



St John's Stonefold CE Primary School, Rising Bridge

Whole School Religious Education Policy	
Written By	P Burns
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**Values:**

***Empathy Aspiration Generosity Love Endurance***

**Mission:**

***Rooted and Established in God's Love: Nurture, Grow, Fly (Ephesians 3:17)***

**Vision:**

**Our vision is to live and grow together as a loving church school family, who celebrate one another's individuality. Built upon our shared Christian values, St John's provides our children with excellent teaching of a bespoke and innovative curriculum, empowering them to flourish with the knowledge and skills for life.**

**From our vision, we inspire our children to have uncompromising aspirations and to thrive and succeed.**

## **Mission Statement for R.E.**

St. John's Stonefold Religious Education will support children in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes through exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of Christianity and other religions in the contemporary world, with such emphasis upon Anglican beliefs and practices as appropriate to our school's situation.

## **Introduction**

As a Voluntary Aided School the management of R.E. is a distinctive role of the governors and head teacher. R.E. has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided within its school.

This policy reflects the school's agreed values and philosophy with regard to Religious Education. It illustrates how Religious Education is taught within school and gives guidance on planning and assessment. The policy has been produced after discussion with governors and members of staff and will be reviewed annually. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Schemes of Work in the Blackburn Diocesan Agreed Syllabus for R.E. which sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught on a half – termly basis.

The policy will be available to all staff, governors, parents, advisors and inspectors.

## **Entitlement**

R.E. in our church school lies at the very heart of the curriculum. The Governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus which reflects the National Framework for R.E, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. The R.E. Curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus requires a curriculum allocation of 5% of the available timetable and in view of this, children will be taught in class groups for one hour a week at both Key Stage One and 1 hour 10 minutes at Key Stage Two. Christianity plays a central role in R.E, taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time

available. Appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is included, with a focus on Islam in order to reflect the children's population in the school.

The time allocated to R.E. in school is independent of time allocated to Collective Worship. Although R.E and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich each other Collective Worship is a separate statutory requirement and is not covered by this policy.

### **Aims**

At St. John's Stonefold we believe that R.E. should help children to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's society within which a diversity of views are held;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

We base our teaching of R.E. on the key principle that good teaching in R.E. allows children to both learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our R.E. curriculum therefore follows the Blackburn Diocese Questful RE Syllabus 2018 together with Understanding Christianity. We assess using the Assessment Ladder of Expectations in RE together with the assessment materials within these documents.

## **RE and Church School Distinctiveness**

The content of the R.E. curriculum contributes towards our church school distinctiveness through:

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year;
- study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs;
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish church and the Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community;
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life;
- liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur;
- skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions;
- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts;
- the facility to listen to Christian 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions;
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence;
- a sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection.

## **R.E. and Other Faiths**

It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths. Therefore R.E. in our Church School should also help pupils to:

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;

- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

Religious Education in our Church School should enable:

- children and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- children to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- children from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- children from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- children with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- children of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

### **Contribution of R.E. to children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Spiritual development within R.E. in our school enriches and encourages the children's discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer children a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

Social development enriches children's understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where

Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

## **Contribution of R.E. to the Teaching of Other Subjects**

Although R.E. is taught as a discrete subject within our school, it does provide many opportunities for links with other curriculum areas, particularly English, PSHE, History, Geography and the creative arts. In addition, there are strong links between R.E. and cross curricular themes and dimensions, including multi-cultural education, equal opportunities, citizenship and health education. As stated previously, it also has strong links with collective worship.

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in our English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet and CD ROMs. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin choices and behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

## **Assessment/Planning/Record Keeping and Reporting**

The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education document, Religious Education Syllabus for Church Schools, provides the Programmes of Study from which teachers plan their teaching and the objectives against which the children's progress can be assessed. There are also separate folders covering all aspects of the Religious Education curriculum which provide more ideas and go into greater depth.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases (long term, medium-term and short-term). The long term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage. Our medium term plans give details of each unit of work for each term.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. The class teacher uses the syllabus units and/or scale to set relevant, creative, effective and challenging tasks using a wide range of teaching strategies. Weekly planning includes references to the expected level of achievement. S/he keeps these individual plans and discusses them during planning/book moderations with the R.E. subject leader and senior leaders.

Informal assessment is undertaken on a lesson by lesson basis through observation of children at work, discussion and questioning so that any misunderstandings or problems can be identified in the lesson. This assessment is reinforced by the marking of children's work. Each child in Key Stages 1 and 2 will have their own R.E. book and each class through school must have an R.E. 'scrapbook'. The scrapbook will contain evidence of children's discussions, comments and ideas, visits and visitors, photographs, group work, post-it notes and printed work from the interactive whiteboard.

Termly assessments are used to support and confirm teachers' professional judgements. Formal assessment is recorded by class teachers at the end of each term on the Insight tracking tool and monitored by the R.E. subject leader.

The R.E. subject leader with the co-operation of the staff keeps a portfolio of levelled evidence of the R.E. taking place throughout the school to monitor standards and progression.

### **Resources**

There are a range of texts including children's books, teachers' guides and resource books and general information books stored centrally in the Religious Education cupboard in the PERCH room. A variety of religious artefacts, audio-visual resources and posters are also available to all teachers and stored centrally. All resources are audited by the R.E. subject leader and listed on the R.E. resource list.

Chatterboxes/talking tubs have been introduced as a means of getting the children to become more questful and find out what they initially know or to assess their learning thorough speaking and listening opportunities using visual and tactile resources.

### **Special Educational Needs Provision**

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Our assessments in R.E. allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

We enable children to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning in Religious Education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a mosque, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all children involved.

### **Equal Opportunities**

It is our aim to offer equal access to the curriculum to all children irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability and social circumstances, so that each child has the greatest opportunity to progress. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice in equal opportunities. Refer to Equal Opportunities Policy. The Public Duty of the Equality Act 2010 also states:

Protected characteristics in the act include sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.



Schools have due regard to:

“eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation”

(b) “advance equality of opportunity”

(c) “foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it”

This includes tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

### **Parental Involvement**

At St John’s Stonefold, we believe education to be a joint venture between home and school and are aware that one of the most significant factors influencing children’s attainment at school is parental involvement. We therefore encourage the support of parents.

Parents’ evenings are held twice a year during which parents and teachers discuss their child’s progress in Religious Education along with other subjects. Further information is provided in a school report which is issued in the Summer Term. Parents can contact the school at any time if they have concerns regarding their child’s progress in Religious Education. Parents are also invited to school church services and Celebration Assemblies each half-term in school.

### **Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School**

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any school.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by our school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community.

Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.

If a request for a withdrawal is made, the head-teacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation.

### **Inset Provision**

Staff development is overseen by the head-teacher. Needs are identified by individual teachers or by the senior leadership team and are prioritised according to the school development plan.

School based INSET is arranged by the Religious Education subject leader in conjunction with the headteacher. Effectiveness of INSET is evaluated through discussion with the staff.

### **Role of the R.E. Subject Leader**

It is the role of the Religious Education subject leader to:

- To be the professional leader and manager of Religious Education in the school.
- To secure high quality teaching in R.E.
- To monitor and secure high standards of learning and achievement in R.E.
- To ensure the effective provision and use of resources in R.E.
- To... Lead, Manage, Guide, Monitor, Train, Motivate