



## Religious Education Policy

Our Christian faith emphasises the value and worth of every individual with their own distinctive character, gifts and abilities.

Christ's command to 'Love one another' calls us to respect and help other people, this provides the foundation for our school and all we aim to achieve.

### Introduction

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

### The Legal Requirement

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that:

**'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based.'**

Although there is not a National Curriculum for R.E., all maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes R.E. All maintained schools therefore have a statutory duty to teach R.E.

The R.E. curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the locally agreed syllabus for R.E. Agreed Syllabuses used in schools (maintained or academy), which are not designated with a religious character must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. Schools with a religious designation may prioritise one religion in their R.E. curriculum, but all schools must recognise diverse religions and systems of belief in the UK both locally and nationally.

In brief, legislation requires that:

- in maintained community, foundation or voluntary schools without a religious character, R.E. is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus;
- for foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, R.E. must be taught according to the Agreed Syllabus, unless parents request R.E. in accordance with the trust deed of the school.

R.E. must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in reception classes.

At Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, to ensure compliancy with the Pan Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religions Education, R.E. is taught using the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) scheme of work.

In line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement, at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School we believe that Religious Education 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. Driven by our vision, we believe the teaching of R.E. provides an understanding and tolerance of all faiths (and none) which in turn promotes harmony and appreciation.

### **What is the purpose and aim of R.E. in school?**

The purpose of R.E. is to promote religious literacy. Religious literacy requires pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews and to use that knowledge to engage in informed and balanced conversations about religions and beliefs. In addition to learning about religions and worldviews, R.E. offers students

the chance to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally and to reflect on their own beliefs, being able to be discerning about the many attitudes and opinions they will encounter.

The non-statutory 2013 National Curriculum Framework for R.E. states that pupils should:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews
- Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

To achieve these aims, Religious Education at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School provokes challenging questions. R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for life in the modern world, and should enable them to flourish as citizens in a pluralistic, global society.

Through our teaching of R.E. at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, our aim for pupils is:

- 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.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- 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.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

At Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, it is felt that the teaching of R.E. is intrinsically linked to our vision and important for many reasons:

- RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these.
- RE enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.
- RE offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.
- RE encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.
- RE challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.
- RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging.
- RE enables pupils to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in an ever changing society.
- RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.
- RE enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

## **Foundation Stage**

RE teaching in the Reception year is statutory. In Foundation Stage certain aspects of religions are explored, with examples provided from Christianity and other religious traditions.

Through the teaching of R.E. in Foundation Stage, teachers draw on the five aspects of religion:

- Religious figures
- Religious stories
- Religious times
- Religious places
- Religious objects

## **Key Stages One and Two**

Christianity is included as a core area of study in each key stage. Pupils are also taught about Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism by exploring the Key Questions laid out below.

**Year 1:**

- Is everybody special?
- Should we celebrate Harvest or Christmas?
- Does creation help people understand God?
- Should everyone follow Jesus?
- Are some stories more important than others?
- Do we need shared special places?

**Year 2:**

- Who should you follow?
- Do religious symbols mean the same to everyone?
- Is it important to celebrate the New Year?
- How should the church celebrate Easter?
- Can stories change people?
- How should you spend the weekend?

**Year 3:**

- Does taking bread and wine show that someone is a Christian?
- Is light a good symbol for celebration?
- Is a Jewish/Hindu child free to choose how to live?
- Does Easter make sense without Passover?
- Does Jesus have authority for everyone?
- Can made-up stories tell the truth?

**Year 4:**

- Do Murtis help Hindus understand God?
- Does the Christmas narrative need Mary?
- Is a holy journey necessary for believers?
- Should believers give up things?
- Did Jesus really perform miracles?
- Does prayer change things?

**Year 5:**

- Do Sikhs need the Guru Granth Sahib?
- Does God communicate with man?
- Does the community of the Gurdwara help Sikhs lead better lives?
- Was the death of Jesus a worthwhile sacrifice?
- Are you inspired?
- What's best for our world? Does religion help people decide?

**Year 6:**

- Are the saints encouraging role models?
- Is 'God made man' a good way to understand the Christmas story?
- Do clothes express beliefs?
- Is the resurrection important to Christians?
- Can we know what God is like?
- Does it matter what we believe about creation?

These questions in both key stages highlight that learning in R.E. lessons is an exploration and based on enquiry which can give rise to diverse answers and beliefs.

**Attainment in RE**

The Diocesan scheme of work makes clear for each unit what the expected learning is as well as what a developing and excelling understanding looks like. Staff use this on which to base their judgements on how well a pupil is performing. Assessment can be in a variety of forms including responding to the overarching question at the end of a unit. All Medium Term plans stipulate the children's prior learning as the emphasis at Holy Trinity, when it comes to assessment, is all about building on and retaining knowledge.

**Subject Leadership**

The leadership of R.E. as a subject is the responsibility of the RE coordinator.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher and the Governing body are responsible for ensuring the quality teaching of R.E. across the school and that all statutory obligations are fulfilled. The school's Teaching and Learning Policy sets out the procedures the school undertakes to ensure consistently good teaching is in place across the curriculum.

## Withdrawal from R.E.

The right of parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction on conscience grounds was included in the Education Act of 1944. All subsequent legislation has retained the clause that allows parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of R.E. It also protects teachers' right to withdraw from teaching the subject. Since 1944 the nature of R.E. has changed significantly from the nurture of children in a faith tradition to an open and educational enquiry.

Here at Holy Trinity C of E Primary School it is hoped that parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the nature and areas of learning found in this syllabus and that, as a consequence, few will feel the need to withdraw either their children or themselves from the subject.

## Associated policies

Teaching and Learning  
Equal Opportunities  
Collective Worship

Policy review date November 2024

Signed: Chair of Governors

Signed: Head Teacher

(This policy will be reviewed every three years or more regularly if necessary).