



# Great Marsden St. John's Primary - a Church of England Academy. Our Curriculum Statement for RE

## Our Vision

Our children will experience love, respect, faith and success as unique individuals within our school community and the wider world, now and in the future.

## Our Mission

We ask that Christ will live in our hearts through faith making us rooted and grounded in LOVE.

Ephesians 3

## Our Values

LOVING God

LOVING Others

LOVING Ourselves

LOVING Learning

LOVING Life

At GMSJ we believe that the basic principle of an effective curriculum is that learning makes a change to long term memory. The intent is that our RE curriculum facilitates the delivery of this basic principle. In order to do so a strategic approach, based on pedagogical research, must be in place.

## CURRICULUM INTENT

**Our RE Curriculum is broad and ambitious.** It is built upon the National Curriculum coupled with defined development of cultural capital “the knowledge that children need to be effective citizens”. Where possible we expose the children to experiences they are unlikely to encounter in other parts of their lives. To achieve this we have a comprehensive and deep knowledge of our families and community that enables us to strategically plan life enrichment.

**Our RE Curriculum is well planned and sequenced,** it contains the right knowledge in the right order, providing pupils with the building blocks of what they need to know and be able to do to succeed in RE. The RE Curriculum is a spiral curriculum (Jerome Bruner) where subject **big concepts, procedural and declarative knowledge** are reencountered throughout the child's life at GMSJ.

**Procedural Knowledge** refers to the knowledge of **how** to perform a specific skill or task, it is automatic. Examples of procedural knowledge in RE are:

- How to navigate a bible
- How to listen to, share and challenge viewpoints courteously

**Declarative Knowledge** involves “knowing that”. Recalling information from declarative memory involves some degree of conscious effort – information is consciously brought to mind. **It is the Who, what, where, when and why of learning.**

Examples in RE:



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- What features are there inside the church?
- Who are significant leaders of world religions?
- What festivals are celebrated in different religions?

The two work together. For example in RE children use the procedural knowledge of how to navigate the bible to develop their declarative knowledge of bible stories.

**Big concepts** are complex and abstract, such as 'place', 'chronology' or 'grammar'. These **big concepts** hold declarative and procedural knowledge. They tie together RE topics into a cohesive framework. Examples of big concepts in RE are :

- Incarnation
- Salvation
- The Kingdom Of God

By encountering the same **big concept** over and over children gradually build understanding of them.

**Our RE Curriculum has a coherently planned assessment sequence** to measure the impact of the RE curriculum on the outcomes achieved by children. Children should be building a body of knowledge that they are able to commit to long-term memory, draw from and build on. In RE we assess learning at three key points in the year. At the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer term.

**Our RE Curriculum is inclusive.**

**Our RE Curriculum ensures that the Golden Thread runs through it.**

### **CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION.**

**How we implement our broad and ambitious RE curriculum.** From entry into school in EYFS, all children experience the RE curriculum. We follow the Blackburn Diocese scheme "Questful RE" combined with elements of "Understanding Christianity".

We weave high quality activities which increase cultural capital throughout the RE curriculum and our wider offer, for example:

- Regular worships held in our church - St John's
- Visits to a wide variety of places of worship
- A range of artefacts that can be shared and held by the children



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### How we implement our well planned and sequenced RE curriculum.

**Big concepts** are charted onto RE plans. Often a number of the seven big RE concepts are weaved into each RE unit. A careful process of selecting and plotting RE units ensures that RE learning is sequenced to build upon prior knowledge.

The RE curriculum map identifies which medium term planning resource must be used to inform short term planning. In RE this is Questful RE, which is supplemented with resources from Understanding Christianity and RE Today.

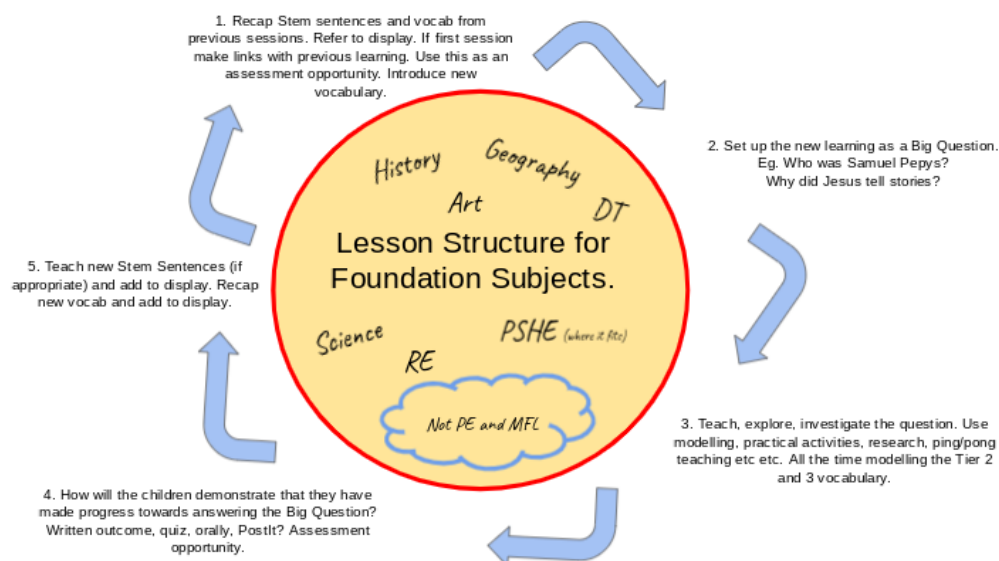
Each RE unit plan states the number of hours that should be spent delivering that learning. This is split between Christianity and other important world religions. Our curriculum ensures that there is an 80:20 split between Christianity and other religions. Such rigour ensures that learning is focused and diverse.

