

**Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery  
and  
Christ Church (Church of England) Junior School**

**“Working together to build a strong foundation through faith and learning.”**



Religious Education Policy

Proverbs 22:6 Start children off on the way they should go: and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.

**Christian vision:  
To grow and learn together with God by our side.**

Policy Adopted: November 2022  
Review: November 2025

## Introduction

Religious Education (RE) teaches children about the nature of religious beliefs and practices. It also teaches children about the importance and influence these religions have on their lives. The RE curriculum helps with the development of a child's spiritual, moral and cultural development. It enables children to learn about some of the major religions; festivals, special books, beliefs and practises as well as encouraging children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people.

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools we help children to learn from religions as well as about religions. We aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths in order to create a religiously educated person for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

RE plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The SIAMS schedule 2018 (Strand 7) makes it clear that RE should reflect the school's Christian vision:

### Christian ethos and Core Christian Values

***Our distinctively Christian ethos contributes to Christ Church as a centre of learning excellence inclusive to all.***

***Through living out our core Christian values – respect, kindness, honesty, love, friendship and perseverance.***

***We are a community in which all our members are respected and valued, and can flourish as human beings equally created in the image of God.***

***As a school, we provide an engaging, well balanced and inspirational curriculum through which every child's potential may be fulfilled.***

***Through positive encouragement and nurturing, each child has the opportunity to develop to the full – socially, emotionally, spiritually and academically – so as to be equipped with the life skills needed to live as a valued and valuable member of society.***

*'Grow and Learn together with God by our side.'*

Working together to build a strong foundation through faith and learning.

Proverbs 22:6 Start children off on the way they should go: and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.

## Policy for Religious Education

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the use of Religious Education at Christ Church (Church of England) Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools.

### Aims for Religious Education

Christ Church (Church of England) Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools are Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools and thus reflects a partnership between Church and the State in providing education for all in which a community life within a Christian Atmosphere is encouraged.

At Christ Church Religious Education plays an important role along with all other curriculum areas in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. RE is an important area in its own right and is regarded as a core subject within the school's curriculum. It has a vital role in developing religious literacy and deepening pupils understanding of Christianity, in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions.

Here at Christ Church we aim that all our children will:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith.
- Explore the Bible as the foundation document of Christianity, especially its accounts of the life, teaching and significance of Jesus Christ and the early Christian Community.
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in the UK today.
- Value and celebrate diversity in our community and our world. Have confidence in their own beliefs, and develop a positive attitude to other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own.
- Question, explore, understand and respect their own and other's understandings of the world.
- Reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal approach to questions which may be posed i.e. 'How valuable do you think the 10 Commandments are as rules for life today?' and follow on by consideration of 'What rules do you live your life by?'
- Develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and beliefs and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Explore the Christian faith and its implications in daily life.
- Explore the present day working of the church, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Develop a personal awareness of their value as an individual, the society of which they are a part and an appreciation of the natural world and their role in its conservation.
- Explore similarities and differences between and within religions.

### **Legal Requirement**

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). 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 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 Executive Head Teacher. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with personal, social, health education (PSHE) and British values. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus. In addition, as a Voluntary Controlled School, we use the Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity resource and other appropriate materials to enhance teaching and learning. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take into account the teachings and practices of other major religions, which are, in our case, Sikhism and Islam.

### **Teaching and Learning**

In EYFS the class teachers deliver the RE curriculum in school and are responsible for the planning and differentiation for all pupils including SEND, PP and the more-able. In Key Stage 1 and 2 a specialist teacher plans and delivers RE to all cohorts. This ensures continuity and progressions across the Federation.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE 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 and Diwali to develop their religious thinking. Where possible we organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

In Nursery the children do not have a discreet RE lesson but RE is delivered through the continuous provision in the form of bible stories, celebrations, worship sessions, circle time/PSED. Diversity and values also reinforced through all areas of learning.

In Reception RE has a discrete timetable slot for teacher input throughout the year. The children in Reception are taught using Understanding Christianity resources in the teacher input sessions. For example, the Understanding Christianity Unit (What makes every person unique and precious?) is taught as part of the Marvellous Me topic in Autumn 1. Reception staff also plan activities to support this learning through the continuous provision.

