



# Barlaston CE (VC) First School



## RE Policy

“Enabling our whole school community to flourish and let their light shine, preparing them for their role as gentle and humble agents for change in the world we share.”

### Introduction

We are proud of being a Church of England school and value our close links with The Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Barlaston and its community. We feel that this puts us in a strong position to develop the children’s knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths including Christianity, address fundamental questions concerning the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit and also to help children to grow up to be caring and respectful citizens.

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining our school’s distinctive Christian character. The subject is regarded as a core subject within the school’s curriculum. It has a vital role in developing religious literacy and deepening pupils understanding of Christianity, in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions.

RE is non-confessional and should be treated as an academic subject in its own right.

### Rationale

As the Church of England document, ‘**Making a difference? A review of Religious Education in Church of England schools 2014**’ recommends that the RE curriculum in all schools should,

*“...ensure it provides a more coherent, progressive and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world”*

*“...explore ways of extending pupils’ ability to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning in RE”*

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the ‘**Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools**’, Church of England Education Office (Feb 2019), see link below: Christianity will, therefore, be no less than 50% of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to the teaching of RE in this Church of England school. However, as a Church school we have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and worldviews. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also learn to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice and discrimination.

RE teaching also follows the legal requirements of the **Education Reform Act (1988)**, which places RE as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement for all pupils. The ERA allows parents and carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the head teacher.

The school bases its RE provision on the **Staffordshire Locally Agreed Syllabus**.

In addition, the school uses the **Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity** resources and other appropriate materials to enhance teaching and learning.

At least 5% of curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate.

## **Aims and outcomes**

Our aims in the teaching of RE for all children are:

- To help pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text
- To help pupils connect their experience of worship with RE
- To help pupils consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide
- To enable all pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and world views and their impact on society and culture
- To give pupils a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions
- To help pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings and understanding their impact on the lives of believers
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief, of themselves, the world and human experience
- To develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, and so to consider important human questions, values and concerns
- To nurture understanding, respect and open-mindedness and inspire lifelong engagement with the study of religions and beliefs.

The outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion – symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make – including believers – and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others – including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

## **The management of RE**

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing.

Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects. Teachers should share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development (SIAMS 2018).

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

The RE subject leader in partnership with our Deputy Head (Curriculum Lead)

is responsible for:

- producing a long term and medium term scheme of work for the school
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision
- ensuring Religious Education has status within the school
- keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- auditing current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff INSET
- monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- ensuring rigorous systems of assessment are in place (SIAMS 2018) and are in line with the Local Agreed Syllabus
- ensuring RE is prioritised within the School Improvement Plan and undertaking its regular review
- accountability for RE standards in the school
- meet with member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

## **RE outcomes for pupils**

Assessment sheets have been developed in partnership with the teaching staff to track the progress of the children. These are completed termly with an annual judgement made about pupils' attainment. These are linked to the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.

In RE pupils will be encouraged / have opportunities to:

- Express their opinions.
- Reflect on their own beliefs / beliefs of others
- Visits to places of worship
- Attend events at St John the Baptist Church

Visit Church four times a year to take part in acts of worship

## **RE across the curriculum**

Although RE is taught as a discrete subject, some of the aspects of the curriculum are also covered in other subjects, where appropriate.

RE also supports other subjects in a similar way. For example, English skills are reinforced in RE lessons, art is used within some lessons and computing skills are also developed where appropriate.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with personal, social and health education (PSHE) and British values.

In addition, the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

**Spiritual** - Widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness

and understanding of God.

**Moral** - Helping each pupil develop their own informed values

**Social** - Helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values of our society

**Cultural** - Aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

Approved and signed off by:

J. Gordon  
Headteacher

G. Tomblin  
Chair of Governors

Policy reviewed September 2024

Next review September 2025