



# RE Curriculum Policy

Updated: April 2024

Up for review: April 2027

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

We treasure each child and enable them to flourish, using their God-given potential, establishing a secure foundation for them to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

We are a 'Christ-centred school, with a child-centred curriculum' where wisdom and love guide and influence learning and teaching for our whole community.

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## INTRODUCTION

Religious Education is a legal requirement for every pupil and forms part of the basic curriculum as set down in the 1998 Education Act. Its place in the curriculum is an acknowledgement of the fact that religious beliefs and practices play an important part in the lives of many people worldwide and have done so throughout history. Christianity will form the majority religious study in all church schools. An understanding of religion can help children develop a better appreciation of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

This is a County Primary Aided school. The Education Acts require that the Religious Education should be provided according to the syllabus laid down by the school governors in line with the Trust Deeds of the school. This document is available in school.



## STATEMENT OF ENTITLEMENT

Please see p.10 for the Statement of Entitlement

The curriculum is planned to deliver R.E. through a combination of methods:

- Religious education is taught mainly through weekly lessons, however opportunities arise in all areas of the curriculum. The R.E. units of work are linked with cross-curricular school topics whenever possible;
- The opportunity is taken to deliver identified areas of R.E. through assemblies and collective worship. The work is carefully planned and followed up in class when appropriate;
- Separately identified R.E. is found at different times of the year covering significant festivals throughout the Liturgical Year, including Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Advent and Christmas.

### Intent

At St. Mary's, our intent to give the teaching and learning of RE is

- a) To engage pupils in enquiring into and exploring questions arising from the study of religion and belief, so as to promote their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- b) To provide learners with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions and beliefs represented in Great Britain.
- c) To develop their understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and outlook,
- d) To enable learners to apply the insights of the principal religions traditions to their own search for identity and significance.
- e) To enable learners to become aware of their own beliefs and values and to have a positive attitude to the search for meaning and purpose in life.
- f) To encourage learners to develop a positive attitude towards other people who hold religious beliefs different from their own.

### Links to other policies

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and documents including:

- West Sussex Agreed Syllabus
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Maps



## **Implementation**

### **CURRICULUM**

It is clearly stated in the Agreed Syllabus that R.E. in schools is concerned with educating children about religion and for them to learn from religion. It is not concerned with inducting them in a particular faith; this is the responsibility of the family or the faith community. Pupils will learn about Christianity, as the main religious tradition in this country, but also about the teaching and practices of some of the other principal world religions represented in this country. In Key Stage One, children will learn about Judaism, in Years Three and Four the focus will change to Hinduism and in Years Five and Six, Islam with a review of Judaism.

### **Curriculum Organisation**

Religious Education is taught through a combination of classroom work and work linked to assemblies. This work is co-ordinated to ensure the highest quality of learning experiences for the pupils and to cover the requirements of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus and the guidelines provided by the Diocese of Chichester. The curriculum for Christianity is based on 'Understanding Christianity'.

The curriculum is planned to deliver R.E. through a combination of methods:

- Religious education is taught mainly through weekly lessons, however opportunities arise in all areas of the curriculum. The R.E. units of work are linked with cross-curricular school topics whenever possible;
- The opportunity is taken to deliver identified areas of R.E. through assemblies and collective worship. The work is carefully planned and followed up in class when appropriate;
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Further details can be found in teachers' plans, curriculum maps and schemes of work.

### **Curriculum Time**

The School gives between 5% and 10% of curriculum time to Religious Education in line with the recommendations of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus. It is anticipated that the actual amount of time given each week will vary.

## **UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIANITY**

### **Key Purpose**

The key purpose of these materials is to support pupils in developing their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. It does this by integrating pupils' developing understanding of significant theological concepts



within Christianity with their own self-understanding and understanding of the world, as part of their wider religious literacy.

## **Aims**

- to enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts
- to enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians
- to develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

## **The Understanding Christianity Approach comprises**

1. Three elements which run through all of the units, from EYFS to KS3:
  - **Making Sense of the Text** - Understanding how Christians make sense of Bible stories and texts; developing skills of listening and thinking about what stories and texts mean
  - **Understanding the Impact** - Looking at ways in which Christians respond to Bible stories and texts in the Church community and in their own lives
  - **Making Connections** - Thinking and talking about lessons people learn from the Bible; reflecting on questions and puzzles that arise from the texts and concepts, and making links with their own experiences

The units of work usually begin with a 'way in', then flow from *Making Sense of the Text*, on to *Understanding the Impact* of the text and the concept on the Church community and Christian living, then explore *Making Connections*. This means that the move from text outwards through the world of the Christian and to the world of the pupil runs through each unit.

