



## **St Peter & St Paul** CofE Primary School

# Religious Education Policy 2020-2023

(This policy has been drafted having regard for the school's Christian ethos.)

	Date	Signed
Agreed by Staff:	July 2020	Mr Steve Ginn Head teacher
Agreed by Governors	July 2020	Mrs N Ford Chair of Governors
Lead:	Religious Education subject leader and link governor	
Review date:	July 2023	

### Our School Mission Statement

We see it as our mission to grow the whole child - intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually. To provide them, within a Christian environment, with every learning opportunity possible and to empower them to be the leaders of tomorrow.

## **Rationale:**

Religious education is an entitlement for all pupils and its place in the school curriculum is an acknowledgement of the important role which beliefs and values play in people's lives, regardless of particular religious commitments. It is also an acknowledgement that religious beliefs and practices play a key part in the lives of many people worldwide today as they have done throughout history. As a curriculum area religious education offers pupils an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School is a Church of England 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.

Acting on advice from the Diocese, the school follows, 'The Emmanuel Project'. A close link with the church community is encouraged so pupils can see Christian life, worship and commitment at first hand and we also make a point of marking the celebrations of the Christian calendar.

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.

## **Aims:**

Our aims in religious education are:

### **To learn about religion:**

- To ensure that learning about the practices, beliefs and teachings of Christianity have a prominent place in our RE curriculum and that these are taught in each year of our school.
- To encourage pupils to know about, understand and respect the rich spiritual insights, beliefs and practices of some of the great religions of the world, particularly those represented in Suffolk and the UK.
- To promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region, the country and worldwide.

### **To learn from religion:**

- To enable each child to explore the human experiences people share, and the questions of meaning and purpose which arise from those experiences.
- 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 (2013) 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 belief' and 'learning from religion and belief'. The Religious Education in our school also fully meets the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office (2016).

### **Time Allocation:**

St Peter & St Paul CE Primary School is required to teach 2/3 Christianity which equates to 4 half terms in each academic year. The remaining teaching time is spent learning about and learning from other world faiths such as Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Humanism.

The time allocated at Key Stage 1 is 36 hours per year and 45 hours per year at Key Stage 2 in line with recommendations in the agreed Syllabus. However this time is enriched with the preparation for seasonal events in the Christian Calendar including Christmas, Easter and Harvest when we prepare for church services.

Approximately 30 minutes a week of teacher-directed time is provided for Reception pupils.

### **The Requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus:**

At St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School, our religious education is based on the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus sets out programmes of study for the foundation stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, beginning with the following focus statements summarising what religious education will look like at that Key Stage. The objectives of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus are met through 'The Emmanuel Project' planning structure as advised by the diocese.

- During the Foundation Stage children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects, and by visiting our local church. Children listen to and talk about religious stories. They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of, and wonder at, the world in which they live.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils investigate Christianity and are introduced to at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and beliefs for some children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and use their imagination to develop a sense of wonder about the world. They talk about

what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

- Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Christianity and other religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief both locally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions, and the importance of dialogue between people of different beliefs. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and in valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas clearly, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others, in the light of their learning in religious education.

'The Emmanuel Project' programmes of study develop continuity and progression in religious education. They detail requirements for 'learning about religion and belief' and 'learning from religion and belief' for each Key Stage. The breadth of study section explains which religions and areas of study should be covered and outlines a wide range of experiences and opportunities which should characterise teaching and learning.

The Agreed Syllabus also sets out attainment targets for religious education and gives level descriptions by which pupils' progress may be assessed.

### **Scheme of Work:**

A detailed curriculum map has been produced showing the progression of skills in Religious Education throughout the school. This takes in to account the newer ways of working in Religious Education, particularly in Key Stage 2 that have been introduced in Suffolk. This can be found (Appendix B) at the end of this policy together with an explanation of Curriculum progression.

In summary, Religious Education starts in a simple fashion in the Foundation Stage, with age appropriate stories and activities. In Key Stage 1 it is based around half-termly themes where Christianity and Judaism are the principal religions studied. Other religions are touched on as appropriate. Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Christianity throughout the key stage, and study Hinduism and Islam as principal religions. Topics may focus on a single religion or be based around a life experience theme, drawing on children's own thoughts and ideas as well as those of several faiths.

