



Religious Education (RE) Policy

2022 - 2023

*Learn from me because I am gentle and humble in heart.
(Matthew 11:29)*

Document Control

Owner

The owner of this document is the Headteacher. All requests for change should be directed to them. Any printed copies of this document are for reference only; the definitive version is the computer file held on the school office administrator's computer.

Revision history

Version	Date	Changes	Author(s)
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Approval

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Review period This policy will be reviewed every annually.

Version	
	July 2023

Introduction

Youlgrave, All Saints' C of E (VA) Primary School provides a happy, caring, family environment where children feel inspired. We know that 'every child matters'; whatever their skills and abilities: whatever their background and whatever their aspirations.

Belonging to a safe and nurturing school community, founded on strong Christian values, our children will develop an array of skills that will equip them to meet the challenges of our ever-changing world; and to make their own positive contribution to our global society.

Religious Education (RE) at Youlgrave, All Saints' C of E (VA) Primary School is treated and respected as a core subject.

The Governors in consultation with the Headteacher have decided to make Understanding Christianity the main scheme and to supplement this with material from the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Derbyshire when teaching other faiths.

Aims

Youlgrave, All Saints' Aims:

- ✓ To provide a caring and welcoming school that safeguards and promotes welfare for all.
- ✓ To develop stimulating learning activities which challenge and enthuse children to achieve their best, not only academically but in all areas of school life.
- ✓ To develop meaningful partnerships with parents, carers, the churches and the wider village community.
- ✓ To recognise and value the uniqueness and achievement of every member of our school family.
- ✓ To encourage children to respect and develop a deeper understanding of faiths and cultures of the world.
- ✓ To provide opportunities for children to explore and reflect upon their own belief and spirituality.
- ✓ To celebrate all that we are and all that we can be.

Aims for Teaching RE

As a church school, the aims of Religious Education are to:

- Enable pupils to encounter 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 talk about core theological concepts such as God, Creation, Salvation, the Kingdom of God, The People of God, Incarnation, The Fall, Gospel and explain why they are important to Christians
- Enable pupils to learn about other major world religions (and world views), their impact on society, culture and the wider world, facilitating pupils' expression of responses and insights
- Contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs
- Enable pupils to respect the faith of others, and value the journey of faith
- Ensure that pupils can speak comfortably and confidently about their understandings of faith and life choices.
- Enable pupils to appreciate the way in which religious beliefs can shape personal and social life and contribute to personal morality and social responsibility
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and the Christian narrative and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians
- Develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of Christianity, of religion and belief more widely, of themselves, the world and human experience.

Drawn from the outcomes from The Church of England Education Office's 'Religious Education in Church of England Schools - A Statement of Entitlement' (2016) and Understanding Christianity.

Our aims for RE are to:

- **Provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- **Develop our children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity** (as a multicultural, world faith), other principal religions and religious traditions that examine these questions; fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **Encourage our children to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious) in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith; and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics: and to express their responses.

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- **Enable our children to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society/world.
- **Teach our children to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs; to help overcome prejudice.
- **Prompt our children to consider their responsibilities** to themselves, and to others; and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to a wider society. This encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **Develop a sense of awe and wonder; and mystery.**

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all children should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'Promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society; and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'.

Learning about (and from religions and beliefs) through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE (within a broad-based curriculum) is essential to achieving these aims.

Exploring the concepts of religion and belief (and their role in the spiritual, moral, and cultural lives of people in a diverse society) helps our children develop a moral awareness and a social understanding.

Learning about and from religious traditions helps pupils to appreciate which aspects of life have been significant for most of humanity throughout the ages.

It also helps to show them what shapes people's behaviour and motivations, and points pupils towards positive models for their own lives.

RE lessons particularly include opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually –

'Helping them to recognise and deepen their relationships with self, others, the planet and, for many, with God.' (Jill Stolberg, Church of England, Birmingham)

In addition, when appropriate, RE lessons offer spiritual moments for stillness, reflection and response.

