

# RE Policy

**Date policy reviewed:**

<b>Signed by</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Nov 2023</b>
<b>Trust:</b>	<b>Nov 2023</b>

## **Rationale for RE at St Thomas' C of E Academy**

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. The SIAMS schedule makes it clear that RE should reflect the school's Christian vision:

***Jesus said 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' John 10:10***

We aspire for everyone to achieve their God-given academic, personal and spiritual potential, so they flourish and make a positive impact in the world. Jesus came to offer life in all its fullness, and we aim to support this through providing a Christian education for the children of Kidsgrove and the surrounding areas through learning for life with Jesus.

The subject of Religious Education (RE) is regarded as a core subject within the school's curriculum. It has a vital role in developing religious literacy and deepening pupils' understanding of Christianity (including as a global religion), in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions. RE is non-confessional and should be treated as an academic subject in its own right.

We absolutely recognise the Church of England document, 'Making a difference? A review of Religious Education in Church of England schools 2014' recommends that the RE curriculum in all schools should,

*"..... ensure it provides a more coherent, progressive and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world"*

*".....explore ways of extending pupils' ability to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning in RE"*

### **RE Statement of Entitlement**

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools.

Christianity will, therefore, be the majority of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to the teaching of RE in this Church of England school. However, as a Church school we have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and worldviews. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also learn to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice and discrimination.

### **The RE curriculum**

RE teaching follows the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act (1988), which places RE as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement for all

pupils. The school bases it on the decision made by the governing body. In addition, the school uses the Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity resources supplemented by Discovery RE to broaden the experiences of our majority white British community.

Our RE 'Learning Journey' document has been written to aid teaching and learning and identifies the key questions and outcomes for each RE topic from Reception to Year 6.

At least 5% of curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation, a large majority of this teaching time will be allocated to an exploration of the Christian faith, and the concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart.

### **The aims of Religious Education in our school are:**

- To help pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text.
- To help pupils understand Christian understanding of the significance of Jesus Christ
- To help pupils consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide.
- To enable all pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and world views and their impact on society and culture.
- To give pupils a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions.
- To help pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings and understanding their impact on the lives of believers.
- To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief, of themselves, the world and human experience.
- To develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, and so to consider important human questions, values and concerns.
- To nurture understanding, respect and open-mindedness and inspire lifelong engagement with the study of religions and beliefs.

### **The outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:**

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives
- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion – symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship, and persons (eg Jesus Christ, Mohammad, Guru Nanak)
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean

- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers

- Reflect on the decisions people make – including believers – and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others – including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)**

In addition, the subject contributes to other areas of education and experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

<b>Spiritual</b>	Widening pupils' vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.
<b>Moral</b>	Helping each pupil develop their own informed values
<b>Social</b>	Helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values of our society
<b>Cultural</b>	Aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage and developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and British values. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

### **The management of RE**

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff

expertise in RE. The RE subject leader is responsible for:

- producing a scheme of work/'progression for learning' document for the school
- supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision
- ensuring Religious Education has high status within the school
- keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff

INSET

- monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- ensuring there are rigorous and effective systems that enable teachers to know how and what pupils are learning in RE
- creating the RE Improvement Plan and ensuring its regular review
- accountability for RE standards in the school
- meeting with members of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

### **Right to withdrawal**

At St. Thomas' C of E Primary Academy we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without giving a reason. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the headteacher who will then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided by the school and set out the options open to the parents as set out in education law. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects. Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE and does not take part in alternative religious education they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff whilst doing work set by their parents which will seek to further their knowledge and understanding of their parents' beliefs and values.

### **Current RE practice and principles**

Class teachers deliver the RE curriculum in school and are responsible for the planning, differentiation for all pupils including SEND, PP and the more able. From the school's assessment proforma for each subject, teachers make a final judgement for each topic taught as to whether the children are working towards the expected standard (WTS), at the expected standard (EXS) or working at greater depth (GDS) which is then reported to the RE leader who analyses these outcomes, in line with school assessment procedures. Regular monitoring of RE takes many forms which includes the monitoring of lessons, books and pupil voice by the Head of School/RE leader where both written and verbal feedback is given which focuses on strengths seen and areas for development.

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed on a three-year rolling programme. The next scheduled review is Summer 2026, unless there is any change to guidance relating to this policy.