



Religions Education Policy

St John's & St Peter's CE Academy

Approved by:

St John's & St Peter's LAB

Date:

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

Review Cycle:

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Mission Statement

St John's and St Peter's CE Academy is a welcoming school family that seeks to serve the Ladywood community by equipping its children and families for success.

By placing God's love in action at the heart of everything we do, we hope to see our children flourish, our culture transformed, and our community thrive.

Through **high-quality education** and an **enriching curriculum**, we will equip every child with the knowledge and skills they need to **overcome challenges** and therefore **achieve their full potential**.

Our hope is that every child at St John's and St Peter's CE Academy can uniquely contribute to the community and make it a place they are proud to call home.

1. The School's Christian vision

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2. Legal position of RE in our school

The 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.

St John's and St Peter's CE Academy is an Academy with a VC heritage therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the guidance for academies in accordance with their funding agreement. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, following advice from the diocese, have decided to adopt the Opening Worlds Religion curriculum.

3. The purpose of religious education

In Religious Education at St John's and St Peter's CE Academy, the aims and objectives of our curriculum are:

- 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 living, believing and thinking.

4. The impact of religious education

A high-quality, engaging Religious Education is vital part in enabling pupils to flourish. Religious Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the moral compass and worldview of our students, and fostering an environment of understanding, tolerance, and respect for diverse beliefs. In Birmingham Diocese, we endeavour to ensure that encounters with the Christian faith are positive for all pupils, regardless of each pupil's own personal faith or background. As with all Church schools, the study of Christianity, focussed on

the teaching of Jesus and the Church, is central. We want our pupils to gain a rich knowledge of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse.

However, we also acknowledge the rich tapestry of cultures and religions within our community, particularly here in Ladywood. As an inclusive community, we study a range of religions and worldviews, fostering respect for the right of all people to hold beliefs.

In accordance with our Christian vision, our Religious Education curriculum places emphasis on the exploration and study of the Christian faith. Through in-depth and detailed teachings, students are guided to explore the core beliefs, rituals, and the history of Christianity, even exploring its roots in Judaism and where it sits now in modern Britain. By engaging with the richness of the Christian faith in greater depth and detail, we hope that students not only deepen their understanding of their own faith but also develop a profound appreciation for the diverse expressions of spirituality within our global community.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Learning about and from religious traditions helps pupils to appreciate which aspects of life have been significant for most of humanity throughout the ages. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding. It also helps to show them what shapes people's behaviour and motivations, and points pupils towards positive models for their own lives.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Multiculturalism and diversity

Recognising and understanding multiculturalism and diversity is a key theme of our RE curriculum, and is particularly important in our inner-city Birmingham context. We take time to study a range of world religions, making links between them and understanding what unites rather than divides. Pupils are taught about multi-cultural Britain in a way that helps them to celebrate diversity and respect complexity. This links to our school values of Contribution and Understanding.

Social injustice

In RE we take the time to hear the voices of the disadvantaged, the marginalised, and the oppressed, as well as understanding how power can work and challenging exploitation and injustice. We also explore attitudes towards the poor and how they are treated in different faith communities. This helps our children to understand the world around them and become agents of change that really believe they can make a difference.

5. RE in our school

Religious Education at St John's and St Peter's CE Academy is an essential part of the school curriculum. It is taught weekly in every class from Reception to Year 6 for at least an hour and is underpinned by a high-quality scheme of work and excellent classroom teaching. We use a variety of approaches to help pupils to begin to develop critical thinking about religious life and teachings, including enquiry based and philosophical approaches such as posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions. Such thinking skills are developed through exploring texts, using stories, and discussion with the teachers and other pupils.

In Reception and KS1, pupils are introduced to the largest world religions (such as Islam), with a larger proportion of time dedicated to Christianity. In KS2 pupils study all six major world religions, again, with a larger proportion of time dedicated to Christianity. The curriculum has been organised in a way that children are deepening their understanding of each faith across their time at primary school. A detailed scheme of work is available on our website.

For more information on our approaches to teaching RE, please see our **Curriculum Intent** and **Curriculum Implementation** documents on our school website at:

<https://www.stjohnsandstpeters.school/page/?title=Religious+Education&pid=56>

LIEP Trips

Where possible, we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities. We partner with the Ladywood Interfaith Education Project, an initiative by St John & St Peter's Parish Church and four local places of worship. These visits are organised by the RE Lead with the support of the Senior Leadership Team. Visits include: A local church, a mosque, a Buddhist temple, and a synagogue.

Resources

We have a wide range of resources to support our RE teaching. Resources are stored in a designated space and should be returned after use. Our school has invested in high-quality texts for the children to use, as well as religious artefacts that can be used in lessons. A regular audit of resources takes place by the RE Lead in order to update our collection.

6. Assessment and recording of RE

Assessment is an integral part of RE teaching, as it determines whether our aims and vision for the pupils are being met. At St John's and St Peter's CE Academy, assessment is guided by two key pieces of research: McCourt's (2019) 'Mastery Model of Education,' and Fletcher-Wood's (2018) model of 'Responsive Teaching.'

At its core, assessment should lead children to learn more effectively. We use a range of assessment strategies to ensure this happens:

Formative assessment:

- Recap and retrieval activities (Do Nows, Say it quickly, Gap fills)
- Show me Boards
- Checks for Understanding
- Cold Calling
- Don't ask one, ask five

Summative assessment:

- Within topic retrieval quizzes
- End of topic retrieval quizzes
- Knowledge Captures

Recording of work

Each pupil (beginning in Year 1) has an RE book which they record their learning in. Feedback is given to the pupils in line with our school Feedback Policy.

For more information on Assessment and Recording in RE, please see our **Curriculum Intent** and **Curriculum Implementation** documents on our school website at:

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7. Monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

With support from the Senior Leadership Team, the subject leader will monitor RE within the school, in line with our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. The subject leader may be asked to contribute to the Church school self-evaluation process.

8. Responsibilities for RE within the school (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing board and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum;
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- all those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD;
- all teaching staff and governors understand the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- the governing board monitors provision and achievement in RE effectively.
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject.

9. The right of withdrawal from RE

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St John's and St Peter's CE Academy.