



*Kirkstall St. Stephen's*

*RE Policy*

*October 2019*

## **Kirkstall St Stephen's Primary School**

### **Religious Education Policy**

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## KSS School Mission Statement

We are cherished, we are challenged, we are children of God

### Our Vision

We are cherished – we aim to create a caring environment where all children and staff feel welcome, valued, supported and respected.

We are challenged- through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, where achievements are recognised but it is also safe to fail, increasing our resilience.

We are children of God – we recognise the value of each and every individual, encouraging everyone's unique spiritual development and potential.

### Our Ethos Statement

Our school ethos is represented by the KSS Values Tree; showing children's growth as a tree planted firmly into God's sustaining love and rooted in our school values of: trust, justice, perseverance, respect, thankfulness and forgiveness.

This is based on Jeremiah 17:7-8

Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,  
whose confidence is in him.

They will be like a tree planted by the water  
that sends out its roots by the stream.

- *This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policy documents and the Leeds Diocesan RE Syllabus.*

## **Rationale**

In accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act, Kirkstall St. Stephen's provides RE for all pupils. The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

All state schools... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

RE is an important and fundamental part of the curriculum at Kirkstall St Stephen's CE School. We have high expectations of the quality of RE taught in our school. RE is exciting and absolutely relevant to the lives of all our pupils. We hope that our commitment and enthusiasm as governors and staff will be communicated by the high priority we place on RE.

In Religious Education pupils should acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity with particular emphasis on the practices and principles of the Church of England finding out what it is like to be a member of Christian and other faith communities. Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

It is the opportunity for our children to discover more about the thoughts and beliefs of others. We aim that all areas of the curriculum contribute to the spiritual development of pupils. However, religious education has a distinctive contribution to make, not least because all the major religions of the world acknowledge that human beings have a spiritual dimension. This does not mean that religious education has a monopoly in this area, nor does it have the sole responsibility for spiritual development.

Our purpose for RE : RE explores big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how we they live. RE helps pupils to make sense of religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The Leeds Diocesan Guidelines, which we follow, states that religious education should help pupils :

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and non-religious worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Within this framework we have identified the following objectives:

To help pupils become religiously literate.

- To provide high quality teaching and so promote the learning of RE, which reflects its importance to us in an Aided school.
- To enable and encourage pupils to consider, reflect on, analyse and evaluate their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical beliefs and to develop an understanding and respect for other people and their beliefs.
- To engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and those with none.
- To provide periods of quiet in which pupils can be still and reflect.
- To promote opportunities for reaching beyond the mundane, the ordinary and the everyday, so as to develop a sense of awe, wonder, joy and thankfulness.
- To develop their knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and other religions represented in Great Britain.
- To explore the breadth and variety of the Christian community across the world.
- To provide an environment for the exploration of religious and ethical matters, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues, in a safe and comfortable context.
- To show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning.
- To help pupils become active citizens, serving their neighbour.
- To give all pupils, irrespective of gender, race and ability, equal access to a religious curriculum.

## **Inclusion**

Our whole school inclusion, English as an additional language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies apply to RE.

RE has an important role in challenging stereotypical views and developing a positive appreciation of others. The curriculum builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education. Pupils from any religious background or none are encouraged to express their beliefs in a respectful and open atmosphere.

Teachers are aware that pupils who have barriers to learning in other areas may have a strong interest in and aptitude for RE. All pupils should be encouraged to progress to their full potential and a variety of teaching methods (e.g. use of art, drama, ICT) should be employed to ensure that this is possible.

Pupils who are gifted and talented in RE are given opportunities to demonstrate and develop their strengths.

Some pupils have positive and deep experiences of religion from their lives outside of school. While there is no doubt that these experiences should be valued, they do not necessarily relate to pupils' ability in RE.

## **Withdrawal**

Pupils' families and faith communities have the right to encourage religious nurture of the children, fostering their faith. It is the responsibility of the school to provide Religious Education for all its pupils.