In Year 1 RE continues with a discrete timetabled lesson with teacher input and continuous provision until the end of the Autumn Term. During the spring and summer terms continuous provision is phased out and RE is taught as a whole class lesson with a one-hour time allocation per week.

The discrete one-hour lesson continues through years 2 to 6. RE is also found in other aspects of school life such as PSHE, celebrating festivals, collective worship, class discussions and circle times or stories with a moral or cultural theme.

In Key Stage 1 the children learn about Christianity and aspects of Sikhism and Islam. In KS2 the children learn about Christianity and further develop their understanding of Sikhism and Islam. Hinduism is also introduced at KS2. The children learn about these religions through encountering some of the important places and objects connected with the religions that are studied. Children become familiar with stories about key people and learn about practices, celebrations and events as well as using stories and symbols.

Through the teaching of RE, children develop positive attitudes towards other people. They also enhance their own moral and social development by:

- Responding to stories from the Bible and stories from other religious traditions.
- Realising that Bible stories and stories from other religions often deal with feelings and situations similar to their own.
- Talking and thinking about puzzling/big questions which arise in life.
- Talking and listening to others about personally important matters.
- Exploring the sense of belonging to a community and especially belonging to a Christian community.
- Exploring the difference between right and wrong, fair and unfair.
- Expressing themselves in art, drama or dance.
- Expressing themselves creatively and thoughtfully with times of reflection and quiet.
- Responding to the wonder and beauty of creation.

### **Strategies for the Teaching of Religious Education**

The content of the Religious Education Curriculum at Christ Church primarily draws upon the Understanding Christianity resource from the Lichfield diocese. The planning has a good balance between teaching children theology, philosophy and human science.

Theology- the study of the nature of God and religious belief.

Philosophy- a theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour.

Human Science - the study of people and their actions

In addition to this, the world religions of Islam and Sikhism, will also be taught throughout the Key Stage.

- modes of working in RE will include class teaching, group work and individual work where deemed appropriate within this structure.
- groups are usually of mixed ability.
- teacher produced worksheets and photo-copiable resources may be used.
- discussion is encouraged (class, group and pairs-talking partners).
- groups/classes are encouraged to communicate their findings in a variety of ways - some suggestions may include: dance, music, model making, IT, assembly and drama. Teaching stimuli may include the use of a story, class visits and follow up, use of artefacts, question planning for visitors, pictures, use of the IWB and associated files, ICT resources, Power-point presentations, DVDs and internet links.

## **Skills**

It is intended that all children should have experience of a range of skills throughout the Key Stage. These may include the following:

**investigation/ enquiry/ exploration** from a variety of media into belief, faith, etc.

**interpreting** religious language, text and symbols.

**expression** of their own personal views about religion.

**empathy/ sensitivity** into views and practices of others to enhance understanding and respect.

**understanding and application** to a child's own situation and applying his/her own beliefs, attitudes and values.

**reflection** on beliefs, practices, customs etc.

**sharing/ collaboration** in activities, and **participation** e.g. in worship.

**observation** of religious activities.

**developing** appropriate **attitudes** e.g. openness and enquiry.

**evaluation** of self, inner thoughts and feelings and inner awareness of one's own spirit.

**responding** to questions and challenges of life.

Excellence in RE is celebrated in display and presentation including:

- displays in the classroom, on class worship areas and around the school.
- sharing work in achievement assemblies.
- presentation and display of work as part of class assemblies etc

## **Continuity and Progression**

The subject leader is responsible for planning and delivering RE, due to teaching RE across the Key Stages.

- the foundation for curricular planning is the School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff and approved by governors.
- schemes of work for RE are developed by the co-ordinator responsible for RE (these come in the form of smartboard files).
- termly plans are stored on the school server in a folder entitled Understanding Christianity.
- staff meetings to discuss the RE curriculum are held when appropriate.

## **The Role of the RE Co-ordinators is to:**

- take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in RE throughout the school.

