



# SAINT JAMES'

Church of England School  
Nursery & Pre School



St James'

## Religious Education (RE) Policy

This policy has been adopted by the governing body of St James' CofE Primary School.

It will be reviewed annually or as required.

If you require more information, please contact the school office.

September 2020

Signed: Mrs J Moore / Headteacher

Signed: Mr S Rusling / Chair of Governors

Reviewed annually

## Mission Statement

Through him we learn to live abundant lives, especially treasuring the values of friendship, trust, thankfulness, respect, forgiveness, hope and courage.

## Vision Statement

Walking hand in hand with Jesus, fulfilling the potential God has given us.

*Luke 1:37 'For with God nothing shall be impossible.'*

## Mission Aim

At St James' CofE Primary School, the Christian (and indeed inclusive human) values "friendship, trust, respect, forgiveness, hope and courage" inform our whole life together.

They were chosen in dialogue with the local community which identified them as exceptionally meaningful and valuable. Therefore, as a school community, we are committed to living these out and modelling them every day in each and every activity.

## Vision for RE

Our vision is to be an exceptional church school committed to investing in young lives. A school where staff and governors work in partnership with parents to provide a caring, stimulating environment rooted in Christian values; a school with high expectations where all are valued and nurtured as individuals because they are unique and loved by God.

In St James School we aim to:

□ recognise and nurture each individual's needs, strengths and talents and to develop good character.

- provide a broad, balanced and inspirational education which enables learners to have high expectations and achieve high standards.
- promote high standards of behaviour where all are respectful, honest, and compassionate.
- provide a safe, stimulating and happy learning environment grounded in Christian values.
- teach children to be responsible moral citizens who act independently and co-operatively with an awareness of and respect for the multicultural community and world in which we live.
- work together with parents as co-educators to promote strong home-school relationships to give each child a consistency in their development.

## Purpose

This policy should be taken and used as part of St James' CofE VC Primary School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision for RE, instrument of government, aims, values and ethos as a Church of England School. It relates to the teaching and learning of Religious Education for all pupils from 4-11 years within St James' CofE School.

## Aims and Objectives

Through the teaching of Religious Education, we hope to foster children's feelings of awe and wonder, delight and mystery. We hope to assist them in their exploration of the meaning of life, to support them in making life choices and help them confront difficult or painful situations they may have to encounter. We want children to value themselves and to recognise the way in which they are valued by God, enabling them to value and show care and respect for others and the wider world.

Through the teaching of Religious Education, we seek to:

- develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain and their ability to respond to the core beliefs and practices of these religions
- explore issues within and between faiths to help them understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stories), and understand the influence of these on individuals, societies, communities and cultures;
- consider questions of meaning and purpose in life;

- learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to develop critical thinking and reasoning about religious and moral issues;
- develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a multi-faith society;

Care is taken to ensure that the range of learning experiences we provide gives children experience of, and prepares children for, citizenship in modern multi-cultural Britain through understanding contrasting cultures, beliefs and faiths.

### **Organisation**

St James' as part of the LDST follow Understanding Christianity, supported by the Blackburn RE Syllabus.

### **Early Years**

The teaching of RE forms part of the Early Years curriculum for PSED and Understanding the World. RE objectives are covered through free play activities, circle times and religious stories. All major Christian religious festivals are celebrated and experienced by the children. Children have access to a wide range of opportunities to extend their understanding of their own faith and the faith of others.

### **Key Stage 1**

RE in Key Stage 1 is taught weekly by class teachers or HLTA, following the locally agreed syllabus.

Children share their experiences of faith and belonging, learn about the place of prayer in religion, understand the role of the Church and learn the significance of major religious festivals. There is a balance between learning about religions, and also learning from religions, with an emphasis on children learning how to think for themselves based on what they have understood about faith.

### **Key Stage 2**

RE in Key Stage 2 is taught weekly by class teachers or HLTAs, according to the locally agreed syllabus.

Children learn more about Jesus as the central figure of Christianity and about other key religious leaders, about the role of Sacred Texts within religions, about the history and significance of the Church and other places of worship, and about sacraments and rites of passage. At least half of what is studied in KS2 is distinctly Christian, with some other topics being studied through looking at several faiths. There is a balance between learning about religions, and also learning from religions, with an emphasis on children learning how to think for themselves based on what they have understood about faith and understanding the similarities and differences between religions to encourage values of tolerance and respect.

## British Values

Although this is something which is developing in its significance for schools, it is not something new at St James'. British values are promoted in so much of what we do, not least during our school assemblies and collective Worship, Religious Education and PHSE sessions. The values are integral to our Vision statement and our ethos which complements British values and always has done.

Schools are subject to a duty (Section 26, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. At the foot of this page there is some information to support parents in discussions about extremism and preventing radicalisation.

## Democracy

Children, parents and staff have many opportunities for their voices to be heard at St James' Primary School. Democracy is central to how we operate.

An obvious example is our Pupil Leadership Team, ECO team and School Value Ambassadors. The election of the Pupil Leadership Team (PLT) and ECO team members reflects our British electoral system and demonstrates democracy in action: candidates write mandates, pupils consider characteristics important for an elected representative, pupils vote in secret using ballot boxes etc. Made up of two representatives from each class, the PLT and ECO meets regularly to discuss issues raised by the different classes. The council is able to genuinely effect change within the school.

Other examples of 'pupil voice' are:

- using Pupil Feedback forms, children are asked to respond and reflect on the teaching and learning

Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and with concern to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. We encourage pupils to take ownership of not only their school but also of their own learning and progress. This encourages a heightened sense of both personal and social responsibility and is demonstrated on a daily basis by our pupils.

