

ST. ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



At St. Andrew's we welcome you to our happy, safe and Christian family, where we encourage everyone to do their very best. Our vision is to inspire our children to be confident individuals, who are excited about learning and curious about the world they live in. It is our desire that every child who joins St. Andrew's will achieve high academic standards and indeed, as our school motto states 'Reach for the Stars' and beyond!

OUR VISION

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Through this we aim to empower our children to be successful citizens in a changing world. We want our children to be confident and to be active participants in the journey of lifelong learning. We value our Church of England identity and draw on its rich traditions and heritage.

St. Andrew's CE Primary is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School which has strong affiliations with our local Church. Pupils are drawn from a variety of religious and cultural background and this rich diversity is a strength of the school. We aim to serve our community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We will encourage and nurture an understanding of the Gospel, promoting our values of peace, love, kindness, perseverance, faithfulness and joy to all our pupils and their families.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

As a school within the diocese of Southwark, we are committed to practising the Christian values promoted by our diocese and Church. We aim to be a school which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate on grounds of economic power, gender, mental health, physical ability, race, or sexuality. When discrimination of any kind occurs, we will challenge it, because we believe that we should be a school which includes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ. We therefore strive to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the school feel welcomed and accepted so that they are able to participate fully in school life and flourish as a member of the wider community.

LEGAL POSITION

- In the 1988 Education Act it states, 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.'
- The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides our school's approach to RE. It states, "Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10) It will help to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. 'Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions . . . and for the religious freedom of each person.'" (Religious Education in Church of England Schools A Statement of Entitlement, The Church of England Education Office, 2019.)

INTRODUCTION

- Religious Education plays a crucial part in strengthening the ethos of our school and the overall learning environment. As a core subject, Religious Education has a high status within our school curriculum alongside other core subjects. Religious Education (RE) is determined by the Governing Body and is delivered in line with the guidance offered by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education.
- At St. Andrew's CE Primary, we aspire to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another so that all may be included, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, sexuality, as well as mental health and physical ability. We foster links between school and church. Living in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society we always encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Help the pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of religion and faith.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to study the practices, beliefs and values of other faiths.
- To promote sensitivity and respect for others' faiths.
- Further pupils' growth and development through the study of the beliefs and values of Christianity and other faiths.
- To create an environment for pupils to experience an awareness of God whilst encouraging them to recognise their own value and importance in the sight of God
- To encourage a personal response to moral issues
- Establish a clear and engaging framework for the teaching and learning of Religious Education across the school
- Provide clear guidelines for continuity and progression in the teaching of Religious Education throughout the school from Reception to Year 6.

ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

- At St. Andrew's CE Primary we believe that the wider curriculum concerns the spiritual development of the child and it is not just through the delivery of RE lessons and Collective Worship that the children receive opportunities for spiritual growth. RE is at the heart of the whole curriculum and teachers are sensitive to the fact that particular questions and circumstances can offer opportunities to address issues related to religion and faith (e.g. discuss reconciliation, social responsibilities and forgiveness). Our wider curriculum facilitates these discussions.
- Religious Education has a high status in our School and is compliant with the requirements that the syllabus must, *'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'* (Education Act 1996.)
- Our Religious Education provision is 2/3 of a Christian nature and 1/3 Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism. The content is based on the idea of developing an educational awareness of other faiths and cultures in the community in which we live.
- RE learning is planned using the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education's Syllabus. The syllabus provides a continuous and progressive outline for the development of Religious Education across the school. Within this framework units specified for each year group support the teaching of Religious Education and this ensures effective coverage of all religions taught and is age and stage appropriate.
- We use a progressive, sequenced curriculum designed to develop deep, coherent knowledge over time. As follows:
 - **The Three Disciplinary Lenses** - we weave three distinct perspectives—our "golden threads"—into the units to provide a balanced approach to learning:
 - The Theological Lens (Believing): Exploring core concepts, texts, and what people of faith hold true.
 - The Philosophical Lens (Thinking): Critically analyzing ultimate questions, ethics, and wisdom.
 - The Human & Social Sciences Lens (Living): Examining how faith and worldviews shape daily life and diverse global communities.
 - **Personal Growth & Inclusivity**
 - Diversity & Cohesion - we explore diversity within Christianity and global worldviews, building robust religious literacy to cultivate deep respect, empathy, and community cohesion.
 - Moral & Spiritual Development - RE serves as a catalyst for SMSC growth, encouraging pupils to reflect on their own beliefs while tackling major global issues, such as climate justice.
 - Critical Skills - We empower pupils to master enquiry, critical analysis, and evaluation, giving them the voice to confidently communicate issues of faith and truth.
 - **Lesson Design & Implementation**
 - Every unit blends systematic study (focusing on one religion) with thematic study (comparing religions and practices). Activities include a balanced mix of shorter tasks and extended work to showcase depth of learning.
- All classes are taught RE weekly. As a Church school, it is expected that RE should be given between 5% and 10% of curriculum time. At St. Andrew's CE Primary RE is taught for 1 hour in KS1 and 1.2 hours in KS2.
- Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the Religious Education offered is carefully planned and matched to the ability/level of understanding of the pupil. It aims to raise the pupil's awareness of understanding and the nature of Faith and also help to develop attitudes of respect and tolerance towards others.
- In EYFS and KS1 the children's work is represented visually, through photographs, evidence of discussion and pictures. A whole class book shows evidence of achievement in both attainment and learning about religion, and also learning from religion. Children in years 1 and 2 are introduced to individual class books.
- In KS2 the children have discrete RE books in which they record learning.

