

Christ Church C of E School Religious Education Policy



January 2024

Christ Church
C of E Primary School
Regent's Park
NW1 4BD

Vision and Values



**The Christian faith is at the heart of our school community.
At Christ Church we all care, learn and work together for God and others.
'For we are all God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared
in advance for us to do'. Ephesians 2:10**

**Our Christian Values are
Creation, Community, Endurance, Thankfulness, Reconciliation, Wisdom**

The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in our explicit Christian values, our collective worship, our grounded Christian ethos, our carefully crafted curriculum and in our Religious Education.

We aim to provide ambitious learning opportunities, promoting achievement in every area and nurturing social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

We actively promote the children's cultural capital (defined as the acquisition of skills and knowledge, which an individual can draw on to give them an advantage in life). We will introduce them to strong role models who will impart their knowledge and wisdom to help the children engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement and to become responsible local and global citizens.

Character and resilience are the qualities we promote within our children, developing the inner resources that we call on to help us in life. We instil these qualities in our children to make sure that they are ready to make their way in the world as robust, confident and inquisitive individuals. We know that confidence, knowledge and skills will help them to become compassionate and well-balanced young people. We want them to take their place in society as active citizens, economically independent, exemplifying the British values of equality, mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty and rule of law.

We use our six Christian values, Creation, Wisdom, Thankfulness, Community Endurance and Reconciliation, to reinforce and enrich our teaching wherever applicable.

Creation

'For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.'
Hebrews 3:4

Community

'My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.'
John 15:12

Endurance

'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.'
Galatians 6:9

Thankfulness

'Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.'

1 Chronicles 16:34

Reconciliation

'Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.
Forgive as the Lord forgave you.'

Colossians 3:13

Wisdom

'For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.'

Proverbs 2:6

Our vision is inclusive and seeks to promote the whole child thrive within our Christ Church family.

Each member of our Christ Church family, children, parents and staff are valued as God's creation. We believe in full inclusion and acceptance of all and that this allows every individual to flourish.



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“Religious Education 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.

(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

1. Introduction

This policy is intended to assist staff and pupils in developing a knowledge and understanding of Religious Education and is set within the context of the Church of England Vision for Education, the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education and the school’s theologically rooted vision and associated Christian values.

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and teaching strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at Christ Church C of E Primary School.

This policy will be submitted to the Governing Body. Review of the policy will take place once every two years.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Collective Worship Policy, Religious Education Curriculum Map and Religious Education Intent, Implementation and Impact Statement.

Religious Education contributes to the promotion of the school’s distinctively Christian values. Making connections between the values and learning in Religious Education will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

We are a Church of England school with a strong commitment to the teaching of Christianity, whilst also supporting a multi-faith approach to the curriculum. We recognise, value and acknowledge the rich cultural diversity that exists in our school.

Respect for All and Global Learning

Our school is very diverse both in terms of staff, pupils and the wider school community and we celebrate our differences in culture, beliefs and religion. Religious Education makes an important contribution to a school’s responsibility to promote respect for all and 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 and extremism.

- **The school community** – Religious Education 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** – Religious Education 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 Religious Education is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.
- **The global community** – Religious Education 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

Religious Education makes a major contribution in promoting British Values and enabling learners to develop positive attitudes through valuing diversity, promoting multicultural understanding and respect.

Learning for Diversity

Government guidance advises that “every school is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of cultures, religions or beliefs”.

Religious Education is to “develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a world of diverse religions.”

Religious Education enables pupils to examine the consequences of anti-social behaviour such as racism and to develop strategies for dealing with it.

Our purposes in developing a written policy for Religious Education are:

- ❖ To raise the standards of teaching and learning of Religious Education throughout the school.
- ❖ To enable us to have a unified and consistent approach to the teaching of Religious Education throughout the school.
- ❖ To help teachers in planning and implementing activities for the children appropriate to their stage of development throughout the school.
- ❖ To provide a framework for assessing, monitoring, evaluating and targeting children’s progress in Religious Education and for developing, reviewing and revising our work as a staff.
- ❖ To have a joint statement and explanation of our policy available for parents, governors and teachers.

2. What is Religious Education?

Religious Education is a core academic subject in church schools that enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. The subject provides all pupils with the opportunity to ask questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

Taken from the Religious Education in Church of England Schools - A Statement of Entitlement, the Aims and Objectives of Religious Education in Church schools are:

- 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.

