

## RE at St Margaret's

At St Margaret's, our Christian vision, "Let your light shine before people" (Matthew 5:16), shapes everything we do, including our Religious Education. RE helps our children to shine by developing wisdom, dignity, and respect, reflecting the values of being *Caring, Celebratory, Courageous, Christ-like*, and *Community*-focused.

Our RE curriculum enables every child to flourish and 'live life in all its fullness'. It offers a deep understanding of Christianity as a living and diverse global faith, alongside meaningful learning about religious and non-religious worldviews. Teaching is rigorous and inclusive ensuring all pupils feel valued and respected. [

St. Margaret's C.E. Primary School Durham, in accordance with the 1996 Education Reform Act, provides Religious Education for all pupils registered at the school. Although not part of the National Curriculum, Religious Education has the same status and importance as any other subject. The same high standards are applied to Religious Education as to all other subjects.

Under the terms of the 1996 Education Reform Act an Agreed Syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the principal religions represented in Great Britain. It must not be designed to convert pupils or urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils.

### Our Curriculum

Our RE curriculum builds upon prior knowledge and reflects our diverse school community. RE at St. Margaret's encourages multi-faith harmony, respect for all and community cohesion. It develops children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of world religious and non-religious world views. The school follows the Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

RE is taught through carefully planned units across the academic year which develop children's knowledge and understanding of religion through the four RE concepts:

- Belief
- Authority
- Expressions of Belief
- Impact of Belief

Children are encouraged to think critically by using reason to analyse, evaluate and give opinions. As a result, Religious Education at St. Margaret's is both intellectually challenging, academically rigorous and personally enriching. Our curriculum encourages empathy and enables children to develop their own sense of identity and belonging. Opportunities are given within RE lessons for personal reflection and SMSC Development. Where necessary, we make adaptations to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all learners. These adjustments are informed by ongoing monitoring, assessment, and, where applicable, individual support plans and EHCPs. Religious Education is usually delivered through a weekly timetabled lesson. However, we also make use of alternative approaches when appropriate to enrich pupils' learning experiences. These may include:

- Whole afternoons of RE in a week- particularly recommended for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 units on Easter and Christmas.
- A full day of RE every few weeks, allowing for deeper, continuous enquiry-based learning.
- A suspended timetable day for educational visits, such as trips to places of religious significance, which help bring learning to life.

### EYFS and 'Understanding the World'

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Religious Education is delivered through integrated, theme-based learning that aligns closely with the EYFS curriculum areas, particularly Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Understanding the World, and Communication and Language. EYFS RE at St Margaret's encourages an enquiry-based approach. RE is explored through engaging activities like storytelling, celebrations, role play, and discussions about special people, places, and objects. This helps children to develop a sense of identity, respect for others, and curiosity about the world around them. This approach supports the EYFS goal of fostering children's awareness of communities and cultures, while laying a strong foundation for future Religious Education learning.

## Sequencing: Our journey through RE

### Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, Religious Education is carefully sequenced to support children's developing understanding of religion and belief. Children begin by exploring concepts that are closely connected to their own experiences. Such as special people, places, and celebrations. This helps children relate new ideas to their everyday lives. We then build on this foundation by examining how beliefs and practices have shaped life over time in familiar contexts. Finally, children are introduced to religious stories, traditions, and communities that may be new to them, encouraging curiosity, respect, and a broader understanding of the world around them.

#### Year 1

In Year 1, children explore key aspects of Christianity and Buddhism as well as other religious and non-religious world views. They begin by asking . At Christmas, the unit *"Why are gifts given at Christmas?"* helps children understand Christian belief that Jesus is a gift for the world. In *"Why is Jesus special to Christians?"*, children learn about Jesus' life and teachings, followed by *"What is the Easter story?"*, which introduces Christian symbols and some of their meanings. Later, children explore Buddhism through *"What can we find out about Buddha?"*, learning about his life and teachings.

By the end of Year 1, children will show growing confidence in talking about religion and belief, demonstrating respect for diversity and beginning to make simple connections between religious teachings and how these might link with the world views held by themselves or others.

