



# St Oswald's CE Primary School, York



*Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future*

*Let us encourage one another – Hebrews 10.25*

## Religious Education Policy

Last Review Date: September 2023

Next Review Date: September 2026

Suggested Frequency of Review: Every 3 years

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## Statement of Intent

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. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

It is our aim that St Oswald's will be a place where:

- Everyone is valued and all relationships are based on trust, respect, equality and celebration of diversity
- Everyone has opportunities to develop, achieve and contribute in different ways to be the best they can be
- Everyone is encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, for each other and for our world
- Everything we do contributes to children's personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development
- Children are happy and confident and play a valued role in their local community

As a Church of England School, we subscribe to the Church of England's shared ethos statement for all its schools:

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

*The school aims to serve its community by providing an 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 to all its pupils."*

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff.

### 1. Introduction

At St Oswald's CE Primary school, pupils and their families can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We teach according to the York Agreed Syllabus. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Using guidance and drawing from the Understanding Christianity resource alongside following the York Agreed Syllabus, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupils' own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE

curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

The principal aim of RE at St Oswald's is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- 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 of living, believing and thinking.

## **3 Curriculum for Religious Education**

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy\*
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.

- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
  - offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
  - ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs
- \*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.)

#### **4. Curriculum balance and time**

Parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of the RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-2.

##### Time Allocation.

It is recommended that RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two (this reflects 5% see above). The time allocated for teaching RE at St Oswald's Primary School is:

EYFS	Planned within the EYFS Framework with the aim to have the equivalent of 50 minutes per week.
KS1	1 hour per week
KS2	1 hour 15 minutes per week

This time allocation will be enhanced with an RE Curriculum Day every year.

##### Scheme of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written according to the Diocese of York Agreed Syllabus.

EYFS	Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community, and their place within it.
KS1	Christians, Muslims and Jewish People
Lower KS2	Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Jewish People.
Upper KS2	Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jewish People and those with secular views.

#### **5. Teaching and learning**

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with

those of all religions and worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
  - Reading and critically analysing texts.
  - Interpreting information from different sources.
  - Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
  - Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
  - Engaging in pair and group work.
  - Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
  - Experiencing visits and visitors.
  - Taking part in outdoor learning.
  - Taking time for reflection
- Practising how to disagree respectfully

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

## **6. Cross-curricular links**

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with the whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship. At St Oswald's our curriculum has been built around our RE teaching, with topics chosen to reflect RE units of work and their aims.

## **7. Visits and visitors**

We are able to visit places of worship in our local area, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class. Children will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time at our school.

Year 1/2 – St Oswald's Church

Year 3/4 – A local Mandir

Year 5/6 – A local Mosque

## **8. Resources**

We have a wide range of resources, to support our RE teaching, that we continue to develop. Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; posters, digital resources and artefacts. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the SACRE and Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate. A regular audit of resources takes place by the RE subject leader, in order to update our collection.

## **9. Health and Safety**

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

## **10. Matching Work to Pupils' Needs**

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with special needs and differentiation, applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

## **11. Role of the RE subject leader**

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement to religious education.
  - Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
  - Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
  - Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
  - Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
  - Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
  - Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
  - Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
  - Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
  - Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.

- Ensure there is a school protocol; that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

### **12. Staff training and CPD**

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings.

### **13. Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work followed by the school
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Diocese of York RE syllabus
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

### **14. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

We intend that this policy should operate for the next three years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to share an overview of the planning for RE with the subject leader each term. The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice.

### **15. Self-Evaluation**

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review.

### **16. Legal Requirements**

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over). (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28)

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes. We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate



fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the Headteacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them. Provisions will be made within school to account for the parent's right to withdraw their child from RE lessons.

**18. Policy Approval**

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Headteacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff.

Date of validation: .....

Signed: ..... (Chair of Governors)