

All Saints' C.E.(A) First School Religious Education Policy



Rationale for RE at All Saints' CE (VA) First School

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The subject is regarded as a core subject within the school's curriculum. It has a vital role in developing and deepening pupils understanding of Christianity, in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions.

As the Church of England document, '**Making a difference? A review of Religious Education in Church of England schools 2014**' recommends that the RE curriculum in all schools should,

".....ensure it provides a more coherent, progressive and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world"

".....explore ways of extending pupils' ability to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning in RE"

RE Statement of Entitlement

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the **Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools**, published by the Church of England Education Office (June 2016). Christianity will, therefore, be no less than two thirds of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to the teaching of RE in this Church of England school. However as a Church school we have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and worldviews. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight

into the world in which they are growing up. They will also learn to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice and discrimination.

The RE curriculum RE teaching also follows the legal requirements of the **Education Reform Act (1988)**, which places RE as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement for all pupils. The school bases its RE provision on the Lichfield Diocese RE Guidelines and Understanding Christianity. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity resources and other appropriate materials to enhance teaching and learning.

At least 5% of curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation at least two thirds of subject content will be allocated to an exploration of the Christian faith, and the concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart.

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- To 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.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings and understanding their impact on the lives of believers.
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief, of themselves, the world and human experience.
- To develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, and so to consider important human questions, values and concerns.
- To nurture understanding, respect and open-mindedness and inspire lifelong engagement with the study of religions and beliefs.

The outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion – symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make – including believers – and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others – including believers

- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

In addition the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Spiritual	Widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.
Moral	helping each pupil develop their own informed values
Social	helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values of our society
Cultural	aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with **personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE)** and **British values**. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

The management of RE

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

The RE subject leader is responsible for:

- The development of a scheme of work for the school
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision
- ensuring Religious Education has status within the school
- keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff INSET
- monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- ensuring assessment strategies are in place in line with the Agreed Syllabus
- creating the RE Action Plan and ensuring its regular review
- accountability for RE standards in the school
- meet with member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW –see appendix

At All Saints' CE (VA) First School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without giving a reason.

Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the headteacher who will then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided by the school and set out the options open to the parents as set out in education law. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects. Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE and do not take part in alternative religious education they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff whilst doing work set by their parents which will seek to further their knowledge and understanding of their parents beliefs and values.

Current RE practice and principles

- RE is taught in EYFS, KS1 and KS2.
- A two year rolling programme of themes is used in KS1 and KS2
- Christianity is taught in all Key Stages
- Judaism and Islam and taught in KS1 and KS2 through discrete units and through Themes (e.g "Special Books").
- RE is delivered by all class teachers.
- Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of RE and their achievements are recorded on skills ladders that track their progress throughout school.
- The quality of RE is monitored and assessed through, pupil discussions, learning walks, lesson observations and book trawls.

Other things to note

- Controlled schools (VC) must fulfil the legal requirements of your locally agreed syllabus.
Aided and foundation schools and academies have greater freedom, but it is strongly suggested that we adhere to Diocesan guidance.
- **Section 48 SIAMS** inspections will give a judgment on the progress, achievement, teaching, learning and overall effectiveness of RE in aided schools. However in all schools the contribution of RE to the school's distinctive Christian character will be assessed as will the impact of RE on SMSC and the way in which the subject is meeting the needs of learners and moving them forward in their personal spiritual journey.
Currently, as a VA school RE is inspected as part of the SIAMS process (Core Question 3).

As a RE leader you may be required to help complete the SIAMS toolkit alongside your headteacher.

Appendix

Guidance for schools and academies on the right to withdrawal from Religious Education March 2017

Religious Education

The government guidance *Religious Education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010* states that:

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those who withdraw by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over)

In voluntary controlled schools and academies, religious education must be provided in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus provided by the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) of the local authority in which the school is situated.

In voluntary aided schools and academies, the decision on the content of religious education rests with the Governing Body, and should be in line with the Trust Deeds of the school.

In all forms of church school, the religious education provided should contribute to the Christian character of the school, and this is in aspect of the school's work which is subject to the ***Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)***, whether VC, VA or academy.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, ***the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. (Non-statutory Guidance 2010)***

Any parent considering withdrawal must contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns relating to the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the school.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

It is important that the school makes clear on its website and through other forms of communication, the RE syllabus being taught in school. There needs to be a clear understanding of the relevance of the RE curriculum and how it respects pupils own

beliefs. It is good practice to review requests to withdraw from RE and collective worship annually.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Whether the parents wish their children to be withdrawn from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it.
- Parents can withdraw their child from a specific activity, such as a visit to a place of worship, and not withdraw their child from the remainder of the RE.
- Where pupils are withdrawn from Re or collective worship, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or incur extra cost.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn from RE, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This could be provided at the school or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided. Outside arrangements are permitted providing the necessary safeguarding procedures are in place and the LA or Trust Board is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from withdrawal will only affect the start or end of a school session. **(Non-statutory Guidance 2010)**

It is important that schools are fully aware of issues surrounding religion, race and culture and ensure that parental right to withdrawal requests to not hamper their responsibilities to ensure equality for all and the promotion of British Values.