

Littledean Church of England Primary School

Religious Education

Religious Education in Littledean Church of England Primary School explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the major religions of the world. It enables children to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires children 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 the school to preach to or seek to convert children through R.E lessons.

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Enable children to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today.
- Enable children to learn about the other major religions of the world, their impact on culture, politics, art and history and on the lives of their adherents.
- Develop children's understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth.
- Contribute to the development of children's own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

Legal Framework

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

Littledean C of E Primary School is Voluntary Controlled and therefore follows the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017-2022.

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The statement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides the school's approach to RE. Full details of this document can be found in Appendix 1.

Aims of Religious Education

The aim of Religious Education at Littledean C of E School is to encourage our children to be able to:

- Think theologically and explore ultimate questions
- Reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- Develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply the Bible text
- Make connection between Christian values and Bible teaching; relating them to personal behaviours and relationships
- Recognise that faith is a particular way of understanding and responding to God and the world
- Analyse and explain the varied nature traditions of the Christian community
- Make a well informed response to Christianity
- Respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- Reflect critically on areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths

School Approach to Religious Education

In line with all church schools we have a duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views. A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and child groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on children's experiences in RE. Therefore we encourage visits to places of worship and welcome visitors from different faith communities. We recognise that it is vitally important that teachers and school staff demonstrate respectful attitudes to all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses that we would expect from a children.

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 draw 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 children to deepen their understanding of religion and world views as lived by believers.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development.

Organisation and Time Allocation

In accordance with the structure of the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus we have agreed that:

- In the Foundation Stage children will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year.
- At Key Stage 1 children study Christianity, Judaism and Islam. RE will be taught for at least 36 hours over the year through both discrete weekly lessons and blocked units of the work like RE days.
- At Key Stage 2 children study Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and also consider non-religious worldviews. RE will be taught for at least 45 hours over the year through both discrete weekly lessons and blocked units of the work like RE days.

Planning

We have a two year rolling program of RE for each class, which is based on the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. Each unit of work starts with a question which will structure the children's learning throughout the unit as they investigate potential answers to the question. At the end of the unit the children will formulate an answer to the initial question based on evidence from the lessons they have taken part in during the unit.

The needs of all children are considered by:

- Setting tasks which have a variety of responses.
- Providing resources of differing complexity, according to the ability of the children.
- Setting tasks of varying difficulty, depending on the ability of the group.
- Utilising teaching assistants to ensure that children are effectively supported when necessary.

Assessment and Reporting

Children will be assessed at the end of each unit of work. At the start of the unit the children will carry out an elicitation activity related to the question, they will revisit this at the end of the unit. Teachers will assess children's work throughout the unit and their answer to the unit question to

make a judgement as to whether the key learning objectives for the unit have been met.

Assessment will be undertaken in many forms, such as:

- Talking to children and asking questions
- Discussing children's work with them
- Marking work against a specific learning objective
- Specific assignments for individual children
- Observing practical tasks and activities
- Children's self-evaluation of their work
- Classroom tests and quizzes
- Comparison of elicitation activity to end of unit response

During the summer term, parents will be provided with a written report about their child's progress and attainment RE throughout the year – giving the child an effort and attainment grade.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Subject Leader is responsible for overseeing the teaching and learning of RE throughout the school. The role includes:

- Ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by participating in CPD for RE.
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary.
- Ensuring staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as Understanding Christianity.
- Supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment.
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of assessment information and pupil voice and be able to discuss impact and standards.
- Contribute to the SIAMS self-evaluation process particularly around strand 7.

The Head Teacher and Governors make sure:

- All children 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 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.
- 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 children make good progress.

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

At Littledean 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 religious education 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 children or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship.

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

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all children and respects their own personal beliefs.

- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the curriculum or specific parts of it. No reasons need to be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although the school should ensure that parents are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right might be respected.
- If children are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Children will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a child has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for the kind of RE the parent wants the child to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the child could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the child with the kinds of RE that the parent wants, and the child may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA SACRE is satisfied that any interference with the child's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

Equal Opportunities

All children will have equal access to the entire RE. Gender, learning ability, physical ability, ethnicity, linguistic ability and/or cultural circumstances will not impede children for accessing history lessons. Where it is not inappropriate for a child to participate in a lesson because of reasons related to any of the previously mentioned factors, the lessons will be adapted to meet the child's needs. All efforts will be made to ensure that cultural and gender differences will be positively reflected in all lessons and teaching materials used.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Teaching and Learning
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Inclusion
- Assessment
- SEND
- SMSC

Reviewed: January 2020

Appendix 1 – Statement of Entitlement – see attached

Religious Education in Church of England Schools

A Statement of Entitlement

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 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 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.¹

A high-quality sequential religious education² (RE) programme is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, church schools provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews³ fostering respect for others. In voluntary aided schools, RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed: this document will help schools interpret that legal requirement. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE

¹ The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office, 2016), available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/vision-education>

² Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. The term religious education (RE) is therefore used throughout this document as it is connected to the Section 48 SIAMS inspection and, if and until the law changes we will need to continue to use the term. This does not stop individual schools, MATs or dioceses using other names including Religion and Worldviews for the subject.

³ The term worldviews is used throughout the document to refer to a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. It could refer to an 'institutional' worldview to describe organised worldviews including religions as well as Humanism, Secularism and Atheism or a 'personal' worldview for an individual's way of understanding and living in the world which may be drawn from one or many institutionalised worldviews. Based on Commission on Religious Education, *Religion and worldviews: The way forward A national plan for RE* (Religious Education Council for England and Wales 2018) p4.

must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus for RE unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school. In academies and free schools RE must be taught in accordance with the funding agreement.

The effectiveness of denominational education in Church schools is evaluated during the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) section 4B inspection. That subsequent judgement will reflect the expectations set out in this document. The SIAMS evaluation schedule assesses the way RE contributes to the outworking of church school's Christian vision. It highlights the responsibility of Church school leaders to ensure that pupils flourish academically through the provision of high-quality RE. In addition, in voluntary aided schools, a judgement on standards in teaching and learning in RE is included in the SIAMS report.

The Entitlement: provision, profile and priority

In a Church school the pupils and their families can expect an RE curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, this should include the ways in which it is unique and diverse. Parents can expect the use of high-quality resources, for example, the Understanding Christianity resource. Pupils can expect that teaching and learning in Church schools will use an approach that engages with biblical text and theological ideas.

Pupils can expect that a Church school RE curriculum will engage and challenge them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. They can expect Church schools to provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews. There should be opportunities for them to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils should explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. RE will go beyond a sociological study of religious phenomena and will introduce pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. In all Church schools progress in RE should be significant and attainment high enabling pupils to develop confident religious literacy.

Parents and pupils can expect that in a Church school RE will have a high profile within the curriculum and will be a priority for senior leaders. The RE curriculum is intrinsic to the outworking of a Church school's Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, the RE curriculum will contribute to British values and spiritual moral social and cultural development.

Learning activities must provide fully for the needs of all pupils. Pupils should develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. Pupils should have a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They should have opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

Curriculum statement: challenging, accurate and diverse

In all Church schools religious education must be considered an academic subject. All pupils are entitled to religious education that is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Pupils are entitled to a balanced RE curriculum which enquires into religions and worldviews