



**Ashton St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
Diocese of St. Albans**

Religious Education

Ratified in January 2022

Update in January 2023

Our children will be grounded in God's Word. We maintain a Christian family focus aiming to support parents in raising their children as mature Christian citizens, enabling them to handle life's challenges with courage and perseverance. We provide high quality learning preparing children to flourish academically and spiritually fulfilling their God-given potential.

Aims

Our school vision drives our primary aim at Ashton St Peter's which is to create a caring Christian community in which Christian values and beliefs permeate the whole of school life. By nurturing each child as he or she develops physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually within the context of this caring community, we hope to equip them for life in the real world. We aim to nourish those of the faith, to encourage those of other faiths and to challenge those who have no faith. Links with the church and community are vital, providing an ethos which results in a meaningful and unifying sense of purpose.

As a Church aided school, the R.E. curriculum is required by law to be determined by the Governors in accordance with the Trust Deed. This states that religious instruction shall be given in accordance with the doctrines, rites and practices of the Church of England. Although times and society have changed since the formulation of the Trust Deed and the founding of the school, we believe that as an aided school, we should be emphasising the importance and uniqueness of Christianity among other religions, traditions and beliefs.

We recognise that R.E. involves specific learning and the development of particular skills and attitudes. We aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity while also teaching respect for and tolerance of other religious beliefs and practices. We introduce world religions, through other curriculum subjects and faith stories and through our 'Around the World' topic. Children of another faith within our school are encouraged to share their special times if they wish to. In Foundation Stage children are encouraged to value diverse cultures and celebrate a variety of festivals from other faiths. At Key Stage 1 children begin to compare and contrast elements of other faiths with Christianity. At Key Stage 2 children study other faiths in greater depth.

Children learn to reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding.

Objectives

The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to help children:

- Develop their knowledge of the Christian year including features of the various seasons, ceremonies and the importance of saints in the calendar
- Understand the basic structure of the Bible and become familiar with key personalities and stories, especially with the life and teaching of Jesus
- Have the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the features of our local church buildings and of what happens there
- Develop an appreciation of the importance of worship in the lives of people and of the concepts underlying the acts of worship.
- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives.
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition.
- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today.
- Have respect and consideration for other people's views and celebrate the diversity in society, enabling them to be sensitive towards others and form relationships based on love, sympathy and forgiveness.
- Develop investigative and research skills, and make reasoned judgements about religious issues.

The legal position of Religious Education and time allocation

As a Church aided school we are bound by our Trust Deed, but in line with Diocesan guidelines, our school RE curriculum is based on the LA Agreed Syllabus and the National Society document "Excellence and Distinctiveness in RE". Our RE syllabus reflects the fact that we are a Church of England School. We acknowledge that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and recognise the contribution other denominations make within our school and in Dunstable. We take account of the teaching and practices of other major religions.

In line with the LA Agreed Syllabus and the Dearing Report the time allocation for R.E. teaching is:

Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year

Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year

This translates into 50 to 60 minutes of R.E. every week and does not include Collective Worship time. Collective Worship may be used to support R.E. but it is in addition to curriculum time.

Organisation and Management

RE has a high profile within our school and this is reflected in the joint responsibility shared by the Head, and the subject leader. The subject leader is responsible for researching and co-ordinating the subject across the school. This includes recommending resources and teaching strategies, supporting staff in their subject knowledge and continued professional development, and keeping abreast of current developments in the subject. An active link governor had been appointed.

The R.E. curriculum at Ashton St Peter's is planned to meet the three aims of R.E laid out in the RE Agreed Syllabus 2018-2023;

1. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs.

2. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs.
3. Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts and practices and ideas studied

The Rector, Reverend Rachel, members of the Team and ministers from other denominations contribute to RE lessons. Lay people from the congregation also guide pupils round the Priory Church, explaining the history and worship. We maintain links with churches of different denominations within the town. Such firsthand experiences are to be encouraged, so that through meeting and interviewing people, making visits and handling artefacts, pupils will begin to grasp religious ideas and concepts and gain insights into how a living faith affects individual lives.

Equal Opportunities (see separate policy)

Ashton St Peter's School is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all pupils. Religious Education is an entitlement for all pupils, regardless of their own particular belief or lack of belief.