### **RE Opportunities for Our School:**

- A variety of opportunities related to RE scheme of work, Emmanuel;
- Visitors to classes and assemblies;



- Visits to places of interest e.g. places of worship

## **Teaching and Learning Styles:**

At St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School, we are using increasingly varied and active ways of working which include art and drama, debating, visits, posters, photos, videos and interactive displays. In particular, we recognise the importance of teaching the two attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus (learning about religion and belief and learning from religion and belief) in a balanced way, and our schemes of work have been written to encourage this. We also encourage cross-curricular work.

## **Resources:**

Good resources are essential to fulfil the teaching requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and for St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School, this has been a rapidly improving area. Resources are stored by religion, and appropriate additions are being made as the teaching develops.

## **The Role of Subject Leader:**

- The RE subject leader will monitor provision and standards in RE through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum regularly with staff.
- The subject leader will report annually to the GB on progress and standards in RE and contribute to the school's self-evaluation, in readiness for SIAMS.

## **Professional Development for Staff:**

The subject leader initiates CPD and talks with individual members of staff, advising on what resources are available and suitable to the programme of study that they are following. The RE coordinator regularly attends RE conferences and courses that introduce updates in planning, teaching and assessment. Information from courses is generally cascaded back to staff and some courses are held in school for other teachers in the locality.

## **Matching Work to Pupils' Needs:**

The whole school policy with regard to special needs and differentiation applies to religious education and the SENCO will give advice on adapting work when required. However, teachers are aware that some children have additional experience of a religion through family practice and as a result may show greater ability and understanding when discussing that religion.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting:**

It is important to note that pupils' work in religious education can be assessed; we are not assessing degrees of spirituality but their knowledge, skills and understanding. It is important that their progress is acknowledged, just as in any other subject. Teachers bring pupils' work to book monitoring exercises periodically. This has helped them to clarify their understanding of what makes for quality learning in religious education. Teachers also record formative assessment in their class scrapbooks with corresponding evidence. Class scrapbooks enable teachers to showcase discussions, drama, creativity and other types of learning that has taken place in RE lessons.

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. At the end of each year, we aim to provide objective based reports to parents about children's progress and attainment in religious education.

## **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. The subject leader holds regular discussions with staff to enable the curriculum to be taught confidently and remain well-resourced. Lesson observations, book reviews, pupil interviews, visits to classrooms to see children's work and religious education displays have also been utilised for evaluation and monitoring purposes.

## **Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:**

At St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School, religious education should play a part in:

- **Spiritual** ~ 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.
- **Moral** ~ 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.
- **Social** ~ encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and a sense of 'community'.
- **Cultural** ~ 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).



## **Contribution to Community Cohesion:**

In our Community Cohesion Policy the following aims exist:

- To show that through our ethos and curriculum we can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.
- To address issues of how we live together and how we deal with change in the diverse community of the wider world.

The role of RE in the school is pivotal in this: we study the major belief systems from around the world, intending to give a greater understanding and empathy of global faith communities.

## **Provision for Withdrawal from Religious Education:**

- Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from religious education in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25(4) and 30, which was re-enacted in 1988. Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given and the school must enable parents to exercise this legal entitlement. Parents are asked to contact the Head Teacher if they wish to withdraw their child. It is hoped that, in discussing their requirements, an understanding can be reached and arrangements for alternative religious education or supervision made.
- Teachers have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. In order to do so they must write to the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. Click on the following link for further detail:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-re/legal-requirements/>

However, as teachers are employed by a church school it is expected that they should uphold the Christian ethos of the school and that includes teaching about Christianity and other faiths so children can make informed choices.

## **Religious Education and its Relationship to Collective Worship:**

In law, religious education and collective worship are distinct. Religious education is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during collective worship. However, during collective worship at St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School, stories from the Bible, Christian and other traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned, and we enjoy assemblies led by members of religious communities. These complement and bring depth to our religious education programme and our general day to day teaching. A separate policy is available for collective worship.

