

'But now are they many members, yet but one body.'

1 Corinthians, 12:20

ST AIDAN'S

Voluntary Controlled
PRIMARY SCHOOL

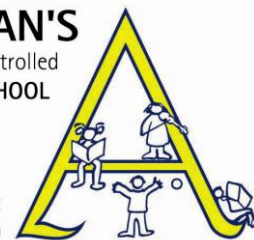
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Religious Education policy

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What is RE?

- 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.

Our Schools' Vision and Bible quote

At St Aidan's VC Primary School, our vision draws inspiration from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, 'but now we are many members, yet one body' (1 Corinthians 12:20)

We cultivate an environment where diverse strengths, cultures and experiences are recognised and valued. We welcome and include every member of the school community. We provide strong foundations that give children and self-belief to thrive academically and grow personally. We work to ensure that each child is nurtured to be ambitious, resilient, resourceful, curious and creative, ready to make full use of the opportunities that life will bring. We prepare children for their life beyond St Aidan's; to look outwards, to contribute to the wider community and to be global citizens-embodiment of the spirit of 'many members, one body'.

Our Values-

Our values bring our vision to life. By living these values every day, we ensure that St Aidan's remains a place where pupils grow into confident and principled individuals ready for the future. Our values are- 'Together, Kind, Strong'

- Community
- Sustainability
- Kindness
- Resilience
- Inclusiveness
- Peace

Statement of Entitlement February 2020-

'Religious education in a Church school 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'.

The Purpose of the Policy:

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching and learning of Religious Education. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all leaders and teaching staff and will be monitored by the RE leader.

We live in a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-faith society and will nurture the respect and understanding of world faiths, world views and cultures within the community in which we live. We will enable all pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of major world religions and their impact on society and culture. We

intend to follow Christ's command to do all that we can in love so that every individual grows in wisdom, builds deep friendship, and practices true forgiveness.

This policy should be read alongside the policies for spirituality, teaching and learning, behaviour, equality and access, and assessment. It is also linked with the teaching of British Values and Citizenship.

The Aims of the Policy:

This policy aims to support children and young people in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values, and attitudes, through an exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in the contemporary world. Our school values of community, sustainability, kindness, resilience, inclusiveness and peace will be developed through an understanding of different world views.

RE is taught as an academic subject.

We do this by: -

- Ensuring that pupils flourish through the provision of high-quality RE, reflecting the Church of England Statement of Entitlement (February 2000).
- Providing learning activities that fully meet the needs of all pupils.
- Helping the pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of religion and faith by providing a safe place to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living, believing, and belonging.
- Furthering pupils' growth and development through the study of beliefs and values of Christianity and other faiths in line with our distinctively Christian vision.
- Contributing towards pupils' experience and understanding of Christianity as a living faith through critical engagement with Biblical text.
- Providing clear guidance for continuity and progression in the teaching of Religious Education throughout the school ensuring that skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and reflection are developed.
- Promoting the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of children across a rich and creative curriculum (see Spirituality policy).
- Valuing the religious background of all members of the school community so that children can share their own experiences with others freely in a safe and respectful environment.
- Valuing the appropriate links that can be made between home, school, and a faith community.
- Introducing pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy, and the human and social sciences. These are understood to mean the following:

Theology: This is about *believing*. It looks at where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

Philosophy: This is about *thinking*. It is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge, and existence.

Human/Social Sciences: This is about *living*. It explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities, and societies.

How is RE taught?

RE is taught through stimulating class discussion, practical activities, group work and individual projects with an emphasis on the exploration of challenging questions which develop the following higher order skills:

- Investigation - questioning, enquiring, acquiring knowledge, describing, naming, vocabulary
- Comprehension – explaining, discussing, understanding, recalling, expressing
- Expression - explaining, articulating, responding, own point of view
- Reflection- thinking, exploring feelings, beliefs, and relationships
- Empathy – understanding feelings, beliefs, and points of view of others
- Application - interpreting, demonstrating, illustrating, dramatising, selecting, identifying similarities and differences (including acknowledging diversity within a world view)
- Analysis- distinguishing between belief and fact, comparing and contrasting, critical questioning
- Synthesis – making links between features of religions
- Evaluation- appraising, formulating arguments, predicting, and assessing

The following strategies should be used in RE lessons.

- Collaborative learning
- Use of artefacts
- Visits and visitors
- Multimedia
 - Cross-curricular links e.g., Role play and drama, Music, Poetry and Dance
- Silence and reflection (a written reflection is made at the end of each lesson in years 1 and above), this is done verbally in the EYFS.
- Adapted activities appropriate for the pupils' knowledge and understanding in RE, not for example their ability to write.

Throughout our teaching there is an emphasis on fairness, respect, commitment, self-worth, curiosity and appreciating the sense of wonder in the world in which we live.

Resources:

A variety of stimulating resources are used in the teaching of RE throughout the school. These include books, artefacts, music, posters, photos, internet, and other multi-media resources. In each room there is an RE area and an RE working wall displaying symbols and artefacts of world religion. Working walls benefit students by providing an interactive and dynamic visual aid for learning that reinforces lessons, supports independent work, and models good practice. They help students, by offering a place to reference key concepts, vocabulary, and examples, which encourages them to become more independent learners and boosts their confidence.