2. Core Christian concepts, which tell the 'salvation narrative' or 'big story' of the Bible
3. Knowledge 'building blocks' which set out core learning.

There are photo packs that are used to provide starting points for lessons and engage children in asking questions and revisit religions and concepts regularly.

These are all outlined in more detail in the Teacher's Handbook.

## **EYFS**

RE should contribute clearly to Early Learning Goals, especially to:

- communication and language development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy



- understanding of the world
- expressive arts and design.

As practitioners use the units in this resource, it is recommended that they look for ELG links and see what else children might achieve as they explore this RE Learning Theme.

The units for EYFS look slightly different in construction from the units for KS1 upwards. They offer a series of suggestions for engaging children in learning, using stories, drama, art and music, using teacher-led activities and ideas for continuous provision.

Children are introduced to Tessa and Tom, two imaginary Christian characters who enable you to talk about things Christian children learn or do. They provide a context for pupils' learning which is easier to handle than talking abstractly about people of faith and belief.

Teachers can create their own Tom and Tessa, or their own similar characters using persona dolls or suitable photos of children. The names 'Tom' and 'Tessa' are immaterial; feel free to change them.

### **Working Walls**

Each class will have an RE display in their classroom that links the Understanding Christianity and Emmanuel units as well as the 5 E's (Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration and Evaluation) The learning journey will be included with the Big Questions that children are asking about religion. The Christian values will link in with this as part of Collective Worship.

### **Evidence me**

**Early Years use Evidence Me for assessment within RE. This forms the basis of asking questions and recording the answers to show knowledge and skills.**

### **Progression of Knowledge**

The long-term curriculum shows the units of work from Understanding and Christianity that shows progression of skills and knowledge. The curriculum is cyclical for Understanding Christianity as a church school and the other religions build upon in a two year cycle.

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is included in the schemes of work and is progressive to support the teacher in planning the learning. This should be used at the beginning of the unit, then presented throughout and reviewed at the end.

### **Resources**

*Artwork for each unit – Each unit in Understanding Christianity there is a piece of artwork for the children to focus on and discuss as a starting point and can be used within lessons.*

*Photo pack – These cover a range of religions, religious festivals, buildings and people. These can be used to go back and cover children's knowledge and aid discussion to keep them thing about what they know and looking at Big Questions.*



Emmanuel Project – Resources are part of the unit of work

Understanding Christianity – Resources are part of the unit of work

## **Emmanuel Project**

The Emmanuel Project looks at the different religions to ensure that each year group covers a religion or builds on previous knowledge.

## **Short-term Planning**

As with all curricular areas, each individual RE lesson within a unit is recorded on **the school's weekly planning template**, consisting of fundamental aspects of good quality teaching.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The school's Equal Opportunities Policy is used throughout the curriculum and must be adhered to at all times. In addition, it is important in Religious Education to ensure the work being covered is appropriate to pupils who come from any religious background or none.

## **Foundation Stage**

All registered pupils in schools must be taught Religious Education. For the purposes of Religious Education, pupils are considered to be registered when they join the Reception class. From the time the pupil enters the Reception class, Religious Education complies with the syllabus agreed by the Governors.

## **Promoting Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Religious Education provides opportunities for:

**Spiritual development:** through helping pupils to consider and respond to questions of meaning and purpose in life, and questions about the nature and values in human society.

**Moral development:** through helping pupils to consider and respond to areas of morality, using their knowledge and understanding, or religious and ethical teachings. This enables them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues.

**Social development:** through helping pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society.

**Cultural development:** through fostering pupils' awareness and understanding of a range of beliefs, practices and values in their own society, and in the wider world. Pupils explore within and between faiths, developing their understanding of the cultural contexts within which they live.



## **Impact**

Teachers use a variety of means of assessing pupils' work in line with the whole school assessment policy and the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This will include:

- the regular reviewing of pupils' work;
- observing the work of groups and individuals and recording the outcomes;
- marking which is developmental and relevant to the subject matter and involves pupils.
- targets that are set with the children
- RE is seen as a core subject
- a consistency in the quality of planning, teaching and assessing
- a strategic cycle of analysing and evaluating teaching and learning of RE
- Assessments will be made on children working behind Age Related, at Age Related expectation and exceeding Age Related Expectations

## **The Role of Governors**

The Governors of Voluntary Aided schools have a special responsibility for Religious Education and developing the Christian ethos of the school. They oversee the formation, delivery, monitoring and assessment of the agreed Religious Education syllabus and provide an important link with the community. The Ethos Committee meet on a regular basis and have input into the SIAMS self-evaluation book.

