

Saint Thomas' C of E Primary Academy

In Association with:

Manor Multi-Academy Trust



Religious Education Policy

Saint Thomas' C of E Academy

Religious Education (RE) Policy

At Saint Thomas' C of E Academy Religious Education helps children to learn about their own religion and other people's religion as well as skills from religions such as those of consideration, tolerance, empathy and respect.

Religious Education contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, social and physical development by helping them:

- To understand what religions teach, what it means to be a religious believer, and to be aware of experiences which raise issues about the meaning of life.
- To reflect on and respond to, this understanding and awareness, and to express their own ideas.

INTENT:

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Saint Thomas' C of E Academy our curriculum is designed to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions. As a Church school within a Multi-Academy Trust we work hard to promote our Christian Distinctiveness and our Christian Values of Trust, Aspiration, Honesty, Forgiveness, Respect, and Responsibility. Our curriculum is seen in its widest sense as the entire planned learning experience. This includes formal lessons as well as events, routines, and learning that take place outside the classroom.

Our curriculum is designed to allow each pupil to:



So that each pupil will:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society.

Our Religious Education curriculum provides a broad and balanced education and allows our children to become:

Successful learners, who enjoy learning, make rapid and sustained progress and achieve their very best in all they do.

Confident Individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives;

Responsible citizens, who can make a positive contribution to society.

Our School Core Values

Our RE curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school.

Respect Fairness
Friendship
Self-belief Perseverance
Appreciation
Resilience Determination
Teamwork
Honesty

Resilience – The power of yet...

Perseverance – Never giving up...

Friendship – Being there for each other and learning from each other's values and beliefs...

Respect – To all, to each individual's own religion and their beliefs...

Determination – Keep on trying...

Self-belief – You can be anything you want to be...

Teamwork – Work collaboratively, valuing one another...

Honesty – is the best policy...

Fairness – Give everyone a fair chance and everyone has a fair voice...

Appreciation – Being thankful for all that we have, who we are and all that we can learn with and from one another...

IMPLEMENTATION:

The Legal Position of Religious Education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the **Wolverhampton** LEA's Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Organisation and Planning

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Wolverhampton LEA's Agreed Syllabus. Each topic builds on prior knowledge and offers opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills as well as offering challenge as they move through the school.

We plan our curriculum in three phrases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plans on an annual basis.

With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic. The RE subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on regular basis, taking into consideration the Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus as well as the pupil's interests and needs.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

In Foundation Stage, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Each class in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will provide children a weekly Religious Education lesson, which will be 1 hour in duration.

Good Religious Education teaching builds progressively on pupil's prior knowledge. It also allows children to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

We also provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

We promote and teach the children about the importance of British Values. They accept and engage with the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Through this teaching and learning, pupils will demonstrate skills and attitudes that will enable them to participate and contribute positively in life inside and outside of the school community.

Our Children's Curriculum Charter

Our children are entitled to a RE curriculum which enables them to:

- Have a voice, be heard and for their voice and viewpoint to be respected.
- Have the chance to learn about religious traditions and about the world in which they live in.

- Have the opportunity to understand what religions teach and what it means to be a religious believer.
- Learn about religion by sharing an understanding of religious practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences.
- Understand the impact of religion on people's lives.
- Learn from religion by developing and reflecting on their own thoughts about what it means to belong to a faith community in our country and across the world.
- Ask sensitive questions that provoke thought and challenge.
- Understand and value the importance of truth, fairness, right and wrong.
- Learn in different ways, both inside and outside the classroom, inside and outside of school.
- To develop their creativity, critical thinking, to be independent and learn from one another.

IMPACT

The impact of the curriculum design will lead to outstanding progress over time at all key stages, from the children's starting points. The rich and broad curriculum and units of work will enable teachers to consistently plan lessons progressively, building on prior knowledge and the development of key skills in order to deliver lessons over the highest standard and children's outcomes to be of the highest quality. Children will be confident, resilient, self-motivated, independent learners, with a depth of understanding of different religions and their differing beliefs.

We will ensure that the curriculum is regularly monitored and reviewed. The learning and outcomes will also be monitored and feedback will be given around what is going well and what are the ways to grow.

Our assessment system of building blocks will be used by the children and staff to reflect on the progress that is being made over time. Senior Leaders will evaluate progress that has been made and the impact of the curriculum to ensure all pupils, including the most disadvantaged and pupils with SEND have been given the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors.