



R.E. Policy

Date effective from	1 st October, 2024
Date of next review	October, 2026
Person responsible	Mrs K. Ogden

Mission Statement: St. Stephen's is rooted in Christian faith and committed to excellence: encouraging staff to excel, pupils to flourish, and all to feel secure, valued and loved.

Our Vision:

At St Stephen's, we are inspired by the biblical teaching and example of Jesus Christ being, 'The Light of the World' (John 8:12).

Our school is welcoming and inclusive. We strive to celebrate and nurture everyone to their full potential. We, both children and adults, desire to be **good role models** who inspire others through **a love of learning** and are motivated to make a positive impact on each other's lives. We want this impact to go beyond school, into our community and the world. To be 'lights in the darkness' for, the 'light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it' (John 1:5)

Our school values are:

Good role models – compassion, courage and friendship

A love of learning – wisdom, joy and resilience

Purpose

St. Stephen's Religious Education will 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. Our purpose is to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Central to religious education in Church schools is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. There is a clear expectation that as inclusive communities, we provide sequenced learning about a range of religions and worldviews, fostering respect for others. We will engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience. We explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

Introduction

As a Voluntary Aided School, the management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher. RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed. RE is taught according to the local agreed syllabus.

This policy reflects the school's agreed values and philosophy regarding Religious Education. It illustrates how Religious Education is taught within school and gives guidance on planning and assessment. The policy has been produced after discussion with governors and members of staff and will be reviewed periodically. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023 and the Understanding Christianity resources written by RE Today.

Entitlement

RE in our church school lies at the very heart of the curriculum. RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and must be provided for all. The RE Curriculum in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus (Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus 2023) requires a curriculum allocation of between 5-10% of the available timetable. In view of this, class teachers will work reflectively to allocate the appropriate amount of time across a term. This will usually include a weekly lesson (1hr KS1 or 75mins KS2), day projects and the use of visits/visitors.

The Manchester Diocese syllabus 2023 presents a 50% balance between Christianity and other Religions and Worldviews.

The time allocated to RE in school is independent of time allocated to Collective Worship. Although RE and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich each other Collective Worship is a separate statutory requirement and not covered by this policy.

Aims

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills

needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim and provides the curriculum to ensure that all pupils:

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, practices and ideas studied

This syllabus is designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE. It responds to national calls for deepening pupils' knowledge about religions and for developing their 'religious literacy'. It does this by studying one religion at a time ('systematic' units), and then including 'thematic' units, which build on learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied.

RE and Other Faiths

RE should equip pupils to recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in RE within a Church School. This respect must be based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

Therefore, RE in our school should also help pupils to:

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions
- recognise the common human quest for justice, peace and love and the common goal of the survival of life on this planet.

Pupils study the religious traditions of the following:

4–5s Reception Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.

5–7s Key Stage 1 Christians, Jews and Muslims.

7–11s Key Stage 2 Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews.

Consideration of other religions and nonreligious worldviews can occur at any key stage, as appropriate to the school context.

Contribution of RE to Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Spiritual development within RE in our school enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their "inmost being" and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

Contribution of RE to the Teaching of Other Subjects

Although RE is taught as a discrete subject within our school, it does provide many opportunities for links with other curriculum areas, particularly English, PSHE, History, Geography and the creative arts. RE also has strong links with collective worship.

School Organisation

The school has a Foundation Stage, Years One and Two form Key Stage One and classes Three, Four and Five form Key Stage Two. Across all three key stages Religious Education is taught in classes as a discrete subject.

Assessment/Planning/Record Keeping and Reporting

The Manchester Diocese syllabus 2023 provides the Programmes of Study from which teachers plan their teaching and the objectives against which the pupils' progress can be assessed. Our long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each half term during each key stage, as suggested by the syllabus. The medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each half term.

The class teacher plans for each lesson and using the specific learning objectives for that lesson.

The expectation is that pupils' achievements will be "weighed up" by teachers using criteria arising from the Programmes of Study. Assessment is undertaken on a "lesson by lesson" basis through observation of children at work, discussion and questioning so that any misunderstandings or problems can be identified in the lesson. This assessment is reinforced by the marking of children's work. We track progress of pupils using the unit learning outcomes.

Summative assessment takes place with an end of year judgment and summary of attainment for RE on pupil end of year reports.

Resources

There are a range of texts including children's books, teachers' guides and resource books and general information books stored with the RE Coordinator or within individual classrooms. A variety of religious artefacts, visual resources and posters are also available to all teachers. All resources are audited by the RE subject leader and listed on the RE resource list.

Special Educational Needs Provision

At our school we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of the school 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 progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Our assessments in RE allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

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

Equal Opportunities

It is our aim to offer equal access to the curriculum to all pupils irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability and social circumstances so that each child has the greatest opportunity to progress. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice in equal opportunities. Refer to Equal Opportunities Policy.

Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any school.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by our school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.

If a request for a withdrawal is made, the head-teacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation.

Role of the RE Subject Leader

It is the role of the Religious Education subject leader to:

- Provide support and guidance to all staff
- Organise school based INSET
- Audit, purchase and distribute resources
- Keep abreast of current developments in Religious Education
- Provide an annual subject development plan, with key actions and costings, to contribute to the school development plan.
- Be accountable for standards in RE throughout the school regular monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning.
- Liaise with external personnel.
- Assist staff in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding of Religious Education through relevant resources and an INSET programme.
- Help staff to provide all pupils with teaching and learning experiences which will not only meet the agreed syllabus requirements in Religious Education but will also provide them with learning links in other subjects.