although collective worship in our school is used to support the teaching of RE and give it a wider profile.

We are committed to supporting our pupils with high quality planning and delivery of RE. We follow the Blackburn Diocesan scheme of work / syllabus. Learning about and from religion is an essential aspect of this scheme.

Eight core concepts of Christianity and God’s salvation plan

Throughout the Blackburn syllabus pupils will be introduced to and given opportunity to explore the big ideas of Christianity. These are eight core concepts at the heart of Christianity that together tell God’s big story. The eight core concepts in this syllabus match those identified by the authors of Understanding Christianity (RE Today Services) so that the two resources are compatible. The core concepts are expressed in the Bible and lived out by Christian people each day. These big ideas reveal God’s salvation plan, the big story.



Eight Core Concepts of Christianity:

Concept	Story
God Father, Son and Holy Spirit	In the beginning God.....
Creationcreated the heavens and the earth and everything was good.
Fall	Humankind spoilt creation and broke the relationship with God. Therefore, humans became in need of rescue.
People of God	In the Old Testament God tries to restore his relationship with people, choosing particular people to work with him. He spoke through the words of the prophets, but the people did not listen and were awaiting the Messiah.
Incarnation	The arrival of the Messiah, the Saviour, to rescue the people from the results of the fall and restore their relationship with God. Jesus, the Son of God, who came to live among us.
Gospel	Jesus' good news for everyone. His life, ministry and teaching, showing people what it means to live in relationship with God who is their father, and loves them.
Salvation	The death and resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate rescue plan. God's people are saved because through Jesus sin is dealt with and forgiveness offered. People can now choose to follow the way back to God.
Kingdom of God	God's kingdom is the world as God intended it to be. Christians look forward to the day when God's kingdom fully comes and earth and heaven are transformed. Until that time they strive to build the kingdom in their communities, empowered by the Holy Spirit and reflecting Jesus example in the world.

RE is taught in half termly units following the diocese scheme.

Through the teaching of RE children have the opportunity to develop many key skills such as thinking, research, evaluating, reflecting, empathising, communicating and co-operating. Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects.

As a church school the main focus will be on the teachings of the Christian church but we are also committed to promote respect, understanding and tolerance for those who adhere to other religions. We therefore study a range of different religions and religious festivals throughout Foundation stage, Key stage 1 and Key stage 2.

We help pupils to:

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue;
- 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

RE activities are planned following a cycle of themes, with emphasis on the individual needs of each child. There is a commitment to adopt varying teaching styles to accommodate the differing ways in which children learn. RE activities are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability.

As well as following the Diocesan scheme for RE the school curriculum is also enhanced by focusing on a given Christian value each half term.

School and class environment:

Our school promotes a positive atmosphere with relationships rooted in Christian values. Parents and pupils know what it is to belong to a church school community.

There are visual features / focal points in the school and each classroom which mark it as distinctively Christian. Classroom displays celebrate children's RE work and the school also shows openness and sensitivity to the needs of pupils of other denominations, faiths and cultures.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as PSHE and our collective worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other peoples responses and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

Management:

The daily planning, teaching and assessing of RE within the school is the responsibility of class teachers. The overall management and leadership of the subject is the responsibility of the RE subject leader in close collaboration with the SLT.

The RE subject leader attends regular training and professional development and organises INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary.

Another key role is the monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching within RE. Work and planning scrutiny, board walks, lesson observations and pupil interviews are all used to gather appropriate evidence. Pupil progress is also tracked using assessment data and the RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in RE in each year group and is a collection of good practice.

Resources

Children have opportunities to learn from a range of sources, including a variety of reference books, posters, artefacts and software. These are kept in a central resource area. Visitors are also invited into the classroom. Budgetary targets are discussed with the staff each year and adding to the RE resources has been on a rolling programme.

Every class has access to Bibles and prayer books appropriate to their year group.

