

St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School

Religious Education Policy 2024



**With God's help, together, we aspire,
achieve and believe.**

Christian Vision

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Christian Narrative

At St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School, our vision is to be inclusive, inquiring and inspirational by:

Providing our children with a curriculum and experiences of God's wonderful world and prepare our school family for their life journey. We want all our pupils to achieve and become the person God created them to be.

We hope to foster confidence, delight and discipline in seeking wisdom, knowledge, understanding and skills in order to shape their lives.

Together, as a nurturing, Christian school, our goal is to encourage each other to believe in ourselves. With Jesus' help, we will aim to make a positive difference through our Christian values.

Our Vision rooted is rooted in the parable of the Mustard Seed

The Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-34

'It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth.

Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.

Introduction

At St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. Religious Education (RE) is an important subject, developing our pupils' knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of our society. 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 can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions, and worldviews. RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. RE also makes important contributions to other parts of the school curriculum such as citizenship, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE education) amongst others. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development,

deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally, and cross-culturally.

We follow the Blackburn Diocese Questful RE Syllabus. As a supplementary document we use the Understanding Christianity to support our RE teaching when it links with the Questful RE units.

The Distinctive nature of R.E. in a Church School

We celebrate our unique character as a Church school by:

- exploring the Church's year
- visiting places of worship, especially the local parish Church, to develop an understanding of the Church as a living community
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life
- using religious language to express knowledge and opinions
- enjoying and singing Christian psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs from a wide variety of traditions
- creating a sacred space in each class that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection in each class.

Aims

We aim:

- to ensure the ethos of our School R.E. Syllabus encourages our children to develop their own beliefs, values, and attitudes.
- to celebrate the uniqueness of each child and seek to encourage individual creative responses.
- to promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all our pupils
- to promote understanding and awareness of other world faiths
- to encourage caring, thoughtful, and respectful relationships
- to provide a supportive environment where children can develop self-confidence, self-discipline, and a sense of responsibility
- To promote the values of the Church of England.

R.E. Syllabus content

As a Church of England school, we believe that high quality Religious Education is the key to enabling all children to flourish and grow.

We follow the Questful RE scheme, produced by Blackburn Diocese. This syllabus has been designed to embrace the explicit teaching of Christian concepts and God's Big Salvation Story, which is focused around the following narrative: Creation, Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and the Kingdom of God.

We use "God's Big Story" to help us to understand the Bible narrative. It helps us to understand the Bible as more than a collection of different texts, more as one overarching, coherent story. Each unit of teaching and Christian value can be related to "God's Big Story."

The children are encouraged to ask and discuss lots of questions, even those which seem impossible to answer. The children will confidently navigate their own religious journey, searching together for answers and understanding.

The content of the syllabus ensures that all children have a deeper understanding of Christianity. In addition, children explore all major World Faiths and discuss world views where appropriate.

Syllabus

Guidance is taken from the Blackburn Diocese Board of Education and units of work are adapted from the online Questful R.E Syllabus; overall, approximately 80% of study is focussed on Christianity and 20% the study of World Faiths.

Religious Education in a Church School lies at the very heart of the curriculum and we have adopted the Diocesan guidelines of allocating at least 5% of teaching time to R.E.

In some units the focus on the study of World Faiths is increased.

The units are supplemented with additional resources from the diocese recommended Understanding Christianity Units.

All units taught link to the resources on God's Big Plan.

World Faith Units:

The Questful R.E syllabus makes links to World faiths and Worldviews.

Children are encouraged to explore and discover information about the beliefs and practices of World faiths, ask meaningful questions, make comparisons, identify similarities and differences and make connections to their own experiences.

The school follows the Religious Education Syllabus devised by Blackburn Diocese and incorporates a wide range of topics centred on Christian teaching. Lessons include many aspects of the Christian faith including increasing the knowledge of the Bible; relating religious teaching to current society and understanding the significance of main events in the church's calendar. The syllabus also provided opportunities for children to explore Christianity around the world and in other cultures; a multi-faith approach.

Pupils will experience, explore and encounter a wide range of creative and challenging multi-sensory activities that will help them to discover the answers to fundamental questions such as these: –

- Who am I and what does it mean to be me?
- In what ways do/can I relate to others?
- How/where can I encounter God?
- How can I make a positive contribution to the world in which I live?
- What values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are important to me?
- What does it mean to have faith?
- Who/what influences and inspires me?

Links with other Subjects

Religious Education has links with other areas of the curriculum including English, Music, Science and Art and the school is committed to a cross-curricular approach to Religious Education. R.E. is also linked to the way in which the school organises its Collective Worship but, it should be stressed the two are not the same. (Please refer to the school's Collective Worship policy).

Religious Education also provides opportunities for teaching the following cross-curricular dimensions – Equal Opportunities, Personal Social Health and Economic Education and Education for Ethnic Diversity.

Reporting and Assessment

Each child is assessed against national expectations at the end of each unit of work using the assessment activities suggested in the syllabus. Pupils are judged to be working at the expected standard (ARE) or working below the expected standard. Parents/ carers are informed of their child's progress in the annual report compiled in the summer term. Assessment data is collated by the subject leader to judge standards in RE and to ensure that they have a broad and informed overview of attainment and standards within school.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education complements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress.

We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. We ensure that our classroom learning environments are fully inclusive to all pupils within our care.

At St John with St Augustine CE Primary School, we aim to:

- Provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in R.E. according to their individual abilities;
- Identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment (adaptive teaching).
- Identify able and gifted children and provide suitable learning challenges.

At St John with St Augustine CE Primary School, all children are provided with equal access to the R.E. curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities irrespective of gender, ability, including gifted pupils, ethnicity and social circumstance, have access to the curriculum and make the greatest progress possible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Subject Leader has responsibility for:

- implementing the R.E. Policy, action plan and syllabus
- liaising with class teachers who are responsible for teaching R.E. in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2
- auditing and organising school resources for R.E.
- Supplementing resources as the budget allows and incorporating resource requirements in the R.E. Action Plan.
- monitoring the children's progress in R.E.
- maintaining regular contact with the Diocese and attending Subject Leader courses and R.E. cluster meetings
- liaising with the nominated R.E. Governor, Reverend Hugh Scriven.
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in R. E.

ICT

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select, and analyse information, using the internet to help us to research aspects of the Christian faith in greater depth. Pupils also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Resources

Each academic year an audit of resources takes place. In accordance with funding through school resources are bought on an annual basis.

Funding

Funds are allocated each year, according to need, from the delegated school budget. The Religious Education subject leader submits a subject strategic plan (bid) and outlines within this plan the financial requirements of the subject. Discussion with all teaching staff highlights areas where funding is required and additionally provides a balanced view of areas that could be improved through the purchasing of relevant equipment or staff training.

Parental Involvement and Withdrawal

We welcome parental involvement in all aspects of school life.

By law, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to. *'The worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from worship and /or Religious Education) as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.'* [Church of England and Methodist Schools, Diocese of Blackburn, Religious Education Policy Guidance]

Subject Leader: Miss Clare Martin

Headteacher: Mr Mark Proctor

Religious Education Policy date: October 2024

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