3. Curriculum Balance and Time

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy articles of association and funding agreement, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly Religious Education objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of Religious Education. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-2.

Time allocated at Christ Church C of E School:

- Reception: 36 hours per year
- Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year
- Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year

Religious Education curriculum time does not include assemblies or Collective Worship, even where the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work. However, visits to religious places of worship and activities from visitors with a religious context can be included.

4. Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over).
(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 One 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.

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 distinctively Christian vision of the school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in Religious Education, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision.

5. How We Teach Religious Education

Religious Education at Christ Church CofE School seen as a core academic subject and as such is given the same status as other core subjects within the National Curriculum and the school theologically rooted vision.

Religious Education and Inclusion

At our school, we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in Religious Education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Sikh temple or St Paul's Cathedral, for example, that involves a journey), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

Whole school policy with regard to special educational needs, the gifted and talented and differentiation applies to Religious Education. Teachers should be 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'.

Special Educational Needs

Religious Education contributes towards the policy by ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties are able to:

- develop their self-confidence and awareness;
- understand the world they live in as individuals and as members of groups;
- bring their own experiences and understanding of life into the classroom;
- develop positive attitudes towards others, respecting their beliefs and experience;
- reflect on and consider their own values and those of others;
- deal with issues that form the basis for personal choices and behaviour.

Access to Religious Education for pupils with learning difficulties can be improved by:

- using sensory materials and resources through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell, for example, music, tactile artefacts;
- giving pupils first hand experiences, for example, visitors to schools, visits to religious buildings, involvement in festivals;
- organising a range of activities to give personal experiences, for example, dance, drama, visits to a range of environments;
- helping pupils to understand and appreciate their world and its diversity;
- using a range of resources, for example, interactive/sensory stimuli, computing, to increase pupils' knowledge of religions and the elements in them;
- using specialist aids and equipment;

- providing support from adults or other pupils when necessary, while allowing pupils the space, time and freedom to develop skills for themselves;
- adapting tasks or environments and providing alternative activities where necessary, for example, tactile story books, puppets, role-play, music making, presenting work as a painting instead of writing.
- being aware of the pace at which pupils work and of the physical and mental effort required.
- balancing consistency and challenge, according to individual needs.

Gifted and Talented

Gifted in Religious Education is not the same as being religiously gifted.

Gifted and talented pupils in Religious Education are identified by teachers as those pupils who:

- Demonstrate high levels of insight into and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary;
- make sense of and draw meaning from religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- are sensitive to, or aware of, the mysteries of life and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in Religious Education and into other religious and cultural contexts.

It is important that the full range and scope of Religious Education activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. For example, pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education should be appropriately challenged by:

- using a variety of challenging questioning strategies to explore religious phenomena;
- setting extension tasks to encourage greater depth of understanding;
- using authentic materials from a faith;
- focusing on interpretation of symbol, metaphor, text and story and the ways in which these stimulate reflection on meaning and discernment;
- challenging and developing use of spoken and written religious language with both sacred texts and general literature;
- teaching pupils correct terminology and language needed to handle sophisticated religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical questions ideas and materials;
- using questions and tasks from later key stages to stimulate responses through argument, analysis and prediction;
- encouraging pupils to make connections between their work in Religious Education and other subjects.

6. The intent of the London Diocesan Board for Schools Syllabus

- To enable all children to become religiously literate.
- To ensure Religious Education enables all children to live life in all its fullness – vision for Education (Church of England)
- To offer a systematic enquiry-based approach to the teaching of Religious Education so that the following skills in children can be developed:
 - i. Ability to be critical thinkers
 - ii. Ability to engage critically with texts
 - iii. Ability to ask deep and meaningful questions;
 - iv. Ability to make connections within and across religions and worldviews

- v. Ability to reflect, respond and express their own religious, spiritual and/ or philosophical convictions
- vi. Ability to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, belief systems, values and practices

To offer units of learning that:

- Are rooted in theological concepts, strong subject knowledge and content;
- Offer a balanced curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences;
- Offer sequential learning both in terms of knowledge and skills across the primary age range.
- Offer motivating, engaging and creative lessons for all children;
- Provide opportunities for children to develop empathy towards people of similar or differing religious or worldviews to their own.

To ensure the teaching of Religious Education supports and enhances:

- The Christian vision of the school;
- Contributes significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children;
- Takes note of the Religious Education Church of England Schools – Statement of Entitlement;
- The Church of England’s vision for Education – every person deserves to live a ‘life in all its fullness.’

