

# Religious Education Policy

St Margaret's CEVA Primary



**Approved by:**

Learning and  
Standards Committee

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## Introduction

Religious Education (RE) is a statutory entitlement for every pupil and forms part of the basic curriculum (National Curriculum + RE). It is an acknowledgement of the important role that beliefs and values play in people's lives, regardless of any particular religious commitment.

St Margaret's is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School. As such we are required to teach a greater proportion of Christianity: 2/3 Christianity in addition to units on 5 other world religions and Humanism. In Aided schools, RE is the responsibility of school governors and our governing body has adopted the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus, "Religious Education in Suffolk (2012)" with adjustments for the balance of religions required in our type of school. This sets out our aims, general objectives and programmes of study for RE. The full document is available at school.

In Church of England schools the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Church schools should provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of a range of faiths and world views. Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners.

## Aims

RE in our school covers the two RE Attainment Targets: -

**AT 1 – Learning about religion and belief** – how pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding about Christianity and different world religions with reference to:-

- Beliefs, teachings and sources
- Practices and ways of life
- Forms of expression

**AT 2 – Learning from religion and belief** – how pupils, in the light of their learning about religion, express their responses and insights with regard to questions and issues about:-

- Identity and belonging
- Meaning, purpose and truth
- Values and commitments

## Attitudes, Values and Skills

The development of positive attitudes and values is part of school life as a whole but RE has a particular contribution to make. We encourage a close link with the church community so pupils can see Christian life, worship, and commitments at first hand. We make a point of marking the celebrations of the Christian Year.

The aims of Religious Education in Church schools are:

- 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 world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.

## **Planning and Progression**

St Margaret's has adopted the 'Emmanuel' Project units of work for EYFS, KS 1 and KS 2. These units fulfil all the requirements of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for RE and also the Church of England Statement of Entitlement, which is particularly pertinent for Church schools, which have to teach more Christianity than other types of school. Each year group has a plan for the 6 units of RE they have to teach each year and these plans are readily available on the school server. (See attached Appendix 1) All the teaching units are also on the server, where teachers can easily find them. As pupils progress through the primary years the teaching units are designed to enable a deeper understanding of concepts.

Learning themes in Foundation Stage are 'What makes every single person unique and precious?' 'Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas?', 'How can we help others when they need it?', 'Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?', 'Why is the word "God" so important to Christians?' and 'How can we care for our wonderful world?' The main focus is Christianity, but include elements of other faiths.

Learning themes for Key Stage 1 are Belonging, Leaders and Teachers, Stories and Books, Celebrations, Believing, Prayer and Worship, and Symbols and Artefacts. These are explored through Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Learning themes for Lower Key Stage 2 are Religion and the Individual, Symbols and Religious Expression, Beliefs in Action, Inspirational People and Religion, Family and Community. These are explored through Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Learning themes in Upper Key Stage 2 are Teachings and Authority, Symbols and Religious Expression, Worship, Pilgrimage and Sacred Places, Beliefs and Questions and The Journey of Life and Death. These are explored through Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Humanism.

## **Provision (time and resources)**

As we are a church school RE is a core subject, assessed by a separate SIAMS inspection. Each class has a weekly session of RE lasting a minimum of one hour. In addition, as a church school, three additional themed days are held during the year.

It is recommended and encouraged that the equivalent of 30 minutes per week of Religious Education is provided for Foundation Stage children (p13 Agreed Syllabus 2012) 3

## **Resources**

RE is well resourced with a good range of reference books, artefacts, reflective story props and a variety of posters. Most resources are kept in a designated cupboard in the PPA room.

We have many places of worship close to the school and we encourage visits. For example:-

- A mandir in the centre of Ipswich
- Mosques on Bond Street and Argyll Street
- A gurdwara on Bramford Road
- Many Christian places of worship, of different denominations, within walking distance of the school – including Burlington Baptist Church and Museum Methodist Church

We make good use of our school community to help us with visitors from a variety of faiths.

## **Teaching Methods**

Teachers use a concept based approach on an Engage- Enquire-Explore-Express-Evaluate model. This gives much greater scope for RE to be a creative subject, encouraging the use of art, drama, visitors and visits. We want RE to be regarded as an exciting and engaging subject. Pupil's learning is recorded in class scrapbooks throughout the school, this may include annotated photographs, written and pictorial work. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an individual book, where they record at least one piece of work per unit, this book is passed up to the next class

## **Differentiation and Assessment**

Units are carefully structured, thus allowing pupils to increase their understanding of religious concepts and show what they can do. During each unit, the pupils are assessed in one element of AT1 and one element of AT2, their work is either recorded in their individual books (KS2) or in the class scrapbook. Throughout the year, the pupils will be assessed in all six areas twice; once in Christianity and once in the other faiths. Assessment opportunity are clearly identified within the units.

Assessment in RE are recorded at the end of each term on Target Tracker, following the whole school assessment system. The subject leader can access these as part of their subject leader release time.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are vital for standards to be maintained. The subject leader will keep an overview on learning through discussion and informal and formal scrutiny of books and the pupil's learning.

- The Head teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The subject leader will monitor that long term and medium term plans are being adhered to.
- The subject leader will manage resources.
- The subject leader will keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in Religious Education and disseminate these as appropriate.
- The subject leader will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The subject leader will promote the sharing of good practice.
- The subject leader will carry out pupil perceptions.

## **Staff Development**

To demonstrate the subject's comparable status with other core curriculum areas in both staffing and resourcing, it is a priority at St Margaret's to build up staff expertise in RE specifically but not exclusively, working towards:

- At least one member of staff having specialist RE training or qualifications.
- All staff teaching RE having access to appropriate professional development.
- All teaching staff and governors having an understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- NQT's receiving high quality training.
- The subject leader will have the opportunity to attend termly RE network meetings

## **Provision for Withdrawal from RE**

*NB The school must enable parents to exercise their legal entitlement to withdraw their children from RE should they wish to do so.*

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from RE or Collective Worship in accordance with the Education Act 1944, sections 25(4) and 30, which was re-enacted in 1988.

Reasons for withdrawal do not have to be given. Parents are advised of the current provision for RE and Collective Worship in the School website as required by law. They are asked to contact the Head Teacher if they wish to exercise the right to withdraw and discuss their requirements.

## **The Link between R.E. and Whole School Aims and Policies**

R.E. supports the aim *“to help the children develop a good attitude to work and show respect and tolerance for others built on Christian and moral values.”* This also supports the aims set out in our vision and ethos - 'Transforming lives by living and learning together in God's love'.

## **Equal Opportunities, SEN, and Multi-Cultural Policies**

Issues such as fostering respect for individuals, valuing of difference, understanding the uniqueness of the individual and the importance of provision for **all** children are an integral part of the philosophy of Religious Education.

RE also plays a very definite role in understanding different cultures and 'communities' within cultures.

## **Computing**

Pupils should be given opportunities to apply and develop their Computing and IT capability where appropriate in RE.

## **Health and Safety**

Teachers are familiar with the School Health and Safety Policy, the risk assessments and guidance notes. The school and its grounds are maintained in a manner that promotes a safe, healthy and educationally stimulating environment.

## **RE and its Relationship to Collective Worship**

In law, RE and collective worship are distinct. RE is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during assembly. The RE entitlement is entirely separate from requirements for collective worship. However, at St. Margaret's, stories from the Bible, Christian and other traditions, are told and festival days and celebrations are often marked. Members of Christian faith communities and other faith communities also come to share their beliefs and experiences. All of these support the RE curriculum.