



Thornaby Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Policy

'Walking and learning with faith in the footsteps of Jesus'

Rationale

At Thornaby Church of England School our vision statement 'Walking and Learning in faith in the footsteps of Jesus' from the biblical scriptures of 'And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.' 2 John 1 v 6; 'Walk with the wise and become wise.' Proverbs 13 v 20; together with our core Christian values of love, perseverance, hope and forgiveness form the basis of the whole curriculum, both explicit and implicit that we offer the children in our care. We believe that our children need to feel safe and loved in order for them to thrive and learn. We achieve this through our distinctive Christian ethos and the support and care our staff all provide for every child and their family.

We believe the development and internalisation of these four core values of love, perseverance, hope and forgiveness are vital for our children's future. In the uncertainty of the next century they will need to be able to demonstrate and live out these values throughout their entire lives in order to develop as British and Global citizens who will have a positive impact on society as a whole and in the community in which they live. We aim to prepare our children for that future. We fully embrace our school's vision and aims. RE is an academic, non-confessional subject where we seek to ensure that pupils are able to meet the aims and purposes of the Diocesan Syllabus and Statement of Entitlement throughout their time at our school. Religious education is taught in accordance with the York Diocesan Guidelines for Religious Education.

Teaching and learning at this school reflects the distinctive and inclusive ethos of the schools' Anglican foundation and permeates the life and work of the whole school. The purpose of religious education at Thornaby Church of England School is to enable children to learn about religions and to learn from religion itself.

This policy has been written taking into account the latest Statement for Entitlement guidance (2019) and the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (2018). 3 RE in Church Schools - A Statement of Entitlement (Church of England - February 2019)

"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 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 worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. A high-quality sequential religious education (RE) programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews; fostering respect for others. In all Church school's religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and the social sciences. It should be a coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning developing both knowledge and skills. There should be a clear curriculum vision and intent, a structure for implementation and provision and a process for evaluating impact."

Aims and objectives (taken from the Leeds and York Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education).

The principal aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief. This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church schools:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and non-religious worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values. As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:
- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.

- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This means that the RE curriculum:

- Is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- Reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy*.

*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)

- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- Provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- Supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.

- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs.
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for *God* and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs. The syllabus is underpinned by three core elements, which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs. These elements are:

- Making sense of beliefs
- Making connections
- Understanding the impact.

At Thornaby Church of England Primary School, Religious Education is taught in a thematic way with every opportunity used to relate the messages from the Bible to the everyday lives of the children. It is an integral part of all areas of the curriculum, linking *SMSC*, core Christian Values and fundamental British Values. Children learn about other faiths and are given opportunities throughout the curriculum to raise questions about faith and the various religions of the world. They have the opportunity to visit various places of worship, to experience different religions and cultures

through visitors from the local community and are involved on many occasions in worship with St Marks Church.

The school follows the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement and the Diocesan Syllabus' guidance for 'Requirements and Good Practice' and 'Context and Content' for Religious Education (see our curriculum information at the end of this document). Teaching and Learning Religious Education is planned throughout the school using the Diocese of York and Leeds RE Syllabus Guidelines. There are a range of resources for staff to use as well as the Big Frieze (one of which is interactive) which depicts an illustration of the eight core concepts at the heart of Christianity.

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief

and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

All children regardless of ability, ethnicity or gender, will be given equal opportunity to access all aspects of the Religious Education curriculum. Any child experiencing difficulty in accessing parts of the curriculum, will be supported with time, materials and equipment to access the activity at their own level where this is practically possible. Provision is made for children with SEND by providing a variety of relevant materials and opportunities for work to be differentiated by outcome. Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation, applies to RE. Teachers are alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

For Religious Education to contribute to the spiritual development of pupils at Thornaby Church of England Primary School, we aim, as a staff, to celebrate all that is positive about the school, church, community and the environment. We give pupils the opportunity to explore what is meaningful, to ensure that experiences are relevant to the age, aptitude and background of the children, to welcome appropriate responses and to provide a safe and caring environment where children can flourish and develop into responsible human beings.