7. Implementation of the London Diocesan Board for Schools Syllabus

Within every unit of learning the following steps take place as part of the learning process:

Enquire: Engage with a big question and subsidiary questions. All questions will be rooted in one of the disciplines of Religious Education: Theology, Philosophy or Human/ Social Science.

Investigate/ Explore: What is the religious content and context being explored? How deep can we go? This ‘explore’ stage of the enquiry is where children will be primarily learning about religion and belief. In order for this to be effective there are some strategies that can be used to ‘deepen’ learning:

- Interpreting and analysing sacred texts
- Using challenging and controversial questions
- Extended pieces of writing
- Discussion which continually asks ‘Have we gone deep enough yet?’
- Children engage with authentic religious believers (face to face, via webcams, podcasts, video, skype etc)
- Grapple with complex theological concepts, questions and issues

Evaluate/ Communicate: What is our understanding of the concept? What impact does the concept have on the lives of believers? What difference does this belief/ practice make? The aim of this part of the enquiry is to encourage dialogue about the learning. Children should use skills

of analysis and evaluation. The focus should be on the impact of the belief or practice on the religious or belief community being studied.

Reflect on/ Express: What is our understanding and response to the enquiry question when considered from the perspective of the faith and belief traditions that have been encountered? What is our personal response? It should be always based on knowledge and understanding, not values or SMSC development.

8. Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach Religious Education to all children in the school, including those in the Nursery and Reception classes.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Using the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Religious Education in Key Stage One

By the end of Key Stage One, we aim to ensure that all children have an understanding of the main beliefs and teachings of Christianity, Judaism and one other world faith at an age-appropriate level. Children will have begun to recognise similarities and differences within and between religions and have an awareness of what it means to have a religious or non-religious worldview. Children will have a religious vocabulary appropriate to their age and be able to ask important questions about life. They will be able to recognise that others may have a different viewpoint to their own. Some children working at greater depth will have begun to make connections and be able to describe what things are different and the same for religious people.

Religious Education in Key Stage Two

In Key Stage Two, we aim to enhance children's previous learning and enable them to develop a greater understanding of core beliefs and theological concepts of Christianity. Children will be given the opportunity to study three further world faiths.

By the end of Key Stage Two, our aim is that children will be religiously literate at an age-appropriate level. That they will be able to use confidently a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary. That they will have a solid understanding of Christianity as a diverse and global living faith and other world faiths studied and know what the impact of belonging to a faith has on a believers' life. We also want our children to have a solid understanding of what it means to have a religious or non-religious worldview. We aim for our children by the end of Key Stage Two, to be able to express and justify their own views with confidence. We aim for them to be critically thinkers and be able to engage critically with Biblical and other sacred texts. We want our children to be able to draw on their religious and worldview knowledge in order to formulate their own opinion and understanding of the world in which they inhabit.

9. Access to the Curriculum

We recognise, through our adaptive planning system, that children have a variety of learning needs and therefore these are reflected in the activities that are planned. We take each child as an individual and with sensitivity, in order to minimise any barriers to learning. Our aim is that this will enable them to develop new skills, concepts and knowledge and to flourish.

All children are treated with equal respect, worth and value regardless of race, colour, background, gender, sexuality, learning need or learning ability.

10. Impact of the London Diocesan Board for Schools Syllabus

- Children will be able to hold a balanced and well-informed conversation about religion and worldviews (Religious literacy);
- Children will make good or better academic progress from their starting points as a result of a rich and engaging Religious Education curriculum;
- Children will be able to reflect, respond and express their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions;
- Children will be able to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, belief systems, values and practices;
- Children will have developed a deeper understanding of what it means to live life in all its fullness.

11. Environment and Resources

A wide range of resources are in place for each topic area within Religious Education. These are all individually boxed according to religion and a list of contents for each resource box is displayed on the front of each box and a master copy to be given to each teacher to be kept in their classroom.

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education teaching units. We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of Bibles for both Key Stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in Religious Education.

The school has invested in new books, religious artefacts, videos/DVDs, picture packs and posters, and staff may need to familiarise themselves with the new materials. Teachers may choose to use these in Religious Education Staff are invited to suggest gaps in the resources for future spending.

Each classroom has a 'Reflection Area', which includes a Bible, cross and candle, which can be used during time for reflection.

Teachers are encouraged to share resources and artefacts acquired through travel abroad.

Any resources which have proved particularly successful are shared and fed back to the Religious Education Subject Leader.