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from RE. They are asked to contact the head teacher to make arrangements. No reasons have to be given but parents are encouraged to discuss with the head teacher the issues concerning withdrawal. Children who are withdrawn will be fully supervised in another part of the school. Our approach to RE, however, has been constructed in the hope that parents will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

## **Provision**

Kirkstall St Stephen's follows the Diocesan guidelines for the teaching of RE in accordance with the Trust Deed. (See appendix 1)

RE is taught as an identifiable subject although there are links with other curricular areas. In learning about Religion, the children will have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities through individual, small group and whole class teaching. Kirkstall St. Stephen's recognises that 'enquiry' can be instrumental to good learning in RE as referenced in recent Ofsted RE subject reports, and we aim to help pupils develop skills to enquire independently. Pupils should be given time to generate pertinent questions where appropriate and teachers of RE should ensure that the atmosphere in an RE session is conducive to question raising and reflective thought whenever appropriate.

In accordance with the Diocesan Guidelines, we expect that the following hours are the *minimum* hours devoted to RE:

- Key stage 1 – 36 hours per year.
- Key stage 2 – 45 hours per year.

Christianity and Islam will be taught in both Key Stages. Sikhism will be introduced at KS2. Other faiths may be celebrated or mentioned as part of discussion or in other curricular areas and, but they will not form part of our main RE curriculum.

## **Cross Curricular Links**

**RE provides opportunity for cross curricular links. Opportunities include:**

- Working with others through collaboration on projects, negotiating ideas, tasks and evaluations.
- Problem solving – manipulating, responding, experimenting, adapting their thinking, ideas, feelings and meanings.
- Leading their own learning – discussion and critically questioning visual and other

information.

- Looking at citizenship and what it means to be an active citizen, serving our neighbours.
- Our responsibility for the world – what different faiths teach us about caring for our environment.
- ICT – using the internet to investigate. Exploring the global nature of the church, other faiths.
- Communication through exploring and recording ideas, discussing issues of faith and belief.

### **Reporting & Assessment**

The prime purpose of assessment is to identify what each pupil can do in order to plan the next stage in learning and so enable a child to progress at his/her optimum rate.

Consequently ongoing assessment is used in RE to aid planning.

Teachers continuously assess children's performance through observation of work, questioning and discussion. Children's comments are often recorded by teaching assistants. We use I can statements based on the Diocesan syllabus to help with this assessment. Pupils' attainment in RE throughout the school is tracked by the Subject Leader in order to ensure that RE provision in Kirkstall St. Stephen's is successful. Areas concerned with reflection and response can be difficult to assess, the experience itself may well be more important than any attempt to assess. However pupils are encouraged to reflect and respond through creative activities.

Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress in the annual report in which progress and achievements are stated.

### **Governors**

The Governing Body is responsible for formulating, agreeing and adopting the policy.

Governors will then on an ongoing basis:

- Determine the nature of Religious Education in accordance with the requirements of the Trust Deed.
- work in partnership with the Head teacher and staff of the school in formulating and augmenting the RE Policy.

### **Staff responsibilities**

The subject Co-ordinator:

- needs to be up to date with information pertaining to R.E.
- needs to be familiar with The Leeds Diocesan Syllabus.
- is responsible for advising and informing the Head teacher and the Governors.
- is responsible for advising and supporting staff.

- is responsible for maintaining and procuring appropriate resources.
- is responsible for monitoring and keeping under review the implementation of the policy.
- is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Units of Work.
- is responsible for assessing with the RE teachers the children's standards of achievement in RE.
- is responsible for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of RE in the school.
- is responsible for ensuring that the school is up to date with SIAMS inspection framework.

## **Resources**

We use the Understanding Christianity syllabus and also many other resources from RE Today. We have a variety of resources – artefacts, books, music, DVDs to enhance the children's learning. These are mainly kept at the back of year 2. We also invite visitors in and arrange visits to appropriate places. We recognise that religious displays are necessary to help stimulate and interest the children and community. We expect that every classroom will have an RE display. This confirms our Christian commitment as well as celebrating achievement.

## **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The RE policy will be reviewed every two years. The teaching of the subject will be monitored by reviewing the medium and long-term plans and carrying out work scrutinies, looking for a constant improvement in standards.

Regular pupil interviews will be undertaken. This will be evidenced and used to ascertain the following – Is RE enjoyable? Are the children making progress in RE? How do they know? Staff will also be consulted on a regular basis regarding any training that might be needed.

This policy has been adopted by the governors in consultation with the RE Subject Leader.

Date of approval by Governing Body:

Date of Review:

## **Appendix 1**

Trust Deed Statement

*“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church at parish and diocesan level.*

*The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all pupils”*