## Rules and Laws

The importance of rules and laws, whether they be those that govern our school or our country, are referred to and reinforced often, such as in assemblies and when reflecting on behaviour choices.

Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves, and the consequences when laws are broken. These values are reinforced in different ways:

- visits from authorities such as the police and fire service
- during Religious Education, when rules for particular faiths are thought about
- during other school subjects, where there is respect and appreciation for different rules i.e. sport.

## **Individual Liberty**

Alongside rules and laws, we promote freedom of choice and the right to respectfully express views and beliefs. Through the provision of a safe, supportive environment and empowering education, we provide boundaries for our young pupils to make choices safely; for example:

- choices about what learning challenge or activity
- choices about how they record their learning
- choices around the participation in extra-curricular activities

Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are taught how to exercise these safely, such as in our e-safety and PHSE lessons.

## **Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**

St James' CofE Primary School is in an area which is growing in culturally diversity so we are proud to promote and celebrate the different heritages represented in our school. Mutual respect is at the heart of our school ethos.

Our pupils know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have, and to everything, whether it is a school resource, a religious belief. Children learn that their behaviour choices have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community should treat each other with respect. Specific examples of how we at St James' Primary School enhance pupils understanding and respect for different faiths and beliefs are:

- through Religious Education, PHSE/C and other lessons where we might develop awareness and appreciation of other cultures - in English through fiction and in Art by considering culture from other parts of the world
- enjoying a depth of study during Themed Weeks / Days, where sometimes we will celebrate and enjoy learning about the differences in countries and cultures around the world (whilst at other times we might consider groups or individuals who might be vulnerable in some way, such as those with mental health issues)

## **Extremism**

Something which is clearly not part of any British or European value is extremism. It is important to remember that whilst the threat from so-called Islamic State has been a focus in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, the Prevent Duty is clear that extremism of all kinds should be tackled too. Extremism is not a new topic in education, but schools have a relatively new statutory duty to pay "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Our teaching of British values address the issues of extremism.

## **Assessment & Record Keeping**

In Reception, the Early Years Profile is used as a means of recording significant achievement in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

From Year 1 to Year 6, teacher assessment, based on the new 'Benchmark Framework of expectations' statements, is recorded on the annual assessment grid. Progress is to be tracked through the school using these assessments to ensure that standards are high. Pupils' progress and attitude is reported termly to governors and attainment and attitude to learning in RE is reported at the end of the year in the annual report to parents.

## **Monitoring**

Children's learning in RE is monitored regularly by the Subject Leader in line with the school monitoring plan, through monitoring planning, observing lessons, discussions with pupils and evaluating outcomes.

The named governor responsible for RE meets regularly with the Subject Leader in order to review progress.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **The role of the Headteacher**

- To ensure that the National Curriculum and statutory requirements from the Church of England are covered.
- To discuss curriculum delivery with the RE Subject Leader.
- To ensure the implementation of the RE policy and local scheme of work.
- To keep the RE Subject Leader and other staff up-to-date on recent relevant changes in government policy.

### **The role of the Subject Leader**

- To drive improvements in RE by annual action planning and monitoring of the subject.
- To review and update the RE policy and scheme of work regularly, in line with statutory guidance from the Agreed RE Syllabus.
- To implement the school's RE policy and scheme of work, ensuring that an engaging, high-quality RE curriculum is being delivered throughout the school.
- To monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, planning, and pupils' work in RE.
- To feedback to SLT & Governors to inform the SEF & SIP where appropriate.
- To ensure that the teaching of RE is fully inclusive.
- To keep up-to-date with, and enable other members of staff to be aware of, any new developments relating to this curriculum area.
- To attend appropriate courses that will enhance the Subject Leader's role and RE in the school generally, as well as informing other staff of INSET opportunities and arranging/delivering INSET within the school.
- To extend and update resources as and when necessary, in line with the school's budget arrangements and ensure resources are accessible and well maintained.
- To provide and organise a range of enrichment opportunities in RE, including out-of-school trips.

### **The role of the class teacher**

- To implement the school's RE policy and scheme of work, teaching an engaging, high-quality RE curriculum which follows the legal requirements.
- To follow school planning and assessment procedures to plan for a range of abilities and ensure that the teaching of RE is fully inclusive.
- To report annually to parents about achievement in RE.

### **The role of governors**

- Governing bodies must ensure that RE is provided as part of the school's basic curriculum, following the appropriate syllabus.
- The link governor for RE links with the subject leader 2 or 3 times a year to monitor effectiveness of the policy put into practise and been proactive in supporting and monitoring the RE Raising Attainment Plan.

### **Resources**

RE resources are stored in a central resource room. Reference books are available in the school library. Further RE resources including a list of useful websites are to be found on the school network under 'Shared Documents'.

### **Scheme of Work**

The new scheme of work follows Understanding Christianity, supported by the Blackburn RE Syllabus can be found on the school network under 'Shared Documents'.

### **Enrichment Opportunities**

Where possible, children should experience first-hand what they learn about in the classroom. Visitors to the school to enhance RE teaching and learning are strongly encouraged. Teachers are encouraged to organise out-of-school visits for the children to enhance their learning, particularly to places of worship. 'Virtual' visits to places of worship are also available on [www.request.org.uk](http://www.request.org.uk).

St James' Church is a valuable resource for the teaching of RE and children will spend time in the church learning about the Anglican tradition and comparing St James' with other churches and other places of worship.

### **Inclusion**

In planning for and organising RE activities, teachers take a differentiated approach to ensure equality of opportunity for all children, including those with SEN, EAL, those who are and those from all religious and cultural backgrounds.