The Religious Education Subject Leader will support staff to organise these educational visits.

All children have access to the outdoor reflection area for quiet prayer and reflection. Teachers can utilise this area during Religious Education lessons.

Trips

Every year group, from year 1 to year 6 will visit at least one place of worship during the academic year. When they leave Christ Church CofE School, the children will have experienced a place of worship for each of the 6 major world faiths.

We visit places of worship as guests and learners NOT as worshippers.

- Year 1 – Local Church
- Year 2 – Jewish Synagogue
- Year 3 – Buddhist Temple
- Year 4 – Sikh Temple
- Year 5 – Hindu Temple
- Year 6 – Mosque and St Paul's Cathedral

12. Planning, Assessment, Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

Teachers use the London Diocesan Board for Schools units of learning and adapt them so that lessons are tailored to the needs of the specific cohort. The London Diocesan Board for Schools syllabus is designed to have content that is two thirds Christian and one third other major world faiths.

Children demonstrate their ability in Religious Education through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. Self-assessment is an integral part of our Religious Education teaching.

We follow the assessment policy as set out by the London Diocesan Board for Schools. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of each Key Stage. Pupils work in Religious Education is assessed by making informal judgements both by staff and the pupils themselves during lessons and at the end of a unit of work using the assessment sheets.

At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected level of attainment. This is recorded in the child's book. We use this assessment as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

An annual report for Religious Education informs parents of their child's progress and attainment, as required by law. We will make specific, individual, accurate comments on each child's attainment in Religious Education in this report, based on regular monitoring of work with

regard to the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus. We will transfer this information to new schools when pupils leave us.

A folder is available on the common drive that gives those expectations for each compulsory unit of work together with the target sheets for highlighting. Towards the end of the academic year, these target sheets will be used to provide an overall account of the achievement each child has made.

Pupil Progress Reviews

Alongside other core subjects, levels of attainment will be analysed during a discussion between the Senior Leadership Team and the class teacher. Pupils who are not making expected progress will be identified for in-class support and scaffolded work. Likewise, pupils who are judged as making above expected progress will be provided with more challenging questioning in their work and/or set extension tasks to encourage greater depth of understanding.

Every class shares Religious Education work through a whole school Religious Education display, which is situated in the school hall. The display represents the theme that each class is studying at that time, and is changed termly.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, achievement in Religious Education forms part of the Understanding of the World section of the written report to parents (interim and end of year reports). Any significant Religious Education work will be placed in the class work portfolio and/or recorded in their learning journal on Tapestry.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, Religious Education is reported as a separate core subject in children's written interim and end of year reports.

Children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 complete Religious Education and worship evaluations. This allows the Religious Education subject leader to gain pupil feedback on Religious Education lessons and worships, and informs the Religious Education action plan targets.

13. Standards and the Quality of Teaching Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leader carry out book scrutiny exercises regularly. Religious Education lessons are monitored as part of the schedule of Teaching and Learning observations

Religious Education standards are included in staff performance management targets

Support is offered to teaching staff who lack confidence in this subject.

14. Continued Professional Development

The CPD programme is carefully planned by Senior Leadership Team and the Subject Leader and follows the training and development priorities of the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

15. Parents and Carers

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help children flourish.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, achievement in Religious Education forms part of Understanding of the World section of the written report to parents (interim and end of year reports). Any significant Religious Education work will be placed in the class work portfolio and/or recorded in their learning journal on Tapestry.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, Religious Education is reported as a separate core subject in children's written interim and end of year reports.

16. Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of Religious Education.
- Ensure Religious Education provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- To keep up to date with developments in the area of Religious Education through reading, attending London Diocesan Board for Schools, Religious Education network meetings and training and by forming links with other Church of England schools.
- To monitor and evaluate the planning, teaching and assessment of Religious Education across the school in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team.
- To support staff in the teaching of Religious Education across the school through team planning, teaching and moderation.
- To lead the review of the policies and impact of the syllabus on raising standards.
- To plan and lead INSET and CPD to build on the staff's knowledge and practice of effective Religious Education teaching.
- To work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to identify CPD needs of individuals, teams and the whole school.
- To regularly review and keep up to date the school's self-evaluation document for Religious Education that forms part of the SIAMS ongoing self-evaluation document.
- Oversee the Religious Education budget and monitor Religious Education resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into Religious Education lessons.

Evaluation/Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Religious Education leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every **two years** by the Governing Body.