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.

Religious Education is compulsory for all registered pupils unless withdrawn by a parent exercising their legal right of withdrawal. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, Religious Education is provided in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. The Governing Body is responsible for determining the school's RE curriculum and ensuring that statutory requirements are met.

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 worldviews. 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

As set out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement 2026 'Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together'.

Our aim for Religious Education is the same as that stated in the 'Where do I stand?' Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023:

- ‘to develop religiously literate citizens who:
  - possess rich knowledge of the beliefs of different religions and worldviews, including how these may be differently interpreted or change over time.
  - recognise that the ‘lived reality’ 11 of different religions and worldviews is complex and diverse, and that generalities and assumptions must be treated with care.
  - contribute constructively to debate about religious questions and shared human concerns, using their understanding of religion and belief.’

3 Time Allocation

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.

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 closely matches the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus and the different disciplinary lenses, including:

- theology (beliefs about God)
- philosophy (big questions and thinking)
- human/social sciences (how religion is lived in real life).

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.

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 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.

9 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.

10 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.

11 Provision for withdrawal from Religious Education

In all schools, Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child wholly or partly from Religious Education. They do not need to provide a reason for the request. 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. If a parent asks that a pupil is withdrawn, then the school will grant the request without delay and alternative arrangements would be made. Schools have a duty to supervise a withdrawn pupil, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Parents may arrange alternative religious education for the pupil. If this happens, this must not disrupt the rest of the pupil's education or incur any extra cost for the school. Although parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from the RE curriculum, pupils may encounter learning about religious and non-religious worldviews in other curriculum areas from which a parent cannot withdraw their child. As such, the right to be withdrawn from RE does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religious matters.

In this school, we will:

· Clarify for parent the educational nature and aims of RE.

· Provide supervision for a withdrawn child remaining on the premises, but not additional teaching or materials which incur cost.

St. John’s is a voluntary aided school, therefore the teaching of RE will normally form part of teachers' professional duties in accordance with their contract of employment and the school's religious character.

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
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