

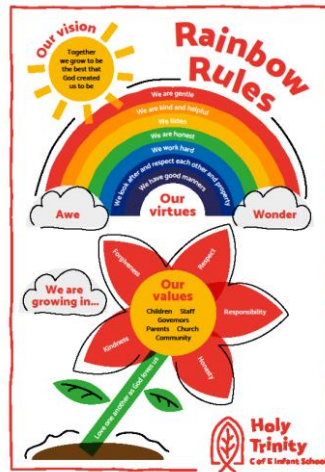


Part of the Minster Trust for Education



# Religious Education (RE) Policy

January 2024



**Together we grow to be the best that God has created us to be.**

## Introduction

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject. However, the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Holy Trinity C of E Infant School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Academy, and we deliver RE in line with the Nottinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus 2023 'Religious Education for All' using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. The purpose of the agreed syllabus is to:

- Enable our school to provide a quality RE curriculum.
- Provide appropriate criteria to those responsible for monitoring its provision, including school governors.
- Enable parents/carers and other stakeholders to be informed about the provision of RE in our school.

Within our school we place very high value on respect for the individual. Showing respect for other's background and beliefs is also an extension of the respect we give to the individual. We believe that RE provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of the differences and similarities with our school and the wider world, to show love to one another and to work together to help each other be the best we can be. It is a subject that celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes.

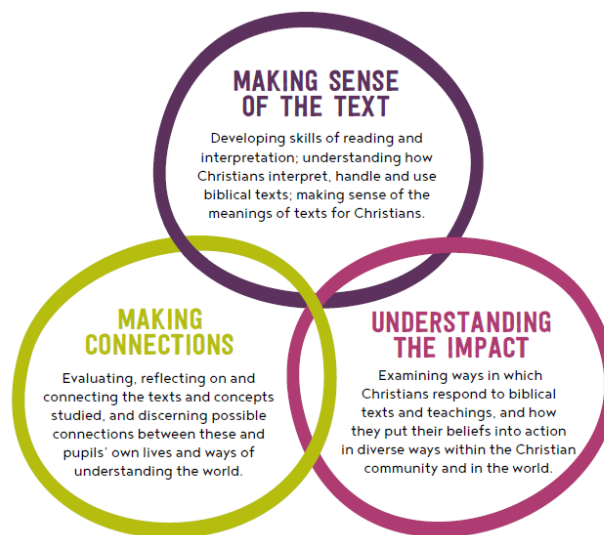
The purpose of Understanding Christianity is

- To help all teachers support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it.
- To explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.
- To support teachers in developing their own knowledge and understanding of Christianity theology to be able to teach with confidence.

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts.
- To enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians.
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief (particularly Christianity), of themselves, the world and human experience.

## Aims and Objectives

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today through:



- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents.
- To contribute to the development of pupil's own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs. Developing a reflective approach to life in an atmosphere of openness, exploration, and enquiry.
- To maintain close links with local churches and other religious communities.
- To respect other people's views and to celebrate the diversity of society.

## Teaching and Learning styles

- RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced, and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled.
- High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus and diocesan materials considering the need to offer breadth of content.

- In order to make RE a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills and philosophy, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.
- Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

## **Inclusion and equal opportunities**

No child should be discriminated against or treated less favourably because of disability, race, learning difficulties or gender. We ensure all children have access to all aspects of the curriculum and modify activities as necessary to meet the needs of all our children, including those with Special Educational Needs and those identified as being particularly able in this area of learning. Our RE syllabus offers breadth, depth and opportunities for philosophical enquiry that promote success for all our pupils.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Our long-term planning for RE includes our EYFS in the coverage of the units of study from Understanding Christianity and the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus 2023. These units of study are planned to integrate with the EYFS curriculum. RE makes a significant contribution to children's understanding to the world and their personal, social and spiritual development. RE in the EYFS provides opportunities for children to investigate their feelings and relationships and to explore and wonder at the world around them. There are opportunities for the children to think about how the choices they make and the things they do, affect themselves and others. Stories, pictures, video, and artefacts, help to provide insights into beliefs, practices, and lifestyles of different people.

## **Key Stage 1 (KS1)**

Our planning is based on the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus 2023 and the KS1 units of work in Understanding Christianity. We also use Philosophy 4 Children and Godly Play activities within our teaching and learning. At KS1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism in most detail, but we also cover a range of other religions through learning about key celebrations of those faiths.

## **Cross curricular links**

RE links to many other curricula aims in SMSC, promotion of our school's Christian values and the promotion of 'British Values'.

- **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

SMSC prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

- **Our school's Christian vision, values and virtues**

RE should contribute to the promotion of our school's distinctively Christian vision, values and virtues. Making connections between these and learning in RE will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

- **Respect for All & Global Learning**

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination & extremism.

- **The school community**

RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

- **The community within which the school is located**

RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches.

- **The UK community**

A major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

- **The global community**

RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

- **The promotion of 'British Values'**

RE provides opportunities to promote the 'British Values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty & mutual respect. (See Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2023 'Religious Education for All' and the supporting document 'Guidance for delivering Religious Education in church schools')

## **Assessment for Learning**

Children demonstrate their ability in RE in a variety of ways. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements through observation, questioning and listening. In KS1, teachers assess children's progress, skills, knowledge and understanding and use these to inform future planning and to provide information to pass on to parents. Children are encouraged to make judgements on how they can improve their own work. Teachers write annual reports and at the end of the academic year, and parents receive information relating to their child's RE development and understanding. Information can also be related to parents during Parents' Evenings. In the EYFS, teachers keep pupil tracking sheets of all seven areas of the curriculum which monitor progress throughout the year. The RE co-ordinator keeps samples of children's work and photographs of R.E. activities.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The co-ordination of the RE curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leader along with the headteacher, who supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE. Monitoring takes place by the headteacher, RE co-ordinator and Governors through lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and progress tracking. The policy and scheme of RE work will be reviewed and updated where necessary. The subject co-ordinator will review resources annually, order new resources and organise the storage and use of them.

## **The right of withdrawal from RE**

It is hoped that in a Church of England School it will not be necessary for any pupils to be withdrawn from RE. However, we recognise that this may sometimes be necessary. At Holy Trinity school we wish to be an inclusive community and recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision, and practice of religious education at Holy Trinity.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents/carers can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