Personal Development and Wellbeing

RE plays an important role in preparing our children for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps our children become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

The distinctive contribution RE makes to the life of the school and other curriculum aims (and community cohesion)

As a church school we are committed to finding ways to contribute to every pupil having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and with the person of Jesus Christ. At Youlgrave, All Saints' this means that we will endeavour to ensure that encounters with the Christian faith will be positive for the pupils and that they will hear of the story of Jesus.

Such encounters will show the pupils to the treasures of the Christian faith in a way that invites, but does not coerce. The values and character of the school will also be shown in the way that attention is paid to the teaching of world faiths particularly those represented in the school's community and local neighbourhood. RE also provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief; and forge links with different community groups in our local area.

Two thirds of RE curriculum time is devoted to teaching about Christianity.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. RE is taught in the context of our whole school philosophy of teaching and learning which promotes enquiry, questioning, debate, collaboration, struggle and reflection.

RE makes an important contribution to our school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young peoples' understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

It provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

Our school's approach to teaching RE

RE has a vital part to play as part of a 'broad, balanced and coherent curriculum', to which all of our children are entitled.

High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by creative planning using the locally agreed syllabus, and Understanding Christianity and seeking diocesan advice through training and network meetings (Eg: RE coordinator meetings), taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

In order to make RE a lively, active core subject we employ a variety of teaching methods to include: art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts/pieces of art, religious stories/verses/quotations; and the use of periods of reflection and stillness.

Where possible, we want our children to have opportunities to encounter other local faith communities' (i.e. Derbyshire/Derby) thorough visits to local places of worship.

RE is delivered mainly as a discrete subject with classes studying RE for one hour per week or equivalent if sessions are blocked together.

We use a variety of approaches of helping pupils to appreciate, and to begin to develop critical thinking about, religious life and teachings, including enquiry based and philosophical approaches.

The school appoints a RE subject leader and strives to ensure that this is someone who has an academic background in Religious, theological and or Biblical studies. The subject leader engages with the Derby Diocese Education team for continuing professional development and training.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- In Early Years Foundation Stage pupils study Christianity and explore faiths through themes such as symbols and food and learning about the religious celebrations of children in their classes.
- In Reception - Year 2 pupils study Christianity and Islam.
- In Years 3 – 6 pupils study Christianity, Islam and Judasim.
- Reference will also be made in a cross curricular way to other religions and people who have no religion.

Assessment and Recording of RE

Pupils record their learning in a range of ways including:

- ✓ in written form but also through art, drama, discussion and other media.
- ✓ Photographic evidence and examples of work produced and activities completed are collated in class RE books.
- ✓ Whole school displays in communal areas display RE learning.

We recognise that children can excel in RE even if their reading and writing skills are not at age related expectations and we strive to ensure that they are able to demonstrate this in arrange of ways. We recognise that RE does provide opportunities also for pupils to utilise their writing skills including argument, persuasion, debate and recount.

Progress and attainment of our children is recorded on the Year Group RE tracking grid, every term; so that progress throughout each year can be monitored.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The RE leader (alongside RE Foundation link-governor and church leaders) will monitor RE through:

- Children's interviews (Pupil Voice)
- Learning walks
- Book scrutinises/work samples
- Analysis of RE assessment data

The subject leader uses the outcomes of these activities to contribute to the Church school self-evaluation process and to the on-going development of the subject including writing the vision and action plan for the subject on an annual basis.

It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness; strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements: and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

(See also PSHE policy).

Responsibilities for RE within the School (Headteachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and Headteacher ensure 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 and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.

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- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD.
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives.
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw.
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations for RE and pupils can make good progress.
- Pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

The Right to Withdrawal from RE

At Youlgrave, All Saints' C of E Primary School, we are an inclusive community but recognise that parents/carers, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their child/children from RE on the ground of conscience.

However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or PSHE. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at Youlgrave, All Saints' Primary School.