



ST MICHAEL'S
C of E PRIMARY
HIGHGATE

Religious Education Policy 2024-25

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To nurture and inspire our pupils to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be



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1. Policy Aims

Religious Education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together

Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to

our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.

(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

Introduction:

This policy is intended to assist staff and pupils in developing a knowledge and understanding of Religious Education and is set within the context of the Church of England Vision for Education, the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education and the school's theologically rooted vision and associated Christian values.

School context and expectations

"We believe that our children's future is created everyday. Every moment counts." As a Church of England school, our vision and ethos are firmly rooted in Christian theology as expressed in the Bible.

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27) We believe that God's love for creation is universal, inherent, inalienable, unconditional and indivisible. We affirm this through our school values and our commitment to the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), we understand that it is our duty to help children fully develop their God-given gifts: their personalities, talents and abilities. We have high expectations of all our pupils and deliver a curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling children to become religiously literate within an inclusive and safe space that promotes critical thinking, and understanding of our own rights, the rights of others and celebrates and respects difference. We believe that we should take the example of the faithful servant and use our talents, each according to our different abilities and starting points, to live peacefully, sustainably and protect God's creation.

By working together in Christian fellowship (**Koinonia**), we can be faithful stewards of **Creation**. In recognition of our common humanity we strive to build **Friendship** with each other and live in peace with each other. We recognise that this is not easy and requires **Endurance** and the courage to show **Forgiveness**. We recognise that this take patience and practice in the knowledge that, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)



2. What is Religious Education?

Religious Education (RE) is a core academic subject in church schools that enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. The subject provides all pupils with the opportunity to ask questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

Taken from the Religious Education in Church of England Schools - A Statement of Entitlement, the aims and objectives of Religious Education in Church schools are:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum balance and time:

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-2 This equates to a minimum of 75 minutes a week.



3. RE Curriculum Map 2023-2024

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Christianity	Christianity	World Faith	Christianity	World Faith	Christianity
Reception	Who made the wonderful world and why?	Why is Christmas special for Christians?	Why do Christians believe Jesus is special?	What is so special about Easter?	Who cares for this special world?	How did Jesus rescue people?
1	What responsibility has God given people about taking care of creation? (6 sessions)	Why is each person important in the Nativity story? (5 sessions)	<u>Judaism</u> What is it like to live as a Jewish person? (6 sessions)	Why is Easter the most important festival for Christians? (4 sessions)	<u>Islam</u> What does it mean to be a Muslim? (6 sessions)	Why did Jesus tell stories? (6 sessions)
2	Why did Jesus teach the Lord's prayer as the way to pray? (6 sessions)	How does the symbol of light help us to understand the meaning of Christmas for Christians? (4 sessions)	<u>Judaism</u> Why are they having a party? (6 sessions)	How do the symbols of Easter help us to understand the meaning of Easter for Christians? (4 sessions)	<u>Islam</u> How do the five pillars of Islam help a Muslim to show commitment to God -Allah? (6 sessions)	Why do Christians make and keep promises before God? (6 sessions)
3	What is the Bible's Big Story? (6 or 8 sessions)	How does the season of Advent and the feast of the Epiphany point towards the true meaning of Christmas? (5 sessions)	<u>Judaism</u> What does it mean to be Jewish? (6 sessions)	Who is the most important person in the Easter story? (5 sessions)	<u>Buddhism</u> What did the Buddha teach his followers about life? (6 sessions)	Who is Jesus (I amstatements) (6 sessions)
4	How did belief in God affect the actions of people from the Old Testament? (6 sessions)	Is the Christmas message of peace still relevant to today's world? (6 sessions)	<u>Hinduism</u> How do Hindus worship? (6 sessions)	What is Holy Communion and how does it build a Christian community? (4 sessions)	<u>Hinduism</u> What does it mean to be a Hindu? (6 sessions)	<u>Liturgy</u> Why is liturgy important to many Christians? (6 sessions)
5	What do the miracles tell us about Jesus? (6 sessions)	How do art and music convey Christmas? (5 sessions)	<u>Buddhism</u> What did the Buddha teach his followers about life? (6 sessions)	What happens in churches during Lent, Holy Week and Easter Sunday? (6 sessions)	<u>Islam</u> How do Muslims live and embrace their faith in a diverse world? (6 sessions)	What does faith look like in Highgate. (6 sessions)
6	What might the journey of life and death look like from a Christian perspective? (6 sessions)	How would Christians advertise Christmas to show what Christmas means today? (5 sessions)	<u>Buddhism</u> What does it mean to be a Buddhist? (6 sessions)	How does the Christian festival of Easter offer hope? (6 sessions)	<u>Christianity</u> How has the Christian message survived for over 2000 years? (6 sessions)	Who decides? (Version a or b) (6 sessions)

Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.