#### Year 2

In Year 2, children deepen their understanding of Christianity and Buddhism through a series of enquiry-based units that promote reflection, discussion, and respectful engagement with diverse beliefs. They begin by exploring *"What can we learn from the story of St Cuthbert?"*, connecting local history with Christian values of compassion and service. In *"Why is the Bible special to Christians?"*, children learn about the Bible's role in worship and guidance for some Christians. The Christmas unit, *"How and why is light important at Christmas?"*, introduces symbolic meanings of light in Christian celebrations. Through *"What does it mean to belong in Christianity?"*, children explore practices such as baptism and church community life. The Easter unit, *"How do Christians celebrate Easter?"*, focuses on themes of hope and renewal. Children also study Buddhism in *"How do Buddhists show their beliefs?"*, learning about symbols, meditation, and the importance of kindness for those with Buddhist world views. Finally, in *"What can we*

*find out about our local faith communities?”*, children investigate how different beliefs are lived out in our local community.

Throughout these units, children progress in their ability to retell religious stories, recognise and describe religious symbols and practices, and begin to ask questions. They begin to make connections between beliefs and actions and express their own ideas with increasing confidence.

## Key stage 2

In Key Stage 2, Religious Education builds on the foundations laid in earlier years, guiding pupils toward a deeper and more critical understanding of religion and belief. Learning is sequenced to help children explore how religious teachings influence individuals and communities, both locally and globally. Children examine sacred texts, historical figures, and moral teachings. They consider how these shape identity, values, and decision making. Enquiry questions encourage children to reflect on complex ideas such as commitment, belonging, and expression of faith. As they encounter a wider range of religions and worldviews, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Humanism, children are supported in developing respectful dialogue, thoughtful questioning, and personal reflection. This progression enables them to make connections between belief and practice, and to appreciate the diversity and significance of religion in the modern world.

## Year 3

In Year 3, children continue to deepen their understanding of religion and belief by exploring key aspects of Christianity and Hinduism through a series of thoughtful and engaging enquiry questions. They begin with *“How do Hindus worship?”*, where they learn about puja, the use of murtis, and the importance of devotion in Hindu practice. During Advent, the unit *“How and why is Advent important to Christians?”* helps children reflect on the themes of preparation and hope leading up to Christmas. In *“What can we learn about Christian worship and beliefs by visiting Churches?”*, pupils explore how different Christian denominations express their faith through worship, architecture, and community life. The Easter unit, *“What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday?”*, explores the events of Holy Week and the significance of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Later in the year, children revisit Hinduism in *“What do Hindus believe?”*, exploring key beliefs such as karma, dharma, and the concept of God in many forms.

By the end of Year 3, children will show increasing confidence in comparing religious practices, identifying key beliefs, and explaining how these influence the lives of believers. They begin to ask deeper questions, make connections between different faiths, and reflect thoughtfully on their own values, experiences and how these impact their own world views.

## Year 4

In Year 4, children begin to explore Christianity in greater depth, while also considering broader questions about values and community. Children revisit the Bible with a more analytical lens, building on their prior knowledge from year 1. They start the year with *“What do we know about the Bible and why is it important to Christians?”* Here they deepen their understanding of the Bible’s significance within Christian belief and practice. This unit supports the development of skills in interpreting religious sources and

understanding their significance. In *“Why do Christians call Jesus ‘The Light of the World?’”*, children reflect on symbolism and metaphor, building their ability to explain religious language and its meaning. The unit *“What do Christians believe about Jesus?”* encourages children to explore theological ideas and express their understanding using appropriate vocabulary. During Spring term, *“Why is Lent such an important period for Christians?”* introduces themes of reflection and preparation, helping pupils to make connections between belief and behaviour. In the summer term, *“How and why do people show care for others?”* allows children to consider moral teachings across faiths and worldviews, developing empathy and personal reflection. The final unit, *“Why do people visit Durham Cathedral today?”*, links local heritage with spiritual significance, encouraging pupils to think critically about the role of religious spaces in modern life.

By the end of Year 4, children describe and explain religious beliefs and practices with increasing detail, make links between belief and action, and begin to evaluate the impact of faith on individuals and communities.

## Year 5

In Year 5, children explore Judaism and Christianity through historical and theological lenses. They begin with *“Why is Moses important to Jewish people?”*, learning about leadership, covenant, and freedom and develop their ability to retell and interpret religious texts. In *“Why do Jewish people go to the Synagogue?”*, pupils examine the role of worship and community, building skills in recognising and describing religious practices. The Christmas unit *“What are the themes of Christmas?”* encourages children to explore symbolic meaning and theological ideas, supporting their ability to explain how beliefs are expressed through celebration. In *“What do Christians believe about God?”*, pupils deepen their understanding of Christian theology. The Easter unit *“Why is the Last Supper so important to Christians?”* helps children to reflect on the significance of rituals. Later, in *“How are Jewish beliefs expressed in the home?”*, children explore how faith is lived out daily, developing their understanding of religion as a way of life. The final unit, *“Why do people use rituals today?”*, encourages children to think critically about the purpose and meaning of symbolic actions across both religious and non-religious world views.