The timetabling of RE looks like this:

In EYFS: One session per week. This could be as a whole class or in small key worker groups. The length of these sessions will vary depending on the activity being explored. Through the year, this will change and develop to reflect the needs of the cohort.

In KS1 & KS2: One session of 1 hour per week.

For the majority of RE lessons a **defined structure is in place**. This is not dictatorial however, it is expected to see some aspects of the outlined framework in each lesson. In RE the lesson model would be:





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**Assessment** sits at the heart of RE teaching and learning at GMSJ. Minute by minute assessment of understanding, or indeed misunderstanding, is fundamental to our teaching model. It informs future teaching, identifies starting points and exposes gaps in procedural and declarative knowledge. Adults use a variety of strategies to obtain information. These strategies are not specified but a minimum use of 'hands up' is encouraged.

In RE we assess children's declarative and procedural knowledge at the end of autumn, spring and summer term. The units covered in the second half of these terms are comparable as classes are covering similar big concepts. We assess using the assessment criteria indicated on each unit plan.

Pupil Conferences are held once per term. This allows the subject leader to discuss with the pupils the learning that they have engaged with.

Children are taught to 'self assess' their learning against given criteria. In RE this is done in accordance with the marking and feedback policy. Marking and Feedback is a crucial aspect of assessment but this must be manageable. In RE verbal feedback will be shared with pupils and indicated in books with VF. In RE, marking will acknowledge children's achievements and provide challenges or questions that encourage children to think, reflect and share their own ideas on the topics covered.

**How we implement an inclusive RE curriculum.** There is a clear expectation that as an inclusive, church school community that we encourage learning about other religions and world views, fostering respect for them. We follow guidelines outlined by The Church of England Education Office (2016) teaching  $\frac{2}{3}$  Christianity to  $\frac{1}{3}$  other religions. Within our lessons, we ensure pupils with Special Educational Needs have the resources they need to engage with RE in a developmentally appropriate way. For example, by using a range of high quality bibles and supporting explanations with practical hands-on experiences We also aim to challenge and stretch those who are identified as gifted and talented.

### **How we implement the Literacy Golden Thread through our RE curriculum.**

In recognising that Literacy skills form an essential basis on which the rest of our curriculum is built, it is fed through the RE curriculum. This is achieved by maintaining high expectations of pupils in their written work.

The Golden Thread emphasizes the teaching of vocabulary. We know that this is often a barrier for our children and therefore requires more input. Technical vocabulary that is essential for the understanding of RE is introduced and used by staff and in turn expected to be used by pupils too.

We know that access to books is sometimes an issue for our families. To this end we have well stocked classroom libraries so that the children can always read in school and Key Stage libraries which allow children to select books to take home. Books related to RE are available



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for children to access. Each class has a reflection area where books related to RE topics or worship are displayed. Children have access to the reflection areas throughout the day.

In addition, we recognise the importance of applying maths in real life contexts and in solving problems. As such, where possible, links between maths and RE are made. An example of this is identifying and exploring the way pattern, symbol and symmetry are used in religious artwork.

### **CURRICULUM IMPACT**

To measure the impact of the RE curriculum at GMSJ we use qualitative and quantitative information.

What we measure:

- Pupils procedural and declarative knowledge across the curriculum.
- Pupil's progress from starting points.
- Pupil's achievements across year groups, in units that cover similar big concepts.

How we measure:

- Reviewing and evaluating the work pupils produce.
- Carrying out teacher assessment informed by the RE syllabus.
- Pupil voice via pupil conferencing.
- Comparison with and benchmarking against similar schools as part of a trust wide cluster.
- Observation of teaching and learning.

Why we measure:

- To identify strengths in our RE curriculum delivery and set goals for improvement.