There is an allocated RE display / focal point within each classroom. These will include evidence of children's learning and provide opportunities for reflection.

Adaptive teaching and SEN Provision

All pupils need to feel that they have something valuable to contribute. Children are always encouraged to take an active part in the subject and the questions they ask are always valued. When planning teachers take into account the varying levels of ability within our school and cater accordingly with differentiated tasks and activities.

We aim to provide an inclusive environment which

- Sets suitable learning challenges
- Responses to children's diverse learning needs
- Overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups.

A number of our children with complex learning needs follow an individualised curriculum through our Stepping Stone provision.

EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT (please refer also to the School's Equal Opportunities Policy):

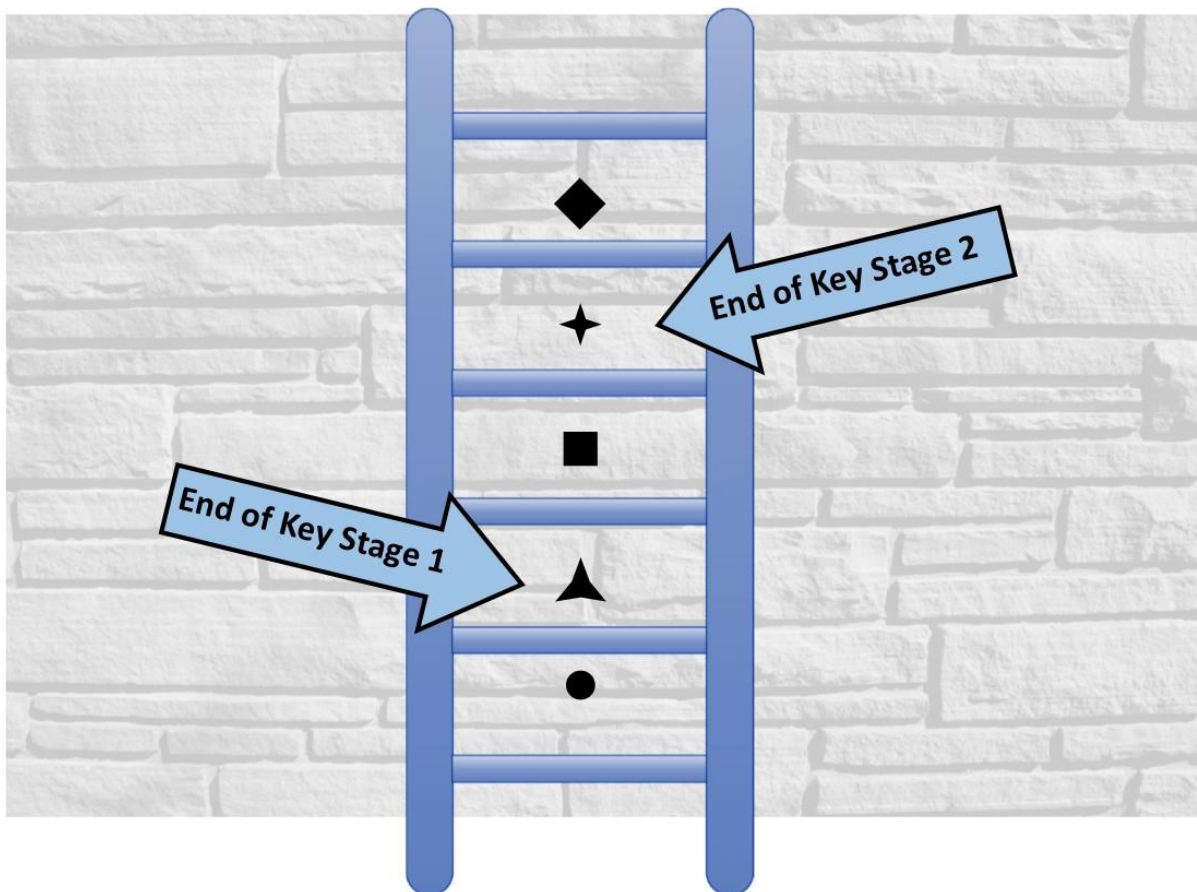
Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a duty not to discriminate against any person based on 'protected characteristics'.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at St Mary and St Paul's.

