

## 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 September 2018

Next review September 2019

## **Our Vision for religious education**

At St. John's, Religious Education 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. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our RE curriculum.

In our school where pupils and staff come from all faiths and none, religious education (RE) is a highly valued academic subject that enables understanding of how religion and beliefs affect our lives. We provide a RE curriculum that is rich and varied and study a range of world religions and worldviews. At the heart of RE in this school is the teaching of Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ which enables enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.

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 the range of faiths studied. 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. Where possible, teaching will be supplemented with visits to places of worship and/or visits from people from religious communities or from people who hold a non-religious worldview.

Pupils are encouraged to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. Our 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.

Encountering religion and belief includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs, teachings and 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. This 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.

## **Aims**

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

1. 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.
2. To 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.
3. To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

*RE Statement of Entitlement 2016*

## **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 Chester Diocesan Guidance which fulfils all legal requirements and the embodies the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2016

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**

- We follow the Chester Diocesan syllabus, using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource 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 i.e. 50 minutes per week in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 increasing to one hour per week in Key Stage 2.
- 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.
- Pupil progress and attainment in RE is tracked and recorded half termly at the end of each unit of study using Classroom Monitor. 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 either 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
- The faiths taught at St. John's at KS1 are Christianity and Judaism and at KS2 Christianity, Hinduism (LKS2) and Islam (UKS2). Other religions and worldviews may be taught implicitly or when comparing ideas or as thematic studies.
- Of the RE taught, 70% is Christianity and 30% is other faiths.
- 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 responses, 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.

## **Assessment & Achievement**

Appropriate to age at the end of their education in our Church 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
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.

*RE Statement of Entitlement 2016*

## **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 last SIAMS was in January 2014 and the target for improvement relating to RE were identified as:

*'To support the children's progress in religious education (RE) more effectively by: ensuring that they know the level they have achieved to inform next steps in their learning and to develop a portfolio of assessed work, in order that all members of staff will have a sound understanding of expected standards and those being achieved.'*

Further details of actions taken to address this can be found in the schools own Self Evaluation document. Please enquire in the school office if you would like further details.

Our next SIAMS is due in the academic year 2018-19.

## **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.