



Saint George's
Church of England School

Religious Education Policy

April 2024

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All Different, All Equal, All Flourishing

This policy is guided by our vision:

‘At the heart of our vision is the belief in inclusive, educational excellence; the belief that we are called to serve all pupils, staff, parents, and the local community by providing places where all develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually in order to live life in all its fullness’. (Linked to our bible verse from John 10: 10)

Introduction

Saint George’s Church of England school is a Church of England Academy; therefore, the provision of Religious Education (RE) must be carried out in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school, ‘Improving the life chances of local children’. RE is taught to all pupils from Reception to Year 13, as required by law. We adopt the Rochester Diocesan Syllabus for RE which recommends that a minimum of 5% curriculum time is given to RE and therefore RE is normally taught for the equivalent of an hour per week within Key Stage One, 1.25 hours per week within Key Stage Two, 1.5 hours per week in Key Stage Three and 2.5 hours per week in Key Stage Four. This is in addition to time set aside for Collective Worship across the school.

Aims

The aims of Religious Education are set out in the Rochester Diocesan Syllabus. All staff leading RE lessons will be promoting the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils. It aims to enable pupils to:

- Receive the highest standard of RE teaching.
- Provoke challenging questions about the purpose of life, beliefs, and issues of right and wrong.





- Gain a secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity as expressed in the traditions of the Anglican Church.
- Develop pupils' knowledge about a range of other religions, faiths and world views.
- Be mature and exploratory in their own beliefs, values, and behaviour, by reflecting on religious beliefs and practices; and doing this in safe environment.

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, Religious Education in our school aims to:

- Enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- Enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture, and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- Contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Objectives

As stated in the Church of England Religious Education Statement of Entitlement, appropriate to age at the end of their education in our school, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.



- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

All pupils at Saint George's Church of England School should follow a balanced and broad curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and society. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief, and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society, helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

RE promotes the school's mission statement *'All Different, All Equal, All Flourishing'* by promoting an ethos of respect for others and building an understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos and champions democratic values and human rights.

RE has an important role to play as part of a broad, balanced, and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed for and provided.

In order to make RE a lively, engaging, creative and active subject, we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, development of thinking and speaking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and time for reflection. Work can be recorded in both individual books and also, within our primary phase, our class 'big books'. Where possible, we also enable our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.





Teaching and Learning

RE has a high profile within our school curriculum. Quality teaching in RE helps generate respect for different views and interpretations where real dialogue takes place. Pupils develop and use a wide range of higher-level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and world views as lived by believers. Key cross-curricular skills such as reading, writing, observation, and discussion are practised. Careful assessment based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts shows that attainment is high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a range of other world religions and on other world views as appropriate.

RE offers a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences, understanding that pupils learn best in different ways. Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through:

- Listening to the teacher and each other
- Reading of texts
- Seeking information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- Discussions with the teacher and other pupils
- Carefully chosen Kagan techniques and activities
- Using a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama
- Visits and visitors
- Artwork
- Outdoor learning
- Time for Reflection
- Extended Writing



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Differentiation and Special Educational Needs

Policy and practice in religious education reflects whole school policy and encompasses the full range and ability of all pupils. All pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs. A range of teaching and learning strategies to achieve differentiated learning are used including task, outcome, resource, support, and pupil grouping. We aim to ensure that all tasks are challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils whilst extending the most able.

Breadth and Balance

At Saint George's Church of England School, although work on Christianity will predominate, there will be in-depth work on the major world religions and on other world views as appropriate. Teaching will seek to bring about a deeper knowledge and understanding of religious traditions but also to develop a range of skills such as the ability to empathise and evaluate attitudes and develop respect for diversity.

Equal Opportunities

Religious education will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender, and religion. It seeks to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs, and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.





Relevance

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives. This will be done through engaging pupils and by posing challenging questions.

Cross-curricular links

Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, drama and history, geography, computer science, music as well as personal, social, and emotional education and citizenship.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in Religious Education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.





Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Rochester Diocesan Syllabus.
- Allow the teacher to ascertain knowledge that has been learned and remembered and to adjust future planning accordingly.
- Seek to identify development in the acquisition of substantive and procedural knowledge.
- Employ well-defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policies.
- Include pupil self-assessment and peer assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.
- Relate to GCSE and A-level syllabi in years 11 and 13 respectively.

Attainment Targets and Assessment

Primary Phase

There are two attainment targets in the Rochester RE Syllabus: AT1: Learning about religions and AT2: Learning from religion.

AT1 helps pupils to know and understand what religious people believe, what they do and how they express themselves. AT2 helps pupils to make sense of themselves, of life and of right and wrong. The syllabus is set out in such a way that there is balance between these two approaches in the subject. In other words, pupils are taught about religion, especially Christianity, but they are also helped to think about the relevance



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of these ideas to their own lives. For example, lessons about Christian saints also encourage pupils to think about saintly qualities in themselves and others.

