



Date Approved by Governing Body	September 2022
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Waterhouses CE Primary Academy and Nursery
Religious Education Policy

'Let your light shine!'



Make your light shine, so others will see the good you do and will praise your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

Church School Vision

This policy is embedded in the school's overall vision, which is '*to provide a stimulating, creative and inclusive environment based on Christian values in which all children will thrive and achieve the best that they possibly can. School life is built on our core values of Love, Hope, Trust and Respect*'.

As a church school our foundation for living and learning are the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

At Waterhouses CE Primary Academy and Nursery Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. As a school we recognise that spiritual development lies at the heart of the curriculum. All members of the school community should experience Christianity through the life of the school, as well as through the taught curriculum.

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools, published by the National Society and adopted by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education (2012). Christianity will therefore be the majority study in RE as understanding Christianity as a living religion is the foundation of Religious Education in church 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.

Church schools have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and world views. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also be able to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice.

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 of all pupils. The school bases its RE provision on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus (2016) and Understanding Christianity. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan RE Resources and other appropriate units to enhance teaching and offer the extra dimension of its Church foundation.

A minimum of 1 hour per week is timetabled in both Key Stages 1 and 2 for Religious Education but it is also taught implicitly at many times. The Foundation Stage has some discrete teaching during the week and is also provided for through continuous provision.

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.

Rationale for RE at Waterhouses CE Primary Academy and Nursery

Religious Education (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. The subject 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. RE is non-confessional and should be treated as an academic subject in its own right.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- To help prepare and equip all pupils for life and to understand the challenges faced by Christians in today's diverse and plural Britain, through fostering in each pupil an increasing level of religious literacy ie to have an established and growing knowledge and understanding of beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views.
- To offer a full and positive presentation of living Christianity and to enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today.
- To enable pupils to learn about other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents.
- 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 contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith 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.

- 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.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of Pupils

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 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 in our society.

Cultural - aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and in developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with PSHE. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

Right to Withdraw

At Waterhouses CE Primary Academy 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. Parents wishing to exercise this right or if they have any concerns about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education, are asked to discuss this with the headteacher first.

Approaches to teaching and learning in Religious Education

At Waterhouses CE Primary Academy and Nursery, RE is delivered in line with the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus (2016) and Understanding Christianity. Our teaching aims will be achieved by:

- **Exploring** religious beliefs, teachings and practices - so acquiring knowledge and understanding of religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyles, rituals and symbolism that offer insight into religious experience and living within a faith community.
- **Engaging** with fundamental questions - so appreciating the human and religious questions that are raised by life and its experiences, and through which meaning, significance and value are forged, and by expressing and evaluating their personal responses to such questions- so gaining skills to be able to relate the things studied and discussed, to their own experience.
- **Reflecting** on the reality of religious diversity and on the issues raised by living in a diverse world - so developing skills of analysis in relation to prejudice and discrimination together with skills of self-awareness, moral judgement and responsible choice.

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, RE forms a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage. During the Foundation Stage, children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

In each key stage, teaching and learning involves an in-depth study of the narrative, beliefs and practices at the heart of Christianity. As a church school the majority of teaching is Christianity. Islam

features throughout the RE curriculum but is studied in depth in Y3/4. In Key Stage One, Christianity and one other focus faith, Judaism is taught. In Y5/6 Sikhism is taught as an example of a further major world faith. In Y5/6, in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus, pupils begin to develop an awareness of secular world views as appropriate, for example Humanism and atheism.

We believe that Religious Education should be an exciting subject and so we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, drama, discussion, use of ICT, exploring artefacts, foods, pictures, photographs, visiting places of worship and listening to people from different faith groups. Learning is recorded not only through a range of writing e.g. letters, diaries and recounts, stories, notes, information and explanation writing but also through pictures and artwork, photographs of drama or notes following class discussions.

Equal Opportunities

All children are given access to the same learning opportunities. Account is taken of children with special educational needs through differentiation of task and outcome and a planned balance of class teaching and group work and providing resources of different complexity. All pupils should be able to feel secure in their study of Religious Education whatever the religious or non-religious tradition of their home.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We assess children's work in Religious Education by assessing their progress continuously throughout the lesson and asking questions that extend the children's thinking and provide the next challenge. There is teacher assessment against success criteria for learning in each topic. Topics are planned to ensure there are opportunities for greater depth of learning for some children. At the end of each topic, pupils are given time to discuss and review their learning. Parents receive an annual report on their child's progress and achievement in RE.

Management of RE

The role of the RE Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Producing a long-term plan for RE for the school ensuring coverage of the programmes of study in the Agreed Syllabus, continuity and progression
 - Supporting colleagues in short term 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 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
 - Accountability for RE standards in the school
 - Meet with a member of the Diocesan RE advisory team each term.
- This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.