Impact:

Assessment, record keeping and reporting.

'Assessment is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. A good assessment framework raises our expectations and makes us aware of the potentially high standards that pupils can achieve. It helps to sharpen the focus on what is being taught and why.'



Assessment in RE is part of a continuous and ongoing process. We use the diocese 'Ladder of Expectation and Achievement'. The ladder is closely linked to the old scale, but uses symbols rather than numbers to indicate expected level of achievement. The ladder is intended primarily to contribute to planning excellent tasks at the right level appropriate for the pupils' experience, knowledge and ability. However, the ladder can be used to make judgements about the level of individual pupils' achievement.

At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to be achieving at ▲ level (rung 2 of the ladder).
 At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to be achieving at ✦ level (rung 4 of the ladder).

Therefore, teachers can set appropriate tasks and make judgements as to whether or not pupils in their class are working at, towards or exceeding expectations of achievement. A recording sheet is designed to be used once each term at the end of a unit. In each unit sheet there is a list of expected knowledge marked with the symbols from the ladder along with a list of expected outcomes. These lists are generic and it is expected that teachers will incorporate them into learning objectives. These expectations have been converted into 'I know' and 'I can' statements that can be used by pupils to self-assess or peer assess. There are no specific assessment tasks as every task, potentially, can be assessed and contribute to the expected achievements. The syllabus units give clear suggestions in *blue italics* as to how the outcomes of the activities can be recorded.

From Year 1 onwards each child will have their own RE book and each class will have a class RE 'scrapbook'. The two books work together to provide the evidence that can be assessed and monitored.

The 'scrapbook' will contain evidence such as pupils' discussions, comments and ideas, records of visits and visitors, photographs, group work, post it notes and printed work from the interactive whiteboard.

The RE subject leader will carry out an RE book/work scrutiny across the school regularly. They will also, with the cooperation of the staff, create a portfolio of evidence of the RE taking place throughout the school.

The purpose of the portfolio is to monitor standards and achievements and to ensure that all children are experiencing creative and challenging RE. It is a working document that can be shown to staff, governors,

parents and inspectors. The portfolio celebrates the success and the distinctive quality of RE at St Mary & St Paul's.

The content of this document can include: -

- children's work from across the school with an indication of where it meets expectations in the ladder;
- photographs recording displays, artwork, visits and visitors;
- teachers' plans showing evidence of quality, creative and challenging RE;
- records of scrutiny of work and lesson observations;
- plans and work from special RE days or theme weeks.

RE work is marked in accordance with the schools marking policy.

Formal Parents Evenings are conducted twice each year and RE is reported annually via the end of year written reports to parents.

Legal requirements

A Legal Requirements

RE in church schools is governed by the 1996 and 1998 Education Acts,

The legislation requires RE to be provided for all pupils (1996 Education Act, Section 352). The type of RE provided within our school is based on guidance from the Liverpool diocese.

B Withdrawals

'The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England or Methodist Church Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England or Methodist Church ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.'

Parents can withdraw their children from RE lessons. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation that is agreed by all parties concerned. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

At the time of writing, no children are withdrawn from RE lessons although parents may withdraw their child from RE as they may in any other school.

Monitoring and Impact:

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed by the subject leader in consultation with the curriculum lead and SLT within school regularly. The effectiveness of the policy is demonstrated through subject leadership reports to governors which include impact statements on outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Impact grids for learning will be completed at the end of each unit of learning.

The policy document will be reviewed by the subject leader, SLT and curriculum leader annually or earlier if required.

Subject Leader – Philip Eastwood & Felicity Greaney
Headteacher – Paul Brooksbank

Last review: Autumn term 2024