4. Legal requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over).

(DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28)

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes.

The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the distinctively Christian vision of the school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision.

5. How we teach RE

RE at St. Michael's is seen as a core academic subject and as such is given the same status as other core subjects within the National Curriculum and the school theologically rooted vision.

The intent of the LDBS syllabus:

- To enable all children to become religiously literate.
- To ensure RE enables all children to live life in all its fullness – vision for Education (Church of England)
- To offer a systematic enquiry-based approach to the teaching of RE so that the following skills in children can be developed:
 - Ability to be critical thinkers
 - Ability to engage critically with texts
 - Ability to ask deep and meaningful questions
 - Ability to make connections within and across religions and worldviews
 - Ability to reflect, respond and express their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions
 - Ability to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, belief systems, values and practices.



To offer units of learning that:

- Are rooted in theological concepts, strong subject knowledge and content.
- Offer a balanced curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.
- Offer sequential learning both in terms of knowledge and skills across the primary age range.
- Offer motivating, engaging and creative lessons for all children.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop empathy towards people of similar or differing religious or worldviews to their own.

To ensure the teaching of RE supports and enhances:

- The Christian vision of the school.
- Contributes significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children.
- Takes note of the Religious Education Church of England Schools – Statement of Entitlement.
- The Church of England's vision for Education – every person deserves to live a 'life in all its fullness.'

Implementation of the LDBS syllabus:

Within every unit of learning the following steps take place as part of the learning process:

Enquire: Engage with a big question and subsidiary questions. All questions will be rooted in one of the disciplines of RE: Theology, Philosophy or Human/Social Science.

Investigate/explore: What is the religious content and context being explored? How deep can we go? This 'explore' stage of the enquiry is where children will be primarily learning about religion and belief. In order for this to be effective there are some strategies that can be used to 'deepen' learning:

- Interpreting and analysing sacred texts
- Using challenging and controversial questions
- Extended pieces of writing
- Discussion which continually asks 'Have we gone deep enough yet?'
- Children engage with authentic religious believers (face to face, via webcams, podcasts, video, skype etc)
- Grapple with complex theological concepts, questions and issues

Evaluate/communicate: What is our understanding of the concept? What impact does the concept have on the lives of believers? What difference does this belief/practice make? The aim of this part of the enquiry is to encourage dialogue about the learning. Children should use skills of analysis and evaluation. The focus should be on the impact of the belief or practice on the religious or belief community being studied.



Reflect on/express: What is our understanding and response to the enquiry question when considered from the perspective of the faith and belief traditions that have been encountered? What is our personal response? It should be always based on knowledge and understanding, not values or SMSC development.

Impact of the LDBS syllabus:

- Children will be able to hold a balanced and well-informed conversation about religion and worldviews. (Religious literacy)
- Children will make good or better academic progress from their starting points as a result of a rich and engaging RE curriculum.
- Children will be able to reflect, respond and express their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions.
- Children will be able to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, belief systems, values and practices.
- Children will have developed a deeper understanding of what it means to live life in all its fullness.

6. Religious Education in Early Years Foundation Stage

Religious Education in the Early Years Foundation stage has the same aims as the wider school syllabus and ensures that two thirds of the curriculum is based on Christian teaching. Each unit addresses an aspect of Christian theology, philosophy, human & social science, and addresses a core concept at an age appropriate level.

7. Religious Education in Key Stage 1

By the end of Key Stage One, we aim to ensure that all children have an understanding of the main beliefs and teachings of Christianity, Judaism and one other world faith at an age-appropriate level. Children will have begun to recognise similarities and differences within and between religions and have an awareness of what it means to have a religious or non-religious worldview. Children will have a religious vocabulary appropriate to their age and be able to ask important questions about life. They will be able to recognise that others may have a different viewpoint to their own. Some children working at greater depth will have begun to make connections and be able to describe what things are different and the same for religious people.



