

**CHRIST CHURCH (CHURCH OF ENGLAND)
INFANT SCHOOL & NURSERY**

**“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.

Policy Adopted: September 2019

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. 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 encourage children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people.

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery 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 21st 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:

Our vision is to ensure that 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.

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Purpose

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.

We teach RE to help our children to:

- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- Develop interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and beliefs and enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

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.

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 Key Stage One, RE is taught as a discrete subject and is allocated 1 hour per week of teaching time. 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.

Children learn about Christianity and aspects of Sikhism and Islam 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 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 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.

Assessment

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

In EYFS, assessments are made using the Early Years Foundation Stage "Development Matters" document. 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.

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. 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 of the school.

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

Each child has their own RE book to record their RE learning and reflection journey.

Monitoring

The co-ordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping them informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject.
- meets with the RE link governor on a termly basis to update, discuss and evaluate RE highlighting areas of strength/weakness and areas for further improvement.

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

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.

Right to Withdrawal

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery 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 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.

Equal Opportunities

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery we strive to provide equal access to the RE curriculum and equal opportunities for all pupils.