Assessment for Learning

As with other curriculum areas, this is an on-going part of teaching and learning. Within RE we are developing and embedding procedures which have recently been put in place. Assessment procedures are followed linked to our Assessment Policy, and to the levels of attainment for RE in the RE Agreed Syllabus, which we have used along with other guidance, to devise our 'I can' statements. These are at this stage generic with a view to developing them further linked to specific units of study.

'I can' statements are used across the whole school to support children in understanding the next steps in their learning. At some point within each unit of study the teacher will assess children's understanding linked to the 'I can' statements and record progress on the level sheet at the front of their RE book. To promote deeper thinking, questions linked to the learning are posed when work is marked. The children's verbal or written responses provide an indication of their understanding. Guidance is given in order to move children on in their learning. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they or their peers might improve their work in the future.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE subject leader with the Headteacher are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. The RE subject leader meets with teaching staff on a termly basis to evaluate the impact and progress of RE teachings. In line with other curriculum areas, the subject leader presents the Headteacher and Governors, with a termly report and keeps evidence of work. The RE subject leader, and or a member of the senior leadership team, monitors the teaching and learning of RE through classroom observations and feedback to teachers. The RE Working Party meets regularly with the Headteacher and subject leader to monitoring all areas of RE and Collective worship throughout the school.

The Foundation Stage

We teach Religious Education to all children in the school, including those in the Foundation Stage. It is an integral part of the learning covered through themes, during the year and we relate the Religious Education elements to the development matters set out in the Early Years Foundation stage.

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education

Through our values themes and religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required to prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. In general, by

promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (See Policy)

At Ashton St Peter's School we offer an education based on Christian principles. This provides a basis on which pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding to create values by which they may choose to live.

Spiritual development is fundamental to the development of the individual. It seeks to foster curiosity without which there would be no motivation to learn, self understanding and relationships with other people, a sense of awe, wonder and creativity and the search for meaning and purpose in life.

Moral development is concerned with developing a child's ability to distinguish right from wrong following Bible teachings, to make personal choices and to act upon them. We promote positive values including honesty, consideration towards others, respect, self discipline, reliability and helping others. Children are encouraged to reject and reflect upon negative attitudes, which include bullying, deceit, cruelty, dishonesty and irresponsibility.

Through social development we create opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the communities in which they function - family, school and the wider community - thereby helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural, multi-faith society.

Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing; they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

RE and Computing

Computing enhances Religious Education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children may select and analyse information, using the Internet. They are encouraged to extend their work at school by finding more information for homework which they can share or use themselves. They also use computing to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children may use *PowerPoint* to help them make presentations on various topics.

Digital cameras may be used to record some activities and visits. These can be used by individuals for their work, for a class book or for a display. Various websites may be used, particularly for virtual tours of places of worship.

RE and Inclusion

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide 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. Classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation are adapted and altered to provide stimulating and varied approaches that enable all pupils to learn effectively.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in Religious Education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom we carry out risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Visits and Visitors

The whole school regularly attends the Priory Church for half-termly and end of term services. A range of local places of worship are visited by pupils across the school, linked to enriching their learning in RE.

Resources

We store most resources for RE in cupboards in the Resource Room. Some classes may keep resources particular to their age group or units of study. All teaching staff plan and implement RE learning opportunities from a range of resource including 'Understanding Christianity'. We have a selection of Bibles and books, including 'big' books, for pupils and teaching staff. Each class has its own set of age-appropriate Bibles. We are developing our collection of religious artefacts and computing resources. The school library also offers a range of RE topic books. Each classroom has an interactive prayer table where children are encouraged to reflect and worship independently. Children's work is displayed around the school based on religious themes, providing visual aids and reminders to share and support learning.

Right of Withdrawal

Under the 1944 and 1988 Acts, parents have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education or parts of Religious Education. Parents who wish to do so are encouraged to discuss this with the Head Teacher first.

Review Procedures

The School's policy will be reviewed:

- Annually in January 2023
- When the School wishes to review the policy.
- If amendments are required by the LA

Ratified by:

Date: January 2022

Headteacher