Pupils are assessed on these two attainment targets at the end of each unit of RE, using the national assessment levels for this subject. These levels also help teachers to pitch the work at the right level, challenging pupils to develop knowledge and understanding in the subject and the ability to reflect on ideas and relate them to their own experiences. Discussion and feedback also enable children to deepen and develop their thinking.

Secondary Phase

In line with the school policy on assessment, it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular formative assessment of their pupils through key questioning techniques in lessons, low stakes testing, well-planned recall sessions, and through following the school's marking policy.

In key stages 3, 4 and 5, pupils will complete one formal summative assessment per term which is carefully constructed to incorporate increasingly challenging examination skills and questions to allow demonstrate the extent to which pupils remember and know new knowledge and the extent to which they are able to accurately reason and explore the topic at a greater depth. The result of this test will allow teachers to quickly and accurately ascertain whether pupils have learned and remembered key knowledge and to react to this in the future planning and teaching of the course; this result will form part of the data used to track pupil progress by the Head of RE and will be used by the class teacher to ensure that work is correctly pitched and appropriately challenging. Opportunities for formal assessment include low stakes quizzing and practice examination questions. We currently report to parents twice a year. Examination groups in key stages four and five will also complete formal mock examinations at key assessment points throughout the year.





Content

We follow the Rochester Diocesan syllabus and structuring our learning alongside the primary phase Quigley curriculum helps the children to:

- Acquire and develop a deep level of knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- Develop an awareness of other principal religions represented in Great Britain: Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies, and cultures.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain.
- Develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold beliefs that are different to their own.
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural, and social development by:
- Develop awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teaching can relate to them.
- Respond to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience.
- Reflect on their own beliefs, values, and experience in the light of their study.

Using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource, we support pupils in exploring the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing pupils' wider religious, theological, and cultural literacy. The core concepts reflect a view that the bible tells a 'big story' of salvation. Pupils revisit the core concepts throughout the different key stages, deepening their understanding and making the links to the overall 'big story' or 'salvation narrative.'



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The three themes of 'Making sense of Text', 'Understanding the Impact' and 'Making Connections' form the underlying pedagogy that are covered across eight key concepts that are built upon as the children progress from Early Years Foundation Stage to Upper Key Stage 2.

The eight key primary concepts are:

- God
- Creation
- Fall
- People of God
- Incarnation
- Gospel
- Salvation
- Kingdom of God

In the EYFS (Reception year), teachers lay the foundations for good Religious Education by linking it with areas of learning and early learning goals, particularly 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development', 'Communication and Language', 'The World' and 'Expressive arts and design'. Aspects of Christianity are explored, such as the 'Special day' of Christmas and 'Special occasions' such as baptisms and weddings. Pupils are also told Bible stories throughout the year. Opportunities to extend their RE knowledge are given during Child Initiated learning times. In EYFS, the Rochester Diocesan syllabus for RE is followed and planned for accordingly.

From Key Stage One, children have RE workbooks to record in and there are also class big books to record discussions, and photographs of learning within RE. The content continues to be based on the concept of 'special', such as special people and places, special books, and objects. This is used to teach pupils about Christianity.





The whole of Key Stage Two explores Christianity under the themes of The Church, Jesus Christ, and The Bible. Other religions are introduced throughout each year.

In key stage three, pupils learn about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text. Pupils consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and world views and their impact on society and culture and are offered a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and /or philosophical convictions. The content and coverage for each year group is outlined below:

Year R

Children in Year R will look at the key concepts of Creation, Incarnation and Salvation. The children will learn about the creation story and will think about why God is important to Christians. They will learn about the birth of Jesus and Jesus' death at Easter. The children will hear and participate in a range of Bible stories from the Old and New Testament and will explore what they can learn from these. They will look at and explore other religious stories from different world faiths.

Year 1

Children in Year 1 will look at the key concepts of God, Incarnation, Gospel, and Salvation. The children will start to look at key vocabulary and phrases that describe religious ideas and beliefs and will use these when talking about their own experiences of religion. The children will start to look at the life of Jesus and will think about in more depth about why Christmas and Easter are important to Christians. The children will also look at and explore stories told by people of different faiths and beliefs.



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Year 2

Children in Year 2 will look at the key concepts of Creation, Incarnation, Gospel, and Salvation. The children will continue to build on their religious vocabulary and will be encouraged to question and share their experiences. The children will think about who made the world and will look at greater depth at the questions asked in Year 1 about Jesus and the importance of Christmas and Easter. The children will also look at Judaism and the special people and times remembered and celebrated within this faith.

Year 3

Children in Year 3 will look at the key concepts of People of God, Incarnation, Salvation and Kingdom of God. The children will be encouraged to share their personal beliefs and values. The children will learn about the Trinity, the impact of Pentecost, Good Friday and will think about what it is like to follow God. The children will also look at Sikhism and will discuss what is important for Sikhs and how they worship and celebrate.

Year 4

Children in Year 4 will look at the key concepts of Creation, Incarnation, Gospel, and Salvation. The children will be encouraged to express their ideas and beliefs and discussing religion. They will continue to explore The Trinity and Good Friday and will think about what Christians learn from the Creation Story and the type of world Jesus wanted. The children will look at Hinduism and what Hindu people believe about God and how they worship and celebrate.





Year 5

In Year 5 the children will explore the key concepts of God, Incarnation, People of God and Salvation. The children will think about what it means if God is loving and holy and how following God can bring freedom and justice. The children will continue to discuss Jesus and think about his life and through Bible stories, find out how Jesus saved human lives. The children will also look at Islam and what do Muslim people believe about the way they should live their lives and why.

Year 6

In Year 6 the children will explore the key concepts of Creation, Gospel, Salvation and Kingdom of God. The children will think about how Jesus led his life and what kind of King Jesus was. The children will discuss Jesus' resurrection and its significance for Christians. They will explore how Jesus lead his life and the lessons the taught and how these encourage Christians to lead their lives today. The children will be encouraged to discuss the relationship between science and Religion and whether they are conflicting or complementary. The children will also look at Buddhism and what Buddhists believe about the way they should live their lives and why.

Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3, RE is delivered as a discrete subject over three lessons per fortnight. Students build upon their previously learned key stage 1 and 2 knowledge of the five principal religions of Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism across three years with 50% of learning time dedicated to Christianity. Students also have a rich opportunity to explore and discuss a range of secular world views and ethical issues such as:

- ethical theories,
- multiculturalism,
- civil rights.



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Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 all pupils follow the full course GCSE (currently Edexcel B- please see course specification for further details of the knowledge covered in each unit):

- Paper 1: Christianity,
- Paper 2: Islam.

At Key Stage 4, RE has 5 hours per fortnight (the equivalent of 10% of curriculum time).

Key Stage 5

For the pupils who choose to study RE at Key Stage 5, the Edexcel Religious Studies course is currently offered and is set out as follows (please see course specification for further details of the knowledge covered in each unit):

- Paper 1: Philosophy,
- Paper 2: Ethics,
- Paper 3: New Testament Studies.

Regardless of whether pupils choose to study RE at A-Level, all sixth form students take part in three RE stop days throughout the year.

The Role of the RE Leader

The RE Leaders will monitor RE within school through learning walks, monitoring data, lesson observations and book scrutiny across all key stages. Crucially, they will also contribute to the development of the all-through RE curriculum, ensuring a consistent, well-researched and well-planned curriculum exists which builds in breadth and depth as pupils progress. The RE Leaders are also responsible for contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, which will include:

- The contribution of RE to the Christian character of the school.
- The achievement of pupils in RE.



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- The quality of teaching and learning in RE.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in RE and especially the teaching of Christianity.

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

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum.
- The subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD.
- Clear information is provided for parents and the right to withdraw their child from RE.
- RE is well resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress.
- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education. (Statement of Entitlement June 2016 The Church of England Education Office)
<http://www.rdbe.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Statement%20of%20entitlement%202016.pdf>
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers are aware of what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Support colleagues and help develop their subject expertise, including cross-phase work.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy, schemes of work, the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of RE, pupils' progress and standards.
- Liaise periodically with the HT and Governors.
- Seek opportunities for professional development for themselves and other staff.



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- Order resources.
- Monitor end of term assessments.
- Observe the teaching of RE in school, providing support and guidance for teachers.

Resources

Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library, posters, CDs, DVDs and artefacts. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate.

Legal Requirements

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their children from religious education. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Executive Headteacher before making this decision.

Conclusion

At Saint George's Church of England School, we expect that families choosing the school will be in sympathy with the Christian ethos of this inclusive community. However, we recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children's religious education on the grounds of conscience, but the right of withdrawal does not extend



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to other areas of the curriculum. We would ask any parent considering withdrawal from RE, to contact the Executive Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision, and practice of religious education at Saint George's Church of England School.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will remain on school premises.

Christian Values

Our core Christian values are at the heart of everything that we live and learn in our school. Our Christian values of Creativity, Honesty, Resilience, Inclusion, Stewardship and Thankfulness are at the core of learning for all members of our school community. We respect the different starting points and abilities of all children. We are 'All Different, All Equal, All Flourishing'. All members of our school community have a responsibility to be the best they can be and to fulfil the potential that God gives us.