

# St John's CE VA Primary School

## Religious Education Policy



At St John's we are:

Loved by God - Learning with Jesus - Living by the Spirit.

### 1 Introduction

Our school is a Church of England **Voluntary Aided School** and the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School i.e., the practices and principles of the Church of England. The C of E 'Statement of Entitlement' for Religious Education 2019' underpins our provision and informs this policy.

We provide a religious education curriculum which is rich and varied and which enables learners to acquire both a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and to find out about a broad range of other faiths and world-views.

As St John's is a CEVA Primary school, we consider RE to be a subject of fundamental importance and as such it takes a high priority in the curriculum. The governing body of our school has adopted the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus as the basis of our RE syllabus. This has been supplemented by some extra material on Christianity. Additional ideas, information and guidance on Religious Education suited to the particular needs of a church school are sought from the diocese. There is a close link with St. John's Church which enables pupils to see Christian life, worship and commitments at first hand and provides opportunity to mark the celebrations of the Christian year.

We recognise that while many of our pupils come from church going families others come from a variety of religious and secular backgrounds and we welcome this diversity. Our Religious Education programme seeks to be sensitive to the home background of each child; it is not the function of Religious Education to promote or disparage particular religious views.

### 2 Aims

Within the framework of the Education Acts and Suffolk Agreed Syllabus, our aims in religious education are:

- to enable each child to explore the human experiences people share and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from those experiences
- to enable pupils to know about and understand the beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Suffolk and the UK. Among these, Christianity has a particular place, and is taught in each year of the primary phase
- to promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region and the country

- to affirm each child in his/her own family tradition, religious or secular
- to provide opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus gives more details of the importance of Religious Education in the curriculum and selects two main aims for its programmes of study and attainment targets: 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion.'

### 3 Time Allocation

The Dearing Curriculum Review (1996) recommended a minimum of 36 hours per year for Religious Education at Key Stage 1, and 45 hours at Key Stage 2; this was reiterated in *Developing and Managing the Primary Curriculum* (QCA, 2003) and is endorsed by the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus 2012. Religious Education curriculum time does not include collective worship, even where an assembly complements or provides a starting point for curricular work.

The time allocated at St. John's is 36 hours per year at Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year at Key Stage 2 in line with recommendations. This is equivalent to 1 hour and 1 ¼ hours per week, respectively. Approximately 30 minutes a week of teacher-directed time is provided for reception pupils, who must receive Religious Education according to the Agreed Syllabus but for whom there is no time recommendation in the documents above.

### 4 Curriculum

Religious Education in church schools should contribute to the school's Christian character and teaching about Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, is at its heart. However, as inclusive communities, church schools encourage learning about and learning from other religions and foster respect for different world views.

All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and steps should be taken to ensure a range of teaching styles, groupings and resources to allow all children to make progress in RE.

We use the Emmanuel Project, a scheme of work for EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) to Y6, which follows an enquiry-based approach looking at the key beliefs and concepts which are important in different faiths. The scheme matches the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.

We enrich our RE curriculum with creative and varied teaching methods, which include art and drama, debating, interactive displays. We hold additional whole school theme days on aspects of Christian Faith and arrange a range of visits and visitors.

## **5 Contribution to spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) development**

These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute. At St. John's, Religious Education should play a part in:

- developing an awareness of a spiritual dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way (spiritual)
- providing a forum for pupils to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by (moral)
- encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and a sense of 'community' (social)
- evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, art, music, drama and literature and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers (cultural).

## **6 Inclusion**

We are committed to equality of opportunities regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We aim to make the RE curriculum accessible to all and accommodate individual needs when appropriate. These needs include, but are not limited to, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and English as an Additional Language (EAL (English as an Additional Language)). As such, teachers plan lessons to cater for different learning styles and aim to present materials using multisensory resources.

## **7 Links with the Diocese, Cathedral and parish church**

All schools are part of an Anglican parish and all children should have the opportunity to visit a local church as part of their RE. We have strong links with our local Church, St. John the Baptist Church. In addition, we also have connections with the Cathedral through the Discovery Centre Team, and an awareness of some Diocesan events.

## **8 Use of ICT**

Pupils are being given increasing opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability where appropriate in Religious Education.

At St. John's, teachers are encouraged to use a Religious Education gateway site: [www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk) as a basic resource for their own and pupils' needs. The Scheme of work provides details of other useful websites with information on religions, pictures of ceremonies and artefacts and also sites run by different religious communities.

## **9 Professional development for staff**

The school acknowledges that no teacher can be an instant expert in six religions. The subject leader has delivered training in staff meetings and is available to support staff who need to develop subject knowledge, skills and personal confidence in teaching Religious Education. The school acknowledges that professional development of this kind is not easy to organise or finance but is committed to ensuring all staff are well equipped to teach Religious Education.

## **10 Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment in RE is a valuable tool by which teachers know that children are making good progress and which enables them to plan future work. The Emmanuel Project offers a range of tasks in each unit to ensure teachers can measure the progress of their pupils. Assessment is based on pupils' depth of knowledge and understanding related to the key questions addresses in the curriculum. There will be opportunities for pupils to use self-assessment to develop their own sense of progress and to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. Standards in RE should be equal to, or exceed, those of other curriculum subjects. We are also required by law to report on pupils' progress and attainment in Religious Education to parents. The Agreed Syllabus provides descriptions of levels of attainment to use as a basis for reporting.

## **11 Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice and, in particular, monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. A foundation governor is the Religious Education governor who is available to assist in this process and to provide feedback. RE provision is externally assessed by SIAMS.

## **12 Provision for withdrawal from Religious Education**

In all schools, parents currently have the right in law to withdraw completely or partially their children from the RE provided in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25(4) and 30, which was re-enacted in 1988. This right does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religions or religious matters. Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given. The school brochure and website advises parents of the current provision for Religious Education. They are asked to contact the Headteacher if they wish to withdraw their child. It is hoped that, in discussing their requirements, an understanding can be reached and arrangements made. Supervision will be provided for a child withdrawn from Religious Education if remaining on the premises. Parents may arrange for their child to receive alternative religious education off-site as long as the school is satisfied it only affects the start or end of a school session.

St. John's is a voluntary aided school, therefore Teachers (who are expected to have signed a National Society contract) may not withdraw from Religious Education.

## **13. Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

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

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn;
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- the religious ethos of the school is maintained and developed.

## **14. Linked Policies**

Due to the focus and purpose of this policy, there are also direct and intrinsic links to the following:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

- Collective Worship Policy
- SMSC Policy
- SRE (Sex & Relationship Education) Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Science Policy
- RE Policy
- PE Policy
- SEN (Special Educational Needs) Policy

Please also refer to those named policies for more comprehensive information.

**Signed:**

**Mrs Eve Burton**

**RE & Collective Worship Lead**

		Date
Version	1.3	20.01.2022
Drafted by	E. Burton	20.11.2015
Reviewed by	All Staff	Feb 2022
Approved by	Curriculum Cttee	March 2022
Ratified by	Governing Body	March 2022
Review period	2 years	
Date of Review		March 2024