



# Religious Education Policy

## RATIONALE

“Christianity should be the majority study in RE in every school. In church schools that should be clearly adhered to. Understanding Christianity is a living religion is the foundation of pupils’ Religious Education in schools. It is important that this draws on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms. The encounter must be an open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations and in which real dialogue and education takes place. Pupils will be enabled to deepen their understanding of God as encountered and taught by Christians.” (Board of Education / National Society Council, July 2011.)

**Links: Teaching and Learning Policy  
Assessment Policy**

## Aims and objectives of RE

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St Peter's Church of England Primary School we aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and 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.

- To promote the spiritual and moral growth of the pupils to enable them to develop an awareness of themselves, as well as a consideration of others, and appreciation for the natural world and a sense of community through shared beliefs and values.
- To help pupils to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions in the United Kingdom.
- To enable pupils to be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- To enable pupils to develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- To enable pupils to develop a positive attitude, respecting the views of others who hold different beliefs from their own
- Religious education should not just convey information about religions or try to convert pupils to a particular religious viewpoint or tradition. It should not convey any other religion as superior to others.

## **Legal Requirements**

It is a legal requirement that R.E. is taught throughout the school to all pupils registered at the school (Education Reform Acts 1996 and 1998). It has an equal standing and status alongside the core subjects of the National Curriculum. 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 (section 9 (3)) allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. It remains the responsibility of the school to supervise that child during lesson time. The ERA also allows teachers in community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools to withdraw from teaching R.E.

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Kent Agreed Syllabus, which is the locally agreed syllabus and must be taught at St Peter's Church of England Primary School as it is a voluntary controlled school. The emphasis therefore is Christianity as prescribed by the Church of England. This does not detract from opportunities to study other World Religions or other Christian denominations. The school uses the Kent Agreed Syllabus. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching and also promotes education for citizenship.

## **Organisation of RE.**

The R.E. subject leader's role is to develop the subject and to support members of staff to teach the Kent Agreed Syllabus. She is responsible for planning and resourcing the syllabus in consultation with the Headteacher. In order to ensure that the syllabus continues to suit the denominational nature of the school, there is continuous liaison between the subject leader, Headteacher, Governors and the Diocesan Education Officer.

We base our teaching and learning style in R.E. on the key principle that good teaching in R.E. 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 in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in R.E. enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, 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.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and 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 in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using Teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

## **Curriculum Planning**

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Kent Agreed Syllabus and we ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. .

St Peter's Church of England Primary School is a one form entry primary school. All classes follow the Kent Agreed Syllabus. Teachers use the agreed attainment targets to plan, monitor and assess the quality of both teaching and learning.

### **AT1: Learning About Religion**

R.E aims to help pupils gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of major world religions represented in Great Britain.

### **AT2: Learning From Religion; Response, Evaluation and Application**

R.E. aims to help pupils develop their ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious issues, beliefs and practices and to consider ways in which beliefs, values and traditions may have significance in their own lives.

In planning and teaching, teachers should ask the question: Which topics and issues might be explored to assist pupils to develop their own beliefs and values and e significant for their lives?

## **Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects**

### **English**

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

### **Information and communication technology (ICT)**

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship 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 society.

### Foundation subjects

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual faiths and cultures. The children have the opportunity to explore, investigate and learn about the different countries and cultures that surround us. Through enrichment opportunities we aim to provide children with a real and deep understanding where they can develop respect, tolerance for others.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching 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 their 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.

### Resources

We are developing a bank of resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education centrally. There is a selection of R.E. books in the library and a set of bibles.

### Assessment and Recording in R.E.

We assess RE three times per year using a set of questions which can be used across the school. The questions are designed to assess both AT1 and AT2 and responses are moderated at teacher meetings to ensure consistency.

### Monitoring and Review

The R.E. subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The R.E. subject leader regularly liaises with the Headteacher with action points following monitoring that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

### Timing and Evidence in Books

Dearing recommendation: (reiterated by the Kent Agreed Syllabus)

KS2: 1 ¼ hour per week  
KS1: 1 hour per week  
Foundation: as KS1

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The Kent Agreed Syllabus is based upon the expectation that this is the minimum amount of time which should be devoted to R.E. each week. However the time allocated to the teaching of R.E. within the classroom is the decision of the individual teacher and lessons should be relevant to the theme/topic being studied as well as to the age and ability of the children in the class. It is not necessary to spend a regular amount of time each week as long as the overall recommendation is adhered to.

Verification of teaching and learning in books can be evidenced in a number of ways to ensure the continuation of good quality teaching and learning. These can include, writing, sequencing stories, prayers/blessings, photographic evidence of roleplay/drama and discussions and pictures. On some occasions teachers will write comments or questions to challenge children's learning and children will be encouraged to respond to these questions or challenges to further their own learning. Children are also encouraged to self assess and evaluate their own learning in R.E. and to comment on what they learned or understood from the learning activity.

### **Equal Opportunities in R.E.**

The provisions of the Equal Opportunities Policy apply to this subject

### **Opportunities For Contribution to Worship**

There are strong links with the school's local parish church; St Peter and St Paul and the vicar is a regular and frequent visitor. Worship is held in the church every Thursday and parents are invited to attend. Every month one of these services is followed by a coffee morning for parents and friends. The school actively seeks to celebrate major festivals through close involvement with the local church. The following services are all held in the church: Term 1, harvest festival, Term 2, Christingle Service for KS2, Term 4, Easter. Our end of year celebration for the school leavers is also held in the church.

As a friend of Rochester Cathedral the school participates in the Cathedral Day at the cathedral as well as any additional events or services.

The school also works closely with a local Christian Faith group –Family Trust who provide an afterschool club for the whole school community.