## **Withdrawal from RE**

When parents request that their child be withdrawn from Religious Education, they are interviewed by the Headteacher to clarify the beliefs and practices from which they wish their child to be excluded. Because of the need to assure their safety, pupils, when withdrawn, work in the main School Library and complete material brought from home.

## **ASSESSMENT, RECORDING & REPORTING**

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is reported in the annual report to parents and should be in line with other core subjects.

Evidence of RE is held in pupil's books and in portfolios which shows coverage of the schemes of work.



## APPENDIX 1 – STATEMENT OF ENTITLEMENT –

### Religious Education in Church of England Schools

#### A Statement of Entitlement

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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

*Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.<sup>1</sup>*

A high-quality sequential religious education<sup>2</sup> (RE) programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews<sup>3</sup> fostering respect for others. In voluntary aided schools, RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed: this document will help schools interpret that legal requirement. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus for RE unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school. In academies and free schools RE must be taught in accordance with the funding agreement.

The effectiveness of denominational education in Church schools is evaluated during the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) section 48 inspection. That subsequent judgement will reflect the expectations set out in this document. The SIAMS evaluation schedule assesses the way RE contributes to the outworking of church school's Christian vision. It highlights the responsibility of Church school leaders to ensure that pupils flourish academically through the provision of high-quality RE. In addition, in voluntary aided schools, a judgement on standards and teaching and learning in RE is included in the SIAMS report.

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<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office, 2016), available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/vision-education>

<sup>2</sup> Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. The term religious education (RE) is therefore used throughout this document as it is connected to the Section 48 SIAMS inspection and, if and until the law changes, we will need to continue to use the term. This does not stop individual schools, MATs or dioceses using other names including Religion and Worldviews for the subject.

<sup>3</sup> The term worldviews is used throughout the document to refer to a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. It could refer to an 'institutional' worldview to describe organised worldviews including religions as well as Humanism, Secularism and Atheism or a 'personal' worldview for an individual's way of understanding and living in the world which may be drawn

## **The Entitlement: provision, profile and priority**

In a Church school the pupils and their families can expect an RE curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, this should include the ways in which it is unique and diverse. Parents can expect the use of high-quality resources, for example, the Understanding Christianity resource. Pupils can expect that teaching and learning in Church schools will use an approach that engages with biblical text and theological ideas.

Pupils can expect that a Church school RE curriculum will engage and challenge them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. They can expect Church schools to provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews. There should be opportunities for them to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils should explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. RE will go beyond a sociological study of religious phenomena and will introduce pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. In all Church schools progress in RE should be significant and attainment high enabling pupils to develop confident religious literacy.

Parents and pupils can expect that in a Church school RE will have a high profile within the curriculum and will be a priority for senior leaders. The RE curriculum is intrinsic to the outworking of a Church school's Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual moral social and cultural development

Learning activities must provide fully for the needs of all pupils. Pupils should develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. Pupils should have a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They should have opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

## **Curriculum statement: challenging, accurate and diverse**

In all Church schools, religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews 3 through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. It should be a coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning developing both knowledge and skills. There should be a clear curriculum vision and intent, a structure for implementation and provision and a process for evaluating impact.

## **Aims and objectives**

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.



- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

### **Curriculum balance and time: sufficient, appropriate and balanced**

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4.

All pupils in Church schools should follow a recognised and appropriate qualification or course in RE or Religious Studies at KS 4. This includes pupils who have SEND. The study of Christianity will be a significant part of any Religious Studies qualification offered.

The school must make it possible for those students who achieve suitable grades at GCSE or equivalent to follow appropriate A level courses. This should be in addition to the provision of core RE entitlement for all students at KS5 which should continue to develop student's understanding of Christianity and other religions and worldviews.

Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

### **Developing staff expertise and knowledge: confidence specialism professionalism**

Pupils in Church schools are entitled to be taught by teachers who have a secure subject knowledge and are confident in helping them navigate and challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice and extremism. It should be a priority in Church schools to build up staff expertise in RE specifically, but not exclusively, working towards:

- at least one member of staff having RE qualifications or receiving specialist training.
- all staff teaching RE having access to subject specific professional development.
- all staff teaching RE knowing how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigour is balanced with respect for different personal beliefs and identities.
- all teaching staff and governors understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- a governing body which is monitoring standards in RE effectively.

### **The role of the Diocesan Boards of Education**

One function of Diocesan Boards of Education (DBEs) is to promote, or assist in the promotion of, religious education in schools in the diocese. This should be fulfilled by monitoring the quality of religious education in Church schools through taking note of SIAMS inspection reports and by securing high quality training for all schools throughout the diocese. This will help ensure that the provision for religious education is effective and is able to fulfil the expectations of this statement.