- monitor progress in RE.
- review the RE policy and guidelines on a regular basis
- create the RE Action plan in line with the SDP and ensuring its regular review
- ensure RE has status within the school
- undertake personal development and subject training and ensure provision for staff INSET
- support colleagues in the implementation of schemes, assessment and record keeping activities.
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation for resources for RE.
- keep up to date with developments in RE and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.
- meets with the Foundation governors to discuss and evaluate RE highlighting areas of strength/weakness and areas for further improvement.

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**RE Coordinator:**

Mrs K Heron

**Monitoring**

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the subject leader, senior leadership team and foundation governors as part of the school's agreed cycle of self-evaluation. Regular monitoring of RE takes many forms which includes the monitoring of lessons, books and pupil voice where both written and verbal feedback is given which focuses on strengths seen and areas for development.

**Assessment, Recording and Marking**

Religious Education has equal standing with the National Curriculum subjects, but is not subject to national attainment targets and assessment arrangements. Assessments are built into the schemes of work, where appropriate, as end of unit tasks, including "Big Question" type activities, and an appropriate record recording sheet for each unit is in each folder

Assessment in RE is concerned with pupils' growing knowledge and understanding and their application of skills.

**EYFS**

In EYFS, assessments are made using the Early Years Foundation Stage Milestones document and Early Learning Goals. RE can make an active contribution to all areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to Understanding the World and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

**Key Stage 1**

In Key Stage one assessment is ongoing through teacher observation, discussion and performance. On completion of a unit of work, the class teacher will look at the children's increasing knowledge and understanding and make a summary judgement for each pupil. For the Understanding Christianity Units, RE assessment is based on Derek and Verity Holloway's assessment guidelines as advised by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education. Assessment Sheets have also been developed to support judgements in the units taught from the Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus.

Each class has an RE Class book for content and pupil responses to be recorded throughout the year. These are passed onto the next class teacher.

In Key Stage 1 each child has their own RE book to record their RE learning and reflection journey.

**Key Stage 2**

At KS2 children are expected to gather information and make associations and connections for developing a base of knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Islam and Sikhism.

Reporting will most likely be in the form of a narrative comment, which will be based on the professional perceptions of the teacher and the evidence of the child's work. This will be shared with parents in the annual report for children.

The reporting will be brief, informative, accurate, efficient and easy to use to facilitate transfer.

**Feedback to pupils** about their own progress in RE is achieved through the marking of work.

### **Effective marking:**

- aims to help children learn and move them on in their learning
- comments aim to be positive and constructive.
- is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher.
- can involve peer group marking

### **Achievement**

It is hoped that by the end of KS2 children at Christ Church should be able to use knowledge gained to

- recognise some of the traditions and customs of different faith groups and from this be able to recognise that questions they raise about beliefs and life issues may give rise to a variety of answers.
- express a personal opinion about religion and life issues.
- describe points of similarity and difference between their own and other people's experiences.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children will be provided with opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life where a broadly Christian ethos is provided.

Within this framework, opportunities will be provided regardless of gender, race, ability and culture for children to develop positive attitudes towards beliefs, faiths and practices of others.

### **Children with Special Needs**

Whilst there is a need to provide a full range of learning experiences for pupils with SEN, it is important to realise that pupils will need to work at levels appropriate to their stage of intellectual development. With this in mind class teachers will adapt the work and teaching where deemed appropriate.

### **Use of Resources**

A variety of Religious Education resources are available in school. These include children's reference books, teacher's resource books, Good News Bibles, pictorial resources such as posters, pictures and videos and artefacts. Resources are shared and all staff, including visiting students and supply teachers, have equal access to all resources.

Resources are purchased by the RE Coordinator following the general school ordering procedures.

### **Health and Safety Issues**

When children handle artefacts, staff must be aware that when the artefact was made, safety standards may not have been as stringent as they are for British educational equipment.

### **Withdrawal from Religious Education**

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools we aim 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 Executive Head Teacher 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.

### **Homework**

Regular homework is not set. However, children may be asked to bring into school relevant items of interest to share. Also, children may be asked to talk to adult members of their family about special occasions, experiences, people, places, things etc., relevant to work being covered.