



"Choose the Right Path"

St James' C of E Infant and Nursery School

RE Policy

Subject Lead	Mrs Cocksedge
Policy Approved by	
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RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is given priority by leaders, including governors, 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;
- 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;
- provides meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions of worldviews;
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, human science and philosophy;
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is diverse;
- 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;
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs;
- is adapted to ensure **all** pupils make progress and flourish.

Mission Statement and our vision

To provide strong foundations in an inspirational environment based upon our Christian values, where children can be happy and have a love of learning, preparing them for life's journey.

"Choose the right path"

Based on Proverbs 22.6

"Teach children to choose the right path and when they are older, they will remain upon it"

As a Voluntary Controlled School, St James' Infant and Nursery School is required in law (unless parents request otherwise) to provide RE in accordance with our Locally Agreed Syllabus (in our case the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus 2023). We also adhere to Cumbria's Statement of Entitlement for RE (Revised 2026). Religious Education in a Church School makes a vital contribution to the ethos, Christian values and spiritual dimension of school life. It should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

Aims

These are:

1. To enable 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.
2. To enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
3. To facilitate pupils' engagement with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
4. To enable pupils 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.
5. To encourage pupils to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways through living, believing and thinking.

Intent

Religious Education lies at the very heart the curriculum of St James' C of E Infant and Nursery school because, as a church school, we see that the Christian faith informs all aspects of our life together.

As a Church of England school, you can expect an RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Our aim is to 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 studied.

Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are central to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners. RE at St James' explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through the major religions of the world. It 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.

Implementation

As we are a Church of England school, we follow the principles of the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus. Christianity is studied in depth throughout our school. We also focus on Islam as well as touching upon elements of other faiths where appropriate. The whole school RE plan seeks to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression.

At St James' C of E Infant and Nursery school we use Blackburn Diocese's 'Questful' syllabus as the basis for our curriculum. This is to ensure we provide high-quality Religious Education which gives pupils a deeper understanding of Christianity and enables every child to flourish.

Questful also focuses on an investigative enquiry approach, giving pupils the sense of being on a quest of discovery, whilst the curriculum content is a balance of the three essential disciplines of quality RE: Theology, Philosophy and Human Social Science. This means pupils will look at concepts through a theological lens, exploring what people of faith believe.

Alongside this, pupils will explore questions and answers raised in relation to the lived reality and impact of religion and world views on people's lives. They will also think like philosophers, and be equipped with the skills that will enable them to make sense of life's experiences. We promote links with our local church to develop and enhance our provision of RE, through CPD, visits and activities such as 'Prayer Stations'. We also have a number of Christian Values, which were chosen by children and staff and which are at the core of our school.

As a Voluntary Controlled school, we follow the current Cumbria Agreed Syllabus; in line with this, RE is taught for 1 hour per week to all registered pupils in reception and Key Stage 1, including those with SEND. This is supplemented by themed events or visits. Of the RE units taught, over 80% focus predominantly on Christianity and these are taken from the Questful RE Syllabus. Other discrete units are used to teach other religions (Christianity and Islam). However, all units provide opportunities to explore links between different world faiths. To ensure progression of knowledge and skills, we have selected core units from the Questful syllabus which allow for key themes, such as Christmas and Easter, to be revisited each year. Children visit local churches to further develop their understanding of Christianity. Our collective worship also benefits from these links – we visit St James' Church for collective worship once per month and regularly welcome visitors into our school to lead Collective Worship. We encourage children to play an active role in acts of worship and use this as a means to explore a different school value each half-term. Note: although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, they are managed separately.

Impact

The children at St James' enjoy learning about other religions and why people choose or choose not to follow a religion. Through their learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wide world, developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life. Our curriculum inspires children to also explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values, whilst having respect for the faith, belief and values of others. Our teachers use a range of formative assessment throughout their lessons, as well as a

summative assessment at the end of each unit of work, typically using learning maps and checkpoints to allow children the opportunity to respond to key questions and themes.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development/ British Values

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. We invite children to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider those of others, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society as well as their own experiences

RE makes an important contribution to the school's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides key context to develop pupil's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination

Health and Safety

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

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of places.

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

Role of the subject leader

Responsibilities include:

1. Preparing and reviewing a school policy and schemes of work in consultation with the staff.
2. Ensuring that Christianity and Islam are undertaken as the two main key religions for KS1.
3. Ensuring that RE is included for 5% of curriculum time over a given period by advising staff on presentation and management of RE themes each term.
4. Attending courses and training sessions and providing necessary feedback to staff. To keep up to date with new developments.
5. Supporting non-specialist teachers and staff.
6. Monitoring resources annually and keeping them up-to-date.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

1. RE is provided in accordance with the agreed syllabus for all registered pupils in the school.
2. There are appropriate resources and staffing to meet the aims in RE.
3. Parents receive an annual written report on their child's progress in RE.
4. Requests from parents for the withdrawal of their children from RE are responded to an alternative arrangement made, so long as it does not incur any additional cost to the school or the Local Authority.

Role of the Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that:

1. RE is included in the school curriculum.
2. Sufficient time and resources are devoted to RE to ensure the school meets its legal obligations and provides an RE curriculum of quality.

Assessment and Recording

We see this as part of the teaching process and linked to our learning outcomes. Children will be assessed by their class teacher over a period of time, using oral, written, creative and visual evidence. Not every activity will be formally assessed, but ongoing assessment will take place in the classroom setting. A range of assessment techniques may be used including directed questions, comprehension, creative writing, art, drama, display and discussion. A written statement will be included in each child's report at the end of KS1.

Teachers will use Understanding Christianity Objectives along with the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus and update via the school's assessment criteria and updated termly.

In Reception, children's attainment is assessed in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage profile requirements.

Cross-curricular links

Our school recognises that RE contributes both directly and indirectly to most areas of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE – Light, colour, sound, seasons, natural world, ourselves, ethical issues.

ENGLISH – Vocabulary, speaking and listening, story, legend and myth, prayer and self expression in verbal and written form.

HISTORY – Placing religious traditions in a historical context, using artefacts as a primary source.

GEOGRAPHY – Local study eg Churches, environmental issues, awe and wonder at the natural world.

ART AND MUSIC – Colour, design, cultural expression, spiritual inspiration.

Whenever it is appropriate, particularly through topic work, we will teach RE themes through cross-curricular links.

Inclusion and Differentiation

Children with SEN and EAL are considered in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of RE we make the most of opportunities to help the children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. One way of doing this is through our links with local religious communities and places of worship.

Withdrawal

In accordance with the Education Acts 1996 and 2002 and DfE 'Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010', parents have the right to wholly or partly withdraw their child from Religious Education at school. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns with the Class teacher or Headteacher.