



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

HEADTEACHER: MR K RONDEAU

**LOVING, GROWING and SUCCEEDING TOGETHER**

**VISION:** The ability to think about or plan the future with imagination and wisdom.

## LOVING

### Every Day Counts

Every school day is crammed full of enjoyable experiences. Children want to come into school because learning is fun.

**1 Timothy 6:17**

Put their hope in God, who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy.

## GROWING

### The Child is at the Centre

Everything we do is for the benefit of the children in our care. We tend to, nurture and grow each child so they believe that their life is brimming with possibility and opportunity.

**Ezekiel 17:4-6**

Then he took of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil.

## SUCCEEDING

### Aspirational & Expectational

We, as a school community, strive to grow and improve personally, academically and socially. St Mark's children do amazing things.

**1 Timothy 6:17-19**

"They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed."

## TOGETHER

### Community, Family and the Team

Relationships between children, the adults in school, parents and the wider community are underpinned by our Christian Values. We work with one another, for one another.

**John 15:12**

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

**LOVING, GROWING and SUCCEEDING TOGETHER**

## Introduction

This policy has been written in the light of the [Church of England's Vision for Education](#) (Autumn 2016), [Valuing all God's Children](#) (Summer 2019) and through reflection on the 2023 [SIAMS Evaluation Framework](#) for schools.

## Legal Position of Religious Education in School

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core or foundation subject. The 1988 Education Act states 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils'.

St Mark's C of E Primary School is a Church of England Academy, therefore Religious Education is provided in-line with the funding agreement and the academy follows the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020 – 2025 / Dudley Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023 - 2028

## The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Church of England's [Statement of Entitlement](#) (February 2019) outlines the aims and expectations for RE in Church of England schools and guides this school's approach to RE.

It begins by stating: 'Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It will help to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together'. Quoting from the Church of England's *Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, it continues: '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 and the school's Christian Vision

The school's Christian Vision is detailed on Page 2. Building on these themes, RE in this school contributes to the outworking of our vision by helping all children to develop an understanding of the place that religion plays in people's lives and how it has influenced history and the growth and development of society. RE enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. It is not the practice of this school to preach to or seek to convert children; it is to equip them with the knowledge, skills and understanding so they may love, grow and succeed together.

## Religious Education Intent

The intent of Religious Education at St Mark's C of E Primary School is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions addressed by religion and world views. It allows them to develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own. We work under the assumption that in every RE Lesson, at least one child

will go on to study the subject at University. As such, it is taught with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

## **School Approach to Religious Education**

In-line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE. Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the *Statement of Entitlement*, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- a challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework
- an assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts
- a curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide
- a pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place
- the opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.

RE that makes a positive contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development.

## **Organisation & Time Allocation**

In accordance with the structure of Dudley Agreed Syllabus we have agreed that, as a minimum:

- in the Foundation Stage pupils will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. They will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism or Islam - RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and also consider non-religious worldviews - RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.

## **Assessment / Recording & Reporting**

The Dudley Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2013 sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of Key Stage learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus.

As a school we track progress in RE through:

1. End of unit teacher assessments
2. Mid-term and end of term teacher/leader professional discussions
3. Curriculum Impact Discussions that are completed by the RE Leader and quality assured by Senior Leaders.

School reports are sent home in the Summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to assessment records as well as pupils' individual work.

## **Responsibilities for RE in School**

The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the legal framework for RE is carried out and that the teaching of RE fits within the school's distinctively Christian vision. At St Mark's C of E Primary School some of the responsibilities for RE may be delegated to other members of staff.

The **Subject Leader** is responsible for:

- ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for RE and share good practice
- attending RE clusters and hub meetings
- providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and being able to discuss impact and standards, all in conjunction with the Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team
- contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, including, but not limited to Strand 7.

The **Headteacher and Governors** must ensure:

- RE has a high profile within the curriculum
- that the legal framework for RE is upheld within the school
- that all pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly-appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- that clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils make good progress
- appropriate support is in place to ensure the effective provision of RE.

## **The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education**

At St Mark's C of E Primary School, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE 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 and citizenship.

Where parents make a request to withdraw their child(ren) from the teaching of RE, the school will, as a matter of courtesy, ensure that the parents are aware of the following:

- the learning objectives covered in RE so that parents can make an informed decision
- what supervision arrangements will be in place for child(ren).

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of RE at our school.

## **Review**

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the governing body every 2 years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- a change in Agreed Syllabus
- a change in legal position framework for RE