Planning and Assessment:

Our Religious Education is broadly of a Christian nature and teaches aspects of other faiths that are represented in our society. All RE lessons are carefully planned and approached with respect, sensitivity, care, and integrity.

We use the Jigsaw RE scheme (previously known as Discovery RE), which aligns with the locally agreed syllabus (SACRE). Teachers will cover the units allocated to their year group, as laid out in the curriculum map. The curriculum takes an enquiry led approach, asking big questions, with a focus on both substantive and disciplinary knowledge and skills.

In addition to Christianity, the following religions have also been selected for study:

- Islam

- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Humanism

RE is a core-subject and should be given 10%, and no less than 5% of timetabled teaching time. RE teaching is of high priority and lessons are timetabled to take place on the same day, at the same time across the school.

There should be a weekly, age – appropriate RE lesson and in addition to this, opportunities can be identified for a themed approach to RE (RE day/focus week). Rehearsals for Nativity plays and pupil – led acts of collective worship do not count as RE lessons.

The curriculum is challenging and robust, based on an accurate theological framework. Each unit begins with a 'Big Question', which informs all planning and assessment throughout the enquiry led learning journey, each week each session has a weekly question as a focussed learning intention.

Learning and assessment takes place through:

- Dialogue and theological enquiry and through critical engagement with religious text.
- Assessment of children's work by making judgements through observation of children in lessons, marking work against the learning intention and using end of unit assessments.
- Careful planning and adaptations to meet the needs of all students and ensure that lessons are inclusive.
- Assessment, which recognises clear progression of skills throughout a unit and across the year and year groups.
- Critical reflection, allowing children to ask questions and suggest answers.
- The opportunity to use and handle artefacts and resources related to World religions.
- Visits to places of worship or visitors speaking about their faith and worship.

The Role of the RE Leader:

The Leader is responsible for:

- Writing and updating the Religious Education policy in the light of initiatives and change and to monitor the development of the subject throughout the school.
- Evaluating progress and attainment of children across the school. The school has a rigorous monitoring and evaluation schedule, with regular learning walks, book looks and children's voice taking place on a regular basis.
- Guiding and supporting teachers in the planning, delivery, and assessment of this subject.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the planned and delivered curriculum specifically in Religious Education.
- Co-ordinating classroom practices and guidelines across the curriculum and ensuring the development of subject skills.
- Auditing and monitoring resources throughout the school to ensure that there are sufficient, age-appropriate resources for effective teaching and

learning.

- Ensuring that staff are continually aware of new developments in this subject and disseminating any relevant information to other colleagues.
- Ensuring that they are up to date with any changes, attend training in RE allowing them to have secure subject knowledge that enables them to support teachers by providing regular professional development opportunities.

Home/School Community Links:

Effective, sustained contact between home, school and the local community is vital to the development of any child. Families and other adults in the local community can be a valuable source of information and skills that can extend the work of the classroom into the locality.

Our school has strong links with the local clergy. Father Ben comes in weekly to lead our collective worship. The whole school attends church for collective worship for key Christian events throughout the year e.g. Harvest and Christmas. The clergy also support teachers' subject knowledge in RE.

Visits to the local places of worship of different faiths are encouraged so that the children can develop greater understanding of other faiths and cultures, classes make at least one trip to a place of worship a year. Speakers and visitors are also welcomed into our school as a further source of information as appropriate to the development of the Religious Education curriculum, and collective worship theme.

Equal Opportunities

Every child is entitled:

- To a curriculum that reflects and values the life and history of all pupils, especially those represented in the local community.
- Not to feel excluded from R.E. because of gender, culture, religion, or class.
- To participate in active exploratory work, with an increasing degree of planning and self-control.
- To be able to demonstrate what they can do in as wide a range of activities as possible.
- To have equal access to the R.E curriculum through appropriate differentiation and adaptation.

Race, culture and social background

- Teachers recognise that children come to school with many different early experiences and will plan and approach R.E. activities with this in mind.
- Teachers should always value the child's experience, which stems from their home backgrounds and cultures.
- Teachers should be mindful of potential sensitivities.
- Teachers should consider cultural and religious issues when planning Religious Education experiences, e.g., tasting foods.
- Teachers should present positive images of children from different cultures in the resources they use.

Evaluation

The RE curriculum will be evaluated through monitoring by the RE lead of lessons and pupils' books, feedback from teachers and pupils, network meetings of RE leaders and with the LDBS through advisor visits and attendance at relevant network and training sessions.

Withdrawal

It is recognised that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education – in its entirety or in part. Any such request should be made to the Head of School or Executive Head Teacher. The class teacher, in consultation with the Head of School or Executive Head Teacher, will make arrangements for a child to be withdrawn during Religious Education lessons.

Date of policy: January 2026

Policy ratified: *Sarah Maghinney*

Review due: January 2029