



The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Aided Primary School

Religious Education Policy

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Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H. (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)

At 'The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Primary School', our children & families are at the centre of everything we do. In our inclusive & unique learning community with two distinctive Christian Foundations, every experience enables all to flourish as individuals so we thrive together as God intended. We are blessed with beautiful outdoor & indoor spaces which we use fully to play and learn, nurturing one another mentally, physically, emotionally, academically and spiritually. We strive for our school community keep being compassionate, loving, kind, responsible citizens who act wisely and keep giving.

Love your neighbour as you love yourself.

The John Wesley is a Church of England and Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School and our Christian values are at the heart of everything we do.

- ❖ **Koinonia**
- ❖ **Love**
- ❖ **Compassion**
- ❖ **Wisdom**
- ❖ **Forgiveness**
- ❖ **Service**

These are underpinned by our learning values:

- ❖ **Promoting curiosity** – asking questions, delving deeper and analysing
- ❖ **Developing communication** – listening, empathy and relationship-building
- ❖ **'Prove it' opportunities** – problem solving, decision making and exploration
- ❖ **Sharing views and opinions** – visual, spoken and written
- ❖ **Encouraging creativity** – innovation, imagination and spirituality

Our whole school vision is built upon and guided by these. Every school policy is written with this in mind and implemented in way that reflects our vision of our children being able to '**Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H**' (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)'.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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 the school's underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and world views) and for the religious freedom of each person (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019).

1. INTRODUCTION

At the John Wesley CEM Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high-quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using Diocese of Canterbury Syllabus for Church schools that incorporates Understanding Christianity units and world faith units written by RE Today and Canterbury diocesan officers, we learn about other religions and world views, fostering respect for them. Links with our Christian values and vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROVISION

All schools in England are obliged by statute to provide Religious Education. It is seen to be a key element of a child's education, a contributor to SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) and a support to the understanding of British Values. Religious Education is a curriculum area; it not the same as Collective Worship or a school's ethos. Religious Education in all Church of England & Methodist schools is seen as having equal standing with the core subjects.

Our school is a Church of England & Methodist Voluntary Aided School and the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School i.e. the practices and principles of the Church of England and of the Methodist church. The Church of England's and Methodists church's 'Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education' (2019) underpins our provision and informs this policy.

We provide a Religious Education curriculum which is rich and varied and which enables learners to acquire both a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and to find out about a broad range of other faiths and worldviews. The content, teaching, learning and attainment of RE in a church school are inspected as part of the SIAMS framework. In all church schools, the effectiveness of the RE curriculum is explored within Inspection Question (IQ) 6. In VA schools where denominational RE is taught, IQ 7 explores the quality of RE.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of the subject may be described as promoting religious literacy.

As stated in the Church of England and Methodist Church 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.

4. 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

5. CURRICULUM BALANCE AND TIME

Reflecting the school's trust deed funding agreement, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4.

The RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for Collective Worship. Collective Worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

6. CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

Religious Education in church schools should contribute to the school's Christian character and teaching about Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, is at its heart. However, as inclusive communities, church schools encourage learning about and learning from other religions and foster respect for different world views.

All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and steps should be taken to ensure a range of teaching styles, groupings, and resources to allow all children to make progress in RE.

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. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

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.
- Seeking 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. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. 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.

All schools enrich their RE curriculum with creative and varied teaching methods and a range of visits and visitors and aim to build a good bank of resources. All schools enrich their pupils learning in RE with additional whole school theme days on aspects of Christian Faith e.g. Pentecost, The Lord's Prayer.

7. CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

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.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

9. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Assessment in Religious Education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity.
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Canterbury Diocesan syllabus
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.

- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

10. ROLE OF THE RE SUBJECT LEADER

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England and Methodist church Statement of Entitlement.
- 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.
- 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.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- 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.
- 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.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE 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 RE lessons.

11. MONITORING, PROGRESS AND STANDARDS

Subject leaders in all schools are responsible, alongside the Headteacher and governing body, for monitoring and evaluating the provision and standards in their subject area.

- The Headteacher will enable the RE subject leader to monitor provisions and standards on a regular cycle.
- The RE subject leader will monitor provision and standards in RE through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum regularly with staff.
- The subject leader will report annually to the governing body on progress and standards in RE and contribute to the school's self-evaluation, in readiness for SIAMS.
- A member of the governing body will assist in monitoring and evaluating the subject, for example, conducting pupil perceptions and learning walks.

12. RESOURCES

Religious Education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; posters, CDs, DVDs and artefacts. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate.

13. THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE

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 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 or play groups. This right does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religions or religious matters.

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 Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision.

Parents may arrange for their child to receive alternative Religious Education off-site if the school is satisfied it only affects the start or end of a school session.

All schools will:

- Clarify for parents the educational nature of RE and ensure there is a clear procedure for requesting withdrawal.
- Discuss with parents the management of their request for a child's withdrawal, noting whether it is complete or partial withdrawal.
- Provide supervision for a withdrawn child remaining on the premises, but not additional teaching or materials which incur cost.

14. LINKS WITH THE DIOCESE, METHODIST CIRCUIT, CATHEDRAL AND LINK CHURCHES

The school is part of a Church of England parish and a Methodist Circuit and all children have the opportunity to visit both local churches as part of their RE. In Church of England and Methodist schools, this entitlement is broadened to include an interactive relationship with the

local churches, growing connections with the Cathedral through the Learning Hub, and an awareness of some Diocesan and Methodist events.

Messy Church is run at our school once a month and a branch of the local Methodist church, Discovery church, is also based in our school once a month.