Cross-Curricular Links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship. Religious Education is used as a link that gives scope for development, in addition to being taught as an individual subject within the curriculum. When cross-curricular links are used, RE objectives are explicit. RE is a springboard that can present meaningful ideas and concepts as a starting point for many areas of the curriculum. The school also has themed days or weeks to enhance and extend Religious Education.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Children are encouraged to take an active role in the learning process. As with every curriculum area, they will be encouraged to take part in class discussions, listen to the views of others and give opinions when appropriate. Opportunities for creativity, spirituality and reflection are built into sessions to allow children to explore their own ideas of faith and religion. Visits and visitors We are able to visit places of worship in the immediate vicinity of our local community where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class. Children will have the opportunity to make a range of visits during their time at our school.

The Role of the Subject Leader in Religious Education (in liaison with the Head Teacher and Leadership Team including Governors)

Policy and Knowledge Development:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Decide which religions are to be included at which key stage
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Ensure that the whole school plan and schemes of work cater for progression and are in line with the Diocesan Syllabus Guidelines
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education
- Devise appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy
- Ensure all school policies are promoted in RE
- Promote RE and displays of pupils' work in RE
- Audit available resources, buy new ones and deploy appropriately

- Keep up-to-date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Identify trends, make comparisons and know about different groups
- Monitor planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation
- Provide observation feedback and report on findings
- Sample pupil's work
- Evaluate outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment
- Prepare statements about RE for parents and governors, as required
- Ensure parents and children are involved in the process.

Supporting and Advising

- Prepare a subject action plan, including short- and long-term targets which builds on existing practice and strives for continuous improvement
- Lead curriculum development and ensure staff development through courses, in-school meetings and training
- Keep up-to-date with new developments and resources
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Parents are informed of their child's progress in Religious Education through written reports and are also given the opportunity to discuss this curriculum area

during parent consultations. The school has a SIAMS inspection every five years and this makes a judgement on RE within the school inspection and report.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next two years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training. The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.

Self-Evaluation

The subject leader for RE and Head Teacher will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education, except those withdrawn at their parents' request (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher, any questions from parents about withdrawals. We would hope that anyone

wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the head teacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Long Term Plan (From Sept 2022)

| | | Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
|------|--------|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| EYFS | | Being Special: Where do we belong? Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas? (Incarnation) | | Which places are special and why? Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? (Salvation) | | Which stories are special and why? Why is the word God so important to Christians?(God) | |
| KS1 | Year 1 | What do Christians believe God is like? (God) | Why does Christmas matter? (Incarnation) | Who is Jewish and how do they live? | What does Easter mean to Christians? (Salvation) | Who is Muslim and how do they live? | Who am I? What does it mean to belong? (Ch + M +J) |
| | Year 2 | Who do Christians say made the world? (Creation) | What makes some places sacred to believers? (Ch+M+J) | Who is Jewish and how do they live? (continued) | What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings? (Gospel) | Who is Muslim and how do they live? (continued) | How should we care for the world and for others and why does it matter? (Ch+M+J) |
| LKS2 | Year 3 | What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? | What is it like to follow God? (People of God) | What does it mean to be a Sikh in Britain today? | Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (Salvation) | When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? (Kingdom of God) | What are the deeper meanings of festivals? (H,S,Ch,M,J) |
| | Year 4 | What do Christians learn from the Creation story? (Creation) | What is the Trinity? (Incarnation/God) | What does it mean to be a Sikh in Britain today? (continued) | What kind of world did Jesus want? (Gospel) | What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (continued) | How and why do believers show their commitment during the journey of life? (H,S,Ch,M,J) |
| UKS2 | Year 5 | What does it mean for a Jewish person to follow God? | Was Jesus the Messiah? (Incarnation) | What kind of King is Jesus? (Kingdom of God) | What did Jesus do to save human beings? (Salvation) | What does it mean for a Muslim person to follow God? | What will make our city/town/village a more respectful place? (Ch,S,M,J,H) |
| | Year 6 | Creation and Science: conflicting or complementary? (Creation) | What does it mean for a Jewish person to follow God? (continued)* | How can following God bring freedom and justice? (People of God) | What would Jesus do? (Gospel) | What does it mean for a Muslim person to follow God? (continued) | Why do some people believe in God and some people not? (Non-Secular/World Views) |