By the end of Year 5, children will explain how beliefs influence behaviour, compare religious and non-religious worldviews, and reflect thoughtfully on their own values and those of others.

## Year 6

In Year 6, children engage with complex ideas about belief, diversity, and identity. They begin with *“What can we find out about a local Muslim community?”*, exploring Islamic beliefs and practices in a real-world context, and developing skills in recognising diversity within and between religions. The Christmas unit *“What do the gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus?”* encourages pupils to compare biblical accounts and reflect on theological meaning, supporting their ability to interpret religious texts and evaluate differing viewpoints. In *“How and why do people care about the environment?”*, children consider religious and ethical responses to stewardship, building their capacity for moral reasoning and personal reflection. The Easter unit *“Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians?”* deepens understanding of sacrifice and celebration, helping children to articulate the significance of belief in shaping identity and values. In *“What can we learn about religious diversity in our area?”*, children investigate how different faiths contribute to community life, developing respectful dialogue and informed perspectives. The year concludes with the statutory bridging unit: *“So, what do we now know*

*about Christianity?”*, where children revisit the four key concepts. Belief, Authority, Expressions of Belief, and Impact of Belief to demonstrate their understanding of Christianity as a diverse and lived world view.

By the end of Year 6, children are expected to evaluate religious ideas, articulate informed personal responses, and demonstrate a broad understanding of religion in society. These outcomes reflect the Durham benchmark expectations for upper Key Stage 2, ensuring pupils are well-prepared for transition to Key Stage 3 with confidence, curiosity, and respect.

Year	Autumn 1	Christmas Unit/ Autumn 2	Spring 1	Easter Unit/ Spring 2	Summer
<b>EYFS Reception</b>	Let's find out about Harvest in a Church  Let's find out about Shabbat	Let's find out about The Christmas Story  Let's find out about Christmas Celebrations in Churches	Let's find out about Holy Books (e.g. The Qur'an, The Torah, The Guru Granth Sahib)  Let's hear some stories Jesus told. -The Lost sheep -The lost coin	Let's find out about Easter celebrations in Church.	Let's find out about special buildings and worship there
<b>Year 1</b>	What can we learn about Christianity from visiting a Church?	Why are gifts given at Christmas?	Why is Jesus special to Christians?	What is the Easter story?	What can we find out about Buddha?
<b>Year 2</b>	What can we learn from the story of St Cuthbert?  Why is the Bible special to Christians?	How and why is light important at Christmas?	What does it mean to belong in Christianity?	How do Christians celebrate Easter?	How do Buddhists show their beliefs?  What can we find out about our local faith communities?
<b>Year 3</b>	How do Hindus worship?	How and why is advent important to Christians?	What can we learn about Christian worship and beliefs by visiting Churches?	What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday?	What do Hindus believe?
<b>Year 4</b>	What do we know about the Bible and why is it important to Christians?	Why do Christians call Jesus 'The Light of the World'?	What do Christians believe about Jesus?	Why is Lent such an important period for Christians?	How and why do people show care for others?  Why do people visit Durham Cathedral today?
<b>Year 5</b>	Why is Moses important to Jewish people?  Why do Jewish people go to the Synagogue?	What are the themes of Christmas?	What do Christians believe about God?	Why is the Last Supper so important to Christians?	How are Jewish beliefs expressed in the home?  Why do people use rituals today?
<b>Year 6</b>	What can we find out about a local Muslim community?	What do the gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus?	How and why do people care about the environment?	Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians?	What can we learn about religious diversity in our area?  STATUTORY Bridging Unit: So, what do we now know about Christianity? (Exploration through the concepts)

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Demonstrating understanding of what has been learnt about Christianity through the four concepts</i></li></ul>
--	--	--	--	--	---

Monitoring and Assessment

Assessment plays a vital role in ensuring our RE curriculum remains ambitious and inclusive. It enables teachers to check pupils’ understanding, identify gaps in learning, and make informed adaptations to teaching so that all children can make sustained progress. Assessment is ongoing and takes various forms throughout each unit. Techniques such as self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher observation are used in line with the specific learning outcomes. Much of this formative assessment occurs naturally within lessons and may not always be formally recorded. Feedback sheets are used to support learning and progress.

At the end of each unit of study teachers make a summative judgment of each pupil’s attainment, recording whether they are working below or at the expected standard. This information informs future planning and supports targeted intervention where needed. By the end of the academic year, teachers determine whether pupils have met the end points for that year.