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## *RE Policy*

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Policy Agreed: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

Review date: Spring 2025

Head Teacher: Anthony David

Chair of Governors: Eric Sorenson

*We believe that everyone is precious and loved by God. We **aspire** to let our light shine in all that we do. We **nurture** and **empower** one another to flourish. Together we shine in our world by showing **compassion** and by serving others. Let God's light shine through us.*

St Mary's CE Primary School aims to provide a caring, stable, stimulating environment where all children can grow and flourish in our learning community. Staff are committed to ensuring that children's time at school is happy, productive and successful. We aim to raise achievement in all aspects of the curriculum, developing resilience and motivation so all children flourish.

St Mary's serves the local community by welcoming children from all backgrounds and faiths. Whilst our ethos is positively Christian, we value and respect the diversity of our community and aim to set all children on life's path of showing compassion, thoughtfulness and understanding one another and respect for one another's rich cultural variation. The teaching of RE drives the promotion of individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths. The teaching of RE and worship has a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual Moral, Social and Cultural development.

### **Introduction**

Our school is situated in central London with an exceptionally diverse multi-racial and multi-faith community which we recognise and value. The school aims to reflect the local community while ensuring that the Christian foundations are maintained. We teach RE so that children can discover more about themselves, others and God and develop a reflective approach to life in the context of religious beliefs, with particular reference to Christianity. We encourage respect and tolerance for the beliefs and practices of others. Collective Worship is separate from the teaching of RE and has its own policy.

### **General Principles**

The Education Act (1998) requires that Religious Education be taught to all pupils. The Governing Body is responsible for the RE syllabus. The leadership and staff work with and under the direction of the Governing Body. It is the Governors' responsibility to ensure that RE is provided for all children and that this is in harmony with the teachings and practices of the Church of England. We recognise that parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw a child from RE but we wish to be an inclusive community. Parents/carers are welcome to discuss this with the head of school and the Rector.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunity Policy, all children are given full access to the RE curriculum. All staff endeavour to help all children, including those with Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) to reach their full potential irrespective of faith, heritage, gender, age or ability. We do this by adapting the curriculum, resources and teaching methods to meet the needs of all children.

### **Aims and Objectives**

#### **Religious Education in our school should:**

- nurture a strong foundation of the Christian faith that includes knowledge of Christian beliefs, values, The Bible (the big story), Old Testament characters, the life and teachings of Jesus, prayer and worship, saints, the local church, The Christian community, living out the faith, rites of passage and Christian festivals.
- enable children to become religiously literate by helping them to appreciate the interrelationship between rituals, beliefs, stories and practices
- nurture children's curiosity about religion and enabling them to both treasure and question religion
- nurture knowledge and understanding of other world faiths in order to appreciate their role in society and to develop empathy and sensitivity for others
- appreciate the ways in which religion is embodied in story, myth, ritual, symbol, artefact, art, music and drama

- provide opportunities for children to reflect on their own experiences and to think about questions of belief and value
- develop appropriate attitudes, for example – respect for truth, respect for the views of others, awareness of spiritual concerns, of moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and the challenge of living in a pluralist society
- enable children to live their life to the fullest, to have the ability to talk openly about their personal beliefs and to flourish
- enable pupils of all faith backgrounds to have a safe space to share their own traditions without fear of being ridiculed or diminished
- help pupils to consider areas of common belief and practice between different faiths as well as appreciating diversity within major faith traditions.

### **Time Allocation**

As a church school, RE is considered to be a core subject in our school. It is taught predominantly by the class teacher and we intentionally teach RE in year groups. 2/3rds of the RE Curriculum taught is Christianity based and 1/3 other faiths. In addition to the weekly RE lessons, the teaching of RE is supplemented further with special days: such as The Big Story Workshop, Easter and Christmas activities. The school dedicates a minimum of 5% of curriculum time to the teaching of RE and is working towards increasing the % of RE being taught.

### **Teaching and Learning Principles**

RE has an important part to play in a broad and balanced curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning and Diocesan advice. The school follows the LDBS scheme of work.

In order to make RE a lively, active subject we use a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, computing, drama and the use of artefacts, pictures and stories. Periods of stillness and reflection are provided in response to the varied stimuli. Visits to a variety of places of worship are organised and visitors from other faiths visit us, providing first-hand knowledge, insight and experience.

### **Monitoring and Review of the scheme of work**

The governing body is responsible for overseeing and reviewing when necessary the scheme of work used by the school. The subject leader monitors RE across the school through assessment data, learning walks, work scrutiny and reviewing planning. Leadership participate in learning walks and work scrutiny. The RE governor and representatives from the LDBS also review books and conduct learning walks as scheduled, but at least once per year.

RE is discussed in Staff CPD meetings and ideas are shared. Through assessment and logging levels of attainment, standards in RE are reviewed to ensure that standards remain high as in other core subjects

### **Assessments and assessment targets**

Termly pupil progress meetings take place, providing teachers with the opportunity to discuss individual pupils' progress in RE with the leadership team. Such meetings provide the opportunity to identify areas of strengths and areas for further development for both individual pupils and for cohort specific needs, thus allowing for gaps to be closed and for every opportunity to be provided to ensure pupils meet or exceed their end of year target.

To ensure that the teaching and learning of RE is pitched accurately and provides all pupils with learning tasks that give scope for children to meet greater depth expectations where possible, moderation of standards take place across year groups and with other Church of

England schools. End of year expectations drive these moderations. A range of evidence is considered when making a judgement about a child's attainment in RE.

Assessment is demonstrated through a variety of ways including

- Completed work in the children's RE books
- Photographs
- Discussion and questioning
- Teacher Assessment
- Pupil voice
- Class displays

### **Guidelines for visits to places of worship:**

It is important that a distinction is drawn between worship in other places and learning about other places. Usually cathedrals, temples, synagogues and mosques have education departments. They will be prepared for visitors and will usually have carried out their own risk assessments.

Occasionally this is not the case so teachers' risk assessments need to include: -

- Who will lead the session or tour?
- What parts of the building are accessible to schools?
- What forms of worship take place during the week?

### **Resources**

There are boxes of resources that the school accesses through Islington's library service – one each for Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Christianity. Each box contains artefacts and books. Other resources are sourced from the internet. Each classroom has an RE learning journey display. RE displays are updated for each unit of work. For the Christianity units, these will include the theological concept for that unit, the big question, each week the question being considered and key vocabulary.

### **Professional Development**

As part of LDBS we enjoy access to their training. The subject leader in particular, and all staff in general are encouraged to attend courses for professional development in the teaching of RE. All teachers are aware of the statement of entitlement and the requirements that should be met.