## **Support for effective and excellent RE**

Teachers in Church schools belong to a wider educational and church community. They are entitled to expect positive support in providing effective and excellent religious education from:

- a named member of staff responsible for religious education and where that person is the headteacher, someone who shadows the role
- their senior management team and their governing body, especially foundation governors
- their local Diocesan Board of Education, including a school's adviser with an appropriate religious education background
- the Church of England Education Office
- local clergy and other minsters and Christian communities.

Derek Holloway  
School Character and SIAMS Development Manager

April 2024



## RE CURRICULUM MAP - 2024-2027

	AUTUMN		SPRING		SUMMER	
UK	Celebrations: Harvest, Diwali	Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas? INCARNATION	How can we help others when they need it? SALVATION	Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? SALVATION	What makes every person unique and precious? INCARNATION	How can we care for our wonderful world? CREATION
Thailand	What do Christians believe God is like? GOD (UC 1.1) (Parables: Lost Son)	Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas? INCARNATION	JUDAISM Why do Jewish families say so many prayers and blessings? (TEFILAH)	Why does Easter matter to Christians? SALVATION (UC 1.5)	What did Jesus teach about God in his parables? GOD (EP) (Parables: The Good Samaritan)	JUDAISM Why is learning to do good deeds so important for the Jewish community? (MITZVOT)
India and Italy	What do Christians believe God is like? GOD (UC 1.1) (Parables: Lost Sheep)	JUDAISM Why is learning to do good deeds so important for the Jewish community? (MITZVOT) Why does Christmas matter to Christians? INCARNATION (UC 1.3)	JUDAISM Why do Jewish families talk about repentance at New Year? (TESHUVAH)	What are the best symbols of Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter? SALVATION (EP)	What is the good news Jesus brings? GOSPEL (EP)	What did Jesus teach God about his parables?  TBC
Year 3	What do Christians learn from the creation story? CREATION (UC 2A.1)	HINDU-DHARMA How does the story of Rama and Sita inspire Hindus to follow their dharma? (DHARMA) What is the Trinity? INCARNATION (UC 2A.3)	What kind of world did Jesus want? GOSPEL (UC 2A.4)  2024 ONLY	Why do Christians call the day Jesus died Good Friday? SALVATION (UC 2A.5)	HINDU-DHARMA Why do Hindus want to collect good Karma? (KARMA)	What is it like to follow God? PEOPLE OF GOD (UC 2A.2)
Year 4	What do Christians learn from the creation story? CREATION (UC 2A.1)	What is the Trinity? INCARNATION (UC 2A.3)	ISLAM How does a Muslim show their submission and obedience to Allah? (SUBMISSION)	How does believing Jesus is their saviour inspire Christians to save and serve others? SALVATION (EP) (To include Lent focus)	What kind of world did Jesus want? GOSPEL (UC 2A.4)	ISLAM Why do Muslims call Muhammed the 'seal of the prophets'? (PROPHETHOOD)
Year 5 and 6	Was Jesus the Messiah? INCARNATION (UC 2B.4)	BIBLE EXPLORERS	HINDU-DHARMA What spiritual pathways to Moksha are written about in the Hindu scriptures?	What did Jesus do to save human beings? SALVATION (UC 2B.6)	What would Jesus do? GOSPEL (UC 2B.5)	HINDU-DHARMA How do questions about Brahman and atman influence the way a Hindu lives?

**CHRISTIANITY** – Following the 'Understanding Christianity' scheme of work  
[www.understandingchristianity.org.uk](http://www.understandingchristianity.org.uk)

**OTHER RELIGIONS** – Following 'The Emmanuel Project' scheme of work  
 Refer to West Sussex syllabus



**APPENDIX 3 – Example of Assessment for each unit of learning****YEAR 5/6 – Assessment Grid – Creation and Fall – Autumn Term**

<b>CORE LEARNING KNOWLEDGE BUILDING BLOCKS - PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE:</b>			
<b>Write Pupil Names →</b>	<b>WTS</b>	<b>EXS</b>	<b>GDS</b>
1. PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT: There is much debate and some controversy around the relationship between the accounts of creation in Genesis and contemporary scientific accounts.	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.
2. PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT: These debates and controversies relate to the purpose and interpretation of the texts. For example, does reading Genesis as a poetic account conflict with scientific accounts?	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.
3. PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT: There are many scientists throughout history and now who are Christians.	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.	Name of pupil here.
4. PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT: The discoveries of science make Christians wonder even more about the power and majesty of the Creator.			

