



“Let your light shine” Matthew 5:16

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Religious Education Policy

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This revision: June 2019

All Saints Primary School, Bishops Caundle

Religious Education Policy

This Policy reflects and reinforces the school's vision – *'Nurturing hearts; Inspiring minds'* which is underpinned by the Bible quote *"Let your light shine"* Matthew 5:16. At All Saints, by nurturing hearts and inspiring minds, we encourage all pupils to shine in everything they do.

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that *'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'*

All Saints Primary is a Voluntary Controlled school therefore we deliver RE in line with the Syllabus The Dorset Agreed Syllabus for RE (September 2016) using an enquiry based approach through 'Understanding Christianity' and 'Discovery RE'

Aims

At All Saints CE VC Primary School we aim that Religious Education will:-

- **Provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **Teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice.
- **Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery**

See resources 'Understanding Christianity' and 'Discovery RE' for specific skills and attitudes developed in RE.

The Importance of RE in the curriculum

- **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** – Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which *'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'*. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of

religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

- **Personal development and well-being** – RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.
- **Community cohesion** – RE makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective RE will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance:
 - **The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
 - **The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief, and forge links with different groups in the local area.
 - **The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK, and how this influences national life.
 - **The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. RE is an important subject in contribution to the schools development as a Rights Respecting School.

Organisation and Planning

Religious Education at All Saints Primary School is delivered in the following way:

- The resources 'Understanding Christianity' and 'Discovery RE' are used as a basis for our planning.
- At KS 1 and KS 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam.
- We allow pupils to play a full part in their own learning in RE:
 - **As learners**, by deploying skills, asking questions and exploring answers
 - **As individuals**, using their own experience and background to reflect on questions of truth and morality and deeper meanings of life and death
 - **As citizens**, promoting debate and dialogue, celebrating diversity, taking appropriate action, putting principles into action

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

While RE is not a statutory requirement for the early years foundation stage, it will be taught at All Saints Primary School to contribute to the following EYFS areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development.

- Communication, language and literacy.
- Knowledge and understanding of the world. - Creative development.

Assessment and Monitoring of RE

Formative assessment is used during lessons and teachers utilise a variety of methods (questioning, discussion, marking, feedback, etc.) in order to determine how each pupil is progressing. Three times a year each pupil will be assessed in RE. The co-ordinator will track pupil progress through the school to ensure that each pupil is learning at an appropriately challenging level.

The co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data and learning scrutiny. The co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the church school self-evaluation process.

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher also make sure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum.
- The subject is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD.
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion.
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion.
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.
- Teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations and pupils can make good progress.
- Where there are insufficient teachers who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE. In these circumstances, head teachers might wish to seek advice from their LA or SDBE. (Salisbury Diocese Board of Education)

At All Saints School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their children 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.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at All Saints School.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.