**Period of Review:**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if guidance in this area should change.



## **Appendix A**

### **Checklist for Governors and Head Teachers**

- ☐ Do all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum?
- ☐ Is RE well led and effectively managed?
- ☐ Are standards, achievement and quality of provision in RE regularly and effectively self-evaluated?
- ☐ Are those teaching RE suitably qualified and trained in the subject?  
Do they have regular and effective opportunities for CPD?
- ☐ Are teachers aware of RE's contribution to developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion?
- ☐ Is clear information provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw?
- ☐ Are teachers aware that they do not have to teach RE?  
Is RE resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that means the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress?
- ☐ Where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, does the Head Teacher ensure that pupils receive their RE entitlement?
- ☐ Discuss progress in RE at least annually at staff/ governing body meetings.

## Appendix C

### Checklist for People who Manage, Plan, Teach and Support RE

- ☐ What implications do the school's ethos, vision and values have for the provision of RE? For example, the school's specialist status, religious character, or the nature of the school's community.
- ☐ What about the school's overall curriculum priorities? Are statutory requirements for RE being met? Is RE's contribution in terms of raising standards and achievement being taken into account?
- ☐ Will RE be taught separately, be combined with other subjects, or both?
- ☐ Will RE be taught every week, term or year in the key stage? Is the programme of study required by the agreed syllabus properly met? Is the provision evaluated as part of the school's self-evaluation process?
- ☐ What about curriculum design? Does the RE curriculum ensure an appropriate balance between RE-led units, whether systematic or thematic, and cross-curricular units?
- ☐ How will the organisation of the RE curriculum be adapted to suit individual pupils with different abilities and needs? For example, the needs of the most able pupils can be met by accelerating their learning, and the needs of less high-achieving pupils can be met by reinforcement techniques.
- ☐ How will the design of the RE curriculum help pupils to make a smooth transfer from one key stage to the next and to make steady progress within a key stage? For example, through the provision of bridging units to support transition from key stage 2 to 3.
- ☐ What about curriculum enrichment? What might need to be added to the RE curriculum to enrich pupils' learning in terms of, for example, fieldwork, LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom), and special focus days?



## **Appendix D**

### **Checklist for Managing the Right of Withdrawal**

- ☐ Is the school careful to ensure that RE is of educational value to all pupils, whatever their belief background, thus reducing the likelihood of parental/carers requests for withdrawal?
- ☐ Does the school ensure that the nature, objectives and content of RE are shared with parents?
- ☐ Are parents or carers notified about plans for RE as part of the curriculum for the coming session for their child's class?
- ☐ Does the school have a procedure in place for parents or carers who want to withdraw children from RE?
- ☐ Does the organisation of the curriculum allow parents to exercise the right of withdrawal?
- ☐ What practical implications arise from a request by parents to withdraw a child from RE and how might they be addressed?
- ☐ Are all those who teach RE aware of the school's procedures?
- ☐ Are all teachers aware of their own right not to have to teach RE?

## **Appendix E**

## **Checklist for Monitoring and Evaluating RE Provision**

- Have RE curriculum decisions been based on the principles of Effective planning? Has there been sound application of these principles?
- Can the parental right of withdrawal be accommodated, where necessary? Does the model of curriculum delivery take into account how provision might be adapted?
- Do pupils value and recognise the contribution RE makes to their understanding - of different communities and ways of life, and to the concept of diversity?
- Do pupils have real opportunities to explore and gain first-hand experience of religious and cultural diversity?
- Does the school help pupils to deepen their understanding - of their own beliefs and values? Of other people's?
- Does RE provide a context to build relationships with the local communities - including those groups with whom it is more difficult to forge links?
- Within the school, does RE provide a voice for religious and other minority groups? Does it develop a culture of mutual understanding and respect?
- Does the school treat religion and belief seriously? Does it model ways of building respect?
- Does the school know enough about the diversity of religion and ethical perspectives within the local community? Does it explore ways of making links with those communities?
- In a largely mono-cultural school, how well is RE working to foster a broader awareness of cultural and religious diversity?