



# St Mary's Primary RE Policy

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## Religious Education Policy St Mary's Church of England Primary School

*This Policy document has been developed based on Religious Education in English Schools: Non statutory guidance 2010 DCSF <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/> and comes from the model policy provided by Salisbury Diocese.*

St Mary's Church of England Primary School will provide 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 community, founded on strong Christian values, 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.

### Our vision

Our vision, as a Church of England primary school, is deeply rooted in a strong Christian tradition, to develop happy, young people with enquiring minds, a lifelong love of learning, respect for themselves, others and the environment so that they will have the skills, resilience and adaptability to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The Bible verse that sets our vision statement in context comes from the words of Jesus:

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" Philippians 4.13

We have five core values that are strategic to this vision

#### **Our core values**

*Forgiveness, courage, friendship, respect and perseverance.*

All we do as a school is underpinned by these values

Whilst growing in God's love, we will support and encourage one another to aim for the best in all we do.

### The Legal Position

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

St Mary's Church of England Primary is a Church of England School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus and supplement this with material from the Diocese and elsewhere.

### Rationale and Aims

In Religious Education at St Mary's School we aim that Religious Education will: -

- **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. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development

- **encourage pupils 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. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery**

## **The contribution R.E. makes to other curriculum aims in particular to community cohesion**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils 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 prepares 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 roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

### **Personal development and well-being**

R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. 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.

### **Community cohesion**

R.E. makes an important contribution to a school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective R.E. will promote community cohesion at each of the four levels outlined in DCSF guidance.

**The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

**The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

**The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

**The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

R.E. 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.

## **PROCEDURES**

R.E. has an important part 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 and provided by careful planning based on Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity. Teachers adapt and supplement the schemes of work as appropriate for their class. In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want 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.

R.E. is taught according to the Trust Deed that also takes note of the Salisbury Diocesan Guidelines. R.E. is taught to pupils regularly. This can be weekly, or in a concentrated block.

R.E. is part of the basic curriculum, and as such, has an equal standing with other subjects within the school curriculum.

R.E., according to the 1988 Education Act “must reflect the fact that the religious traditions are in the main Christian, whilst taking into account the practices of other principal religions in Great Britain”.

In this school Christianity is our principal study. In addition, the following apply -

In Key Stage 1 --- Islam, Judaism and Hinduism

In Key Stage 2 --- Islam, Judaism and Hinduism

Other faiths are also taught as part of an integrated curriculum

R.E. does not seek to persuade or indoctrinate, but help children in their own personal search for meaning, purpose, and value in life. R.E. is taught using themes, which link in with the class topics, or religious calendar, wherever possible. In addition, R.E. can link with the Act of Collective Worship. A variety of methods and strategies are employed in order to address the differing needs of individual pupils. Visits and visitors are beneficial and encouraged, when appropriate.

### **ASSESSMENT, RECORDING, AND REPORTING**

At the end of each unit of work, teachers will assess the children based on their work and contribution's during class activities. On occasions, where relevant, an assessment task may be given. Attainment of the children will be recorded on the year group R.E. tracking sheet where progress throughout each year can be monitored. Children will be judged to be working towards, working at or working beyond the expected standard.

Parents receive an annual report of their child's progress in R.E.

### **MONITORING**

The R.E. subject leader within the school through analysis of this assessment data, through lesson observations, through work sampling and through pupil interviews. This information will feed into the Church school self-evaluation process.

### **THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM RE**

At St Mary's CE Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds 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 citizenship. 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.

The right of withdrawal of any child, requested by a parent will be respected, on receipt of a letter addressed to the Head teacher.