



St Nicholas CE VA Primary School

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Our school is a happy place where everyone is valued, every child can thrive and reach their full potential and where we live out our Christian values celebrating the uniqueness of each individual.

At St Nicholas School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Policy reviewed by:	Lucy Mortimer
Adopted by GB:	June 2022
Chair of Governing Body:	Caroline Fleming
Headteacher	Rizelle Crouch
Policy review due:	June 2025

The Role of RE

Religious Education is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all pupils as part of the Basic Curriculum. As RE is not nationally determined, each Local Education Authority provides an Agreed Syllabus for schools to follow and Church schools are also required to use the Local Diocesan Syllabus to inform their planning.

Religious Education is concerned with two closely related aspects: learning about religion and learning from religion. It should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Aims

We believe that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum. We aim to do this by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them.

- Engaging with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.
- Expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way.
- Exploring their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.
- Recognising the right of people to hold different beliefs within a religiously diverse society.

We aim to enable our children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal religions represented in Great Britain, nurturing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principle religions, in particular, Christianity.

Within the classroom teachers promote the British values of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Also interwoven within the school day are Christian values which underpin the pupils experience of school life. These include generosity, service, respect, thankfulness, trust, perseverance and justice.

How RE is planned for

Teachers plan using a scheme of work based on both the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus and the St Albans Diocesan Syllabus. Our planning takes into account, as far as possible, the structure of our classes and is therefore a two-year cycle of work.

In the foundation stage children will begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of others. Children will listen and respond to simple short stories, handle artefacts and have the opportunity to listen and respond to visitors from a range of religious and ethnic groups, also visiting local places of worship and cultural centres where appropriate.

As well as Christianity three other religions (Judaism, Hinduism & Islam) are taught throughout the school. Buddhism and Sikhism are taught through whole-school celebration days.

Each class teacher plans lessons from the scheme of work, which has been developed by the Subject co-ordinator from Hertfordshire and Diocesan units of work.

Each class teacher uses Understanding Christianity resource materials. This helps develop their own thinking and understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. It provides them with the opportunity to explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.

Developing staff expertise and knowledge and confidence

- At least one member of staff having RE qualifications or receiving specialist training.
- All staff teaching RE knowing how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigour is balanced with respect for different personal beliefs and identities.
- All teaching staff and governors understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.

All staff receiving training in Understanding Christianity resources.

How RE is taught

RE is taught using a range of sources (including artefacts, visits, role play and ICT) and seeks to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. These include:

- Investigation; the use of first-hand and other resources to understand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories.
- Questioning, developing and curiosity about life, relationships and the natural world.
- Empathy; developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as wonder, forgiveness, sorrow, joy and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.
- Reflection; the ability to consider thoughts, feeling, experiences, attitudes, beliefs of oneself and others.
- Relating; linking significant features of religions, making associations between them, to understand what makes religions distinct and/or similar.
- Expression; the ability to identify and explain feelings and aspects of religions.

Our Christian ethos is further expressed through Collective Worship, introducing pupils to worship in a manner appropriate to their age, aptitude and family background and to draw upon the riches of the Anglican and other Christian traditions.

School Prayer

Dear God,
Help us be kind and take responsibility for our actions.
Help us persevere in school and at home.
Help us strengthen our beliefs and achieve our goals.
Keep hope in our hearts and love in our lives.
Amen

Time allocation

RE should be taught for 1 hour per week at KS1 and 1 hour 15 minutes per week at KS2.

Record keeping and assessment

Teachers will assess progress against the Hertfordshire wheel and Understanding Christianity to make a record of each child's progress. Effort and attitude to learning in RE is reported in the end of year report written by the class teacher. The report is shared and given to the child's parents and a copy is kept with the child's records. At the end of year six, a copy of the report is forwarded to Secondary School.

Equal opportunities issues

We recognise the right of parents and teachers to withdraw from Religious Education, as enshrined in the 1988 Education Reform Act. This is set out in our brochure and on the website.

Activities within RE will be planned to allow our pupils to respond according to their abilities with appropriate differentiation.

Review procedures

This policy will be reviewed by the RE coordinator in consultation with the teaching staff in accordance with the school's policy review programme. The Governors' Pupils, Pastoral and Curriculum Committee will review the policy every three years.