8. Religious Education in Key Stage 2

In Key Stage Two, we aim to enhance children's previous learning and enable them to develop a greater understanding of core beliefs and theological concepts of Christianity. Children will be given the opportunity to study three further world faiths.

By the end of key stage two, our aim is that children will be religiously literate at an age-appropriate level. They will be able to confidently use a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary. That they will have a solid understanding of Christianity as a diverse and global living faith and other world faiths studied and know what the impact of belonging to a faith has on a believers' life. We also want our children to have a solid understanding of what it means to have a religious or non-religious worldview. We aim for our children by the end of Key Stage Two, to be able to express and justify their own views with confidence. We aim for them to be critically thinkers and be able to engage critically with Biblical and other sacred texts. We want our children to be able to draw on their religious and worldview knowledge in order to formulate their own opinion and understanding of the world in which they inhabit.

9. Access to the curriculum

We recognise, through our adaptive planning system, that children have a variety of learning needs and therefore these are reflected in the activities that are planned. We take each child as an individual and with sensitivity, in order to minimise any barriers to learning. Our aim is that this will enable them to develop new skills, concepts and knowledge and to flourish.

All children are treated with equal respect, worth and value regardless of race, colour, background, gender, sexuality, learning need or learning ability.

10. Environment and Resources

We aim to provide a rich, stimulating and engaging environment in which Religious Education can take place, that fosters deep questioning and thinking.

We plan and organise the environment, with a range of tasks and activities that are adapted accordingly, to ensure that all children can access the curriculum, whatever their stage of development and learning need. We promote both independent and collaborative working. All tasks have equal status in our planning and delivery of the curriculum.

We enable children to know how to handle a range of artefacts. We value the importance of hands-on experience with a rich variety of real-life resources, including class trips and visitors. We pride ourselves on the working relationship we have with our parish and work collaboratively with the church and wider community.



11. Planning, Assessment, Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

Teachers use the LDBS units of learning and adapt them so that lessons are tailored to the needs of the specific cohort. The LDBS syllabus is designed to have content that is two thirds Christian and one third other major world faiths.

At St. Michael's we use the LDBS curriculum assessment questions which enable staff to make a judgement on pupil progress.

Standards and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated in the following way:

Ongoing formative assessment opportunities consisting of:

- high quality teacher questioning
- teacher observations particularly around children's verbal contributions to class and group discussions
- teacher observations of when children are engaging in collaborative learning opportunities
- Teaching Assistants scribing children's verbal responses during class discussions and debates.
- Quality verbal and written feedback
- Ongoing self and peer assessment
- Beginning and end of unit self-assessments
- Prior knowledge and understanding mind maps at the beginning of a unit and then re-visited at the end of a unit thus offering a tool that evidences clearly a child's progress of learning during a unit
- Summative assessment

12. Continued Professional Development

Inset and training is provided by the RE Leader, SLT and specialist advisors from the LDBS

13. Parents and Carers

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help children flourish.

Feedback on children's knowledge and understanding is given to parents at Parent's Evenings and in the end of year reports. Parents are invited to view children's work at parent's evening.



14. Role of the RE Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of Religious Education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- To keep up to date with developments in the area of Religious Education through reading, attending LDBS RE network meetings and training and by forming links with other Church of England schools.
- To monitor and evaluate the planning, teaching and assessment of Religious Education across the school in collaboration with the leadership team.
- To support staff in the teaching of Religious Education across the school through team planning, teaching and moderation.
- To lead the review of the policies and impact of the syllabus on raising standards.
- To plan and lead INSET and CPD to build on the staff's knowledge and practice of effective Religious Education teaching.
- To work closely with the senior leadership team to identify CPD needs of individuals, teams and the whole school.
- To regular review and keep up to date the school's self-evaluation document for RE that forms part of the SIAMS ongoing self-evaluation document.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

15. Evaluation and Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the RE leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every year by the Governing Body

Date of validation..... Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Date of review..... Signed.....

Chair of Governors