ASSESSMENT

Effective assessment treats our sequenced curriculum as the progress model. Rather than checking isolated skills, assessment focuses on how the curriculum and its implementation enable pupils to build, connect, and retain knowledge over time.

Assessment in RE is a continuous process that encompasses both formative and summative practices:

- Formative Assessment - ongoing learning is recorded in both whole-class floor books and pupils' individual books. Feedback is delivered in line with school policy to directly inform subsequent planning and teaching.
- Summative Assessment - these assessments take various creative forms, such as reflective comments, posters, or quizzes.
- Assessing Substantive Knowledge (Knowing and Remembering) - teachers regularly check the retention of core facts, vocabulary, and religious concepts.
- Assessing Disciplinary Knowledge (Complex Tasks) - Disciplinary knowledge focuses on the "ways of knowing" (theological, philosophical, and sociological lenses). We assess this through complex, meaningful outputs where pupils apply specialised knowledge and reflect on their own positionality. These include discussion and debate, extended writing and creative expression.
- Assessing Concepts ('The Golden Threads') - Assessment in our school does not view knowledge and skills as separate entities; they are deeply intertwined. At strategic milestones—culminating at the end of Key Stage 2—pupils are assessed on their holistic understanding of the overarching core concepts that run through our curriculum. Evaluating these "golden threads" provides vital diagnostic data on long-term pupil progress and directly informs our future curriculum design.
- Reporting - this accumulated evidence of achievement is used to complete end-of-term and end-of-year reports, clearly indicating the specific skills practiced, knowledge learned, and concepts grasped by each pupil.

THE ROLE OF THE RE SUBJECT LEADER

To lead the subject by:

- Writing and updating the RE policy in the light of initiatives and change; monitoring the development of the subject throughout the school.
- Guiding, challenging and supporting teachers in RE.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the planned and delivered curriculum specifically in RE through discussions with teachers and pupils as well as teachers' own evaluations.
- Monitoring pupils' progress in RE through book scrutiny and assessment.
- Monitoring classroom practices and giving guidelines across the curriculum to ensure subject knowledge is clear and skills are being developed, with particular attention to the "Golden Threads."
- Auditing and monitoring resources throughout the school to ensure that there are sufficient age-appropriate resources for effective teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that staff are continually aware of new developments in RE and disseminating any relevant information to other colleagues.

INCLUSION

- At St. Andrew's CE Primary all children are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Work is differentiated according to ability and achievement.
- Children with additional needs will be supported at their appropriate level and targets set according to individual needs.
- The attainment and progress of our disadvantaged children is monitored termly.
- We believe that all children irrespective of race, ability and gender should have equal access to the RE curriculum.
- The SDBE encourages all schools to develop a Faith Group which can oversee the implementation of and monitor and evaluate the impact of the RE provision in the school.

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY LINKS

- Effective, sustained contact between home, school and the local community is vital to the development of any child. Parents and other adults in the local community can be a valuable source of information and offer skills that can extend the work of the classroom into the locality. All visits in and out of school are carefully planned and all input is shared beforehand to ensure content is appropriate and relevant.
- At St. Andrew's CE Primary we have strong links with the local clergy who regularly come into school to lead our collective worship.
- Visits to the local places of worship of different faiths are encouraged so that the children can develop greater understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Children across the school visit our Church often to develop and deepen their spirituality.
- Speakers and visitors are also welcomed into our school as a further source of information as appropriate to the development of the RE curriculum and/collective worship themes.

QUALITY ASSURING INPUT FROM AN EXTERNAL AGENCY

There may be issues relating to quality assuring the work of an external agency delivering an activity in school. We welcome external agencies such as specialist teachers, religious leaders and performers who enrich our curriculum. For this work to be of benefit to pupils, we assess the suitability and effectiveness of input and ensure that:

- A member of school staff is always present during external agency delivery
- Any messages communicated to pupils are consistent with the ethos of the school
- Activities are complementary to the curriculum, properly embedded in planning and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication
- Activities are matched to the needs of pupils
- Activities are carefully evaluated by schools to ensure that they are effective
- Where external agencies are used, we follow the guidance set out by the London Borough of Lambeth in their document, Guidance for Schools - External Agencies; this includes the completion of relevant risk forms where appropriate.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAWAL

The parent's right of withdrawal, as expressed in the 1988 Education Reform Act is respected. Parents are free to express their wish to withdraw their child from the Religious Education Curriculum by writing to the Head teacher. However, it is hoped that this will not be necessary considering their choice to send their child to a Church of England school.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed as part of the school's monitoring cycle.