

St. John the Evangelist C of E (Aided) Primary School Religious Education Policy

Our School's Vision Statement

“St. John’s is a caring, Christian community striving to support its members to achieve their God given potential. Exploring our unique gifts and raising aspirations, we prepare our children for the challenges of the modern world. Following Jesus’ example, we seek to grow good people who can make a difference.”

We believe that

**“Children are a gift from the Lord.”
(Psalm 127 v.3)**

We believe that any gift from God is most precious. This makes children the most precious gift. Consequently, developing and supporting every child in our care to become the best that they can be is fundamental to all that we do.

Revised January 2023

Next review September 2024

Our Curriculum Intent for Religion and Worldviews

Our aim is to provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of a range of worldviews both religious and non-religious. Links with the Christian values of the school are intrinsic to our RE curriculum. In accordance with our vision, (see Pg.1), in every class we aim to provide suitable learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of all children. This may be done through providing support, differentiating activities and using a range of teaching and learning styles within lessons, providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own views of the world. Pupils will recognise that everyone has a 'worldview' and that this constantly evolves as we grow and change. The teaching of Religion and Worldviews will be centered on the concept of 'real lived experience', children will have the opportunity to visit places of worship and visitors will be welcomed into school, wherever possible. Children will be encouraged to see that not all followers of a religion lead their lives in the same way and explore the differences/similarities in different traditions.

Encountering religion and belief includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, practices, their impacts on the lives of believers and communities, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

When responding to their learning encounters religious education is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills in applying, interpreting and evaluating what they learn about religion, and the ability to consider and relate their learning to questions of: identity and belonging; meaning, purpose and truth; values and commitments. As pupils communicate their responses to learning their religious literacy is developed and enhanced in an age appropriate way.

A Vision Statement for Religious Education

At St. John's, our RE curriculum has been designed with the intention of enabling every child to flourish. The curriculum expresses and strengthens our vision, ethos and values which are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. As a school we recognise that a good quality R.E. curriculum has the potential to have the most powerful and lasting effect on a child's heart and mind.

In our school where pupils and staff come from different faiths and none, religious education (RE) is a highly valued subject which combines academic skills with the development of character and spirit. The school's RE curriculum is rich and varied. It studies a range of world religions and worldviews. At the heart of RE in this school is the teaching of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

As with all curriculum subjects, our school's Christian vision drives all of our learning.

God in our Lives

At St John's pupils are encouraged to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. Our RE curriculum inspires pupils and offers them a safe place to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values whilst having respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. At St.

John's we encourage children to ask their own questions and openly challenge their teachers and each other in a respectful manner.

The RE curriculum prepares children for the challenges of the modern world. It enables children to develop sensitivity and respect for others. It breaks down barriers and builds communities.

Ignite your fire

We ignite a passion and curiosity for learning by providing a rich and engaging RE curriculum to inspire all learners to be the best that they can be. Pupils experience a balanced RE curriculum which explores religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. There are also opportunities to visit places of worship or interview visitors in school to help us to find out more about living faith.

We seek to grow good people who can make a difference to the world around them. Our RE study units provide opportunities to 'meet' individuals whose faith determined their paths in life. Children will find out about the way that faith has shaped the world around us and created the diverse society that we live in today

Family

At St John's the RE curriculum enables understanding of how religion and beliefs affects our lives. In our school there is *"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."* (Statement of Entitlement 2019)

RE prepares children for citizenship in today's diverse world. However, we recognise that our school serves a local community that is less diverse than many parts of the country. Therefore, it's essential that our children learn about Christianity as a living, world faith. In addition, learning about other world faiths, helps our pupils develop sensitivity and respect for others, breaking down barriers and building communities.

Truth

RE provides opportunities for spiritual development and personal reflection. It provokes challenging questions about meaning and purpose, truth and values, identity and belonging. In a world when it's not always seen as 'cool' to discuss faith or religion we want our children to be true to themselves and secure in their own view of the world. Through discussion and debate the children will develop a sense of justice for all, recognising that all of God's children should be valued.

Throughout their RE lessons, the children will find out about some truly remarkable individuals who had the courage to be true to themselves, to stand up for others and their faith.

Aims

The aims of Religious Education **in this school** are:

- 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.

National Society RE Statement of Entitlement 2019

Legal Framework

As a **voluntary aided school**, we are free by law to provide RE in accordance with our trust deed.

Our school RE curriculum is based on the Questful resource which is Chester Diocese's offer for RE. The resource which fulfils all legal requirements and embodies the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2019.

Parents have a legal right in accordance with the Education act 1996 to withdraw their children from religious education lessons, but as RE is central to the life and identity of St. John's, we would ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

Teaching & Learning

- Our school RE curriculum is based on Questful which is Chester Diocese's offer for RE. Other resources such as 'Understanding Christianity' and Request are used to support teaching and learning. There are clear learning outcomes for all units of work, based on the appropriate expectations as set out in the RE syllabus.
- RE will be given at least 5% of curriculum time.
- The school scheme of work is organised as a two year rolling programme and ensures that there is continuity and progression for pupils and opportunities for assessment.
- A range of teaching and learning activities inspires pupils learning.
- Progress in RE is part of pupils' annual report to parents.
- Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEND, EAL and the more able are considered in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum.
- RE will be taught as a discrete subject. At times, we may plan RE days or weeks to study a theme in more depth.
- A range of visitors is invited to support the teaching of RE, and whenever possible, there will be planned visits to places of worship
- Of the RE taught, 75% is Christianity and 25% covers other world faiths. Pupils are encouraged to recognise similarities between faiths and use this knowledge to develop their own personal 'worldview'.

- Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development/ British Values

- Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's worldviews and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.
- We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.
- Religious education also introduces pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider community, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice. This includes work on British values.

Leadership & Management

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE subject leader, in close collaboration with Senior Management who together will ensure that the principles set out in the National Society's Statement of Entitlement for RE are implemented.

The RE subject leader will support and regularly monitor the subject across the school and will receive an adequate budget yearly to do this. Relevant and regular CPD will ensure that her subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date. The RE subject leader will ensure that staff receive adequate training whenever necessary in the teaching and assessment of RE. Regular reports to the curriculum governors and to the governing body will ensure everyone is informed on progress and attainment in RE.

SIAMS & RE

Our SIAMS inspection was carried out in January 2019. The overall judgement was GOOD. The targets for improvement were identified as:

- *Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other world faiths in order to prepare them more effectively for life in a diverse society.*
- *Enable pupils to have a more active role in the planning and leading of collective worship in order to further promote their spiritual development.*
- *Improve pupils' understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith in order to broaden their perspective on global issues.*

Please refer to the school's RE action plan to see how these issues are being addressed.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the RE Subject Leader and the SLT and will be based upon discussions with other members of staff, observation of teaching and monitoring of children's work. Re-evaluation of teaching plans will also form part of any review. The outcome of the review will influence the future school development plan.