



## RE Policy

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**Owner: St Ann's School Committee**

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*We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:*

*Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children*

*Article 12: All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously.*

*Article 13: Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.*

*Article 14: Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.*

*Article 15: Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.*

*Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.*

*Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.*

*Article 30: Every child has the right to learn and use language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.*

*Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>.

*'...But those who trust in the Lord, they will find new strength.  
They will soar high on wings like eagles...' (Isaiah 40:31)*

*'Together we aim high, with God's love we can fly'*

## **Inclusion Policy Statement**

At St Ann's Church of England Primary School we are committed to overcoming all barriers to learning and raising standards in all aspects of school life.

We aim to promote inclusivity as an integral aspect of our school development, permeating all our policies, in order to increase the learning and participation of all our pupils.

We recognise and value the varied life experiences and needs of our children. Our school is one in which the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of each child matters.

We are committed to ensuring that school practice reflects our inclusive aims by utilising resources both within the school and the Local Community, by responding to diversity and by nurturing an understanding of difference with our staff and children.

The school strives to establish inclusive values by having high expectations for all pupils, by valuing all children and through the sharing of the same philosophy by all staff, governors and parents alike.

## **School Vision & Ethos**

Our Anglican ethos is characterised by our school vision. The distinctly Christian vision for St Ann's Church of England Primary School is *'Together, we aim high; with God's love, we can fly.'* This vision was agreed in 2019 following a series of workshops and gathering the voice of all stakeholders. *'...But those who trust in the Lord, they will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles...'* (Isaiah 40:31) was the inspiration for the vision.

Our theologically rooted vision is contextually appropriate for the community we serve and ensures the school lives up to its foundation as a Church school.

- *'Together'*: Our pupils start at St Ann's from as many as 21 different settings, so one of our first priorities is to create cohesion.
- *'we aim high'*: This refers to our whole community – pupils, parents/ carers, staff and so on. Generally, our pupils enter our school from a good starting point, and therefore, we have high aspirations for them, and we know our most vulnerable pupils will benefit from this. For our staff, our Christian-driven vision demands them to serve our pupils through the provision of a high quality and broad education, shaped by the Christian faith, so that our pupils' gifts are unlocked.
- *'with God's love, we can fly'*: Alongside high ambition and a first class education, it is our belief in God, that enables our community to flourish so that everyone can experience life in all its fullness.

## **Mission Statement for Religious Education**

As a formally voluntary aided church school, we believe that Religious Education has a central role in developing the ethos of our school. We believe that Christian principles are caught as much as taught and we therefore take great care to demonstrate Christian principles at all times. Worship, tolerance, respect for others, concern for the less fortunate, thankfulness and friendship surround each child and we hope that this will prepare each child to go out into God's world with understanding and compassion.

## **Aims**

The aims of RE in Church schools are:

- to enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.

- to enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- to contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

### **RE Statement of Entitlement (The Church of England Education Office 2016)**

We believe that, in addition, RE should help pupils to:

- think theologically and explore the great questions of life and death, meaning and purpose
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post-modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world
- respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition

Being a formally voluntary aided school, the leadership of Religious Education at Rainhill St. Ann's is a distinctive role of the school committee and Headteacher. The Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating standards in RE and for devising action plans for future developments within RE. Religious Education is in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The school committee as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in our school. Although RE and Collective Worship naturally complement and enrich one another we manage them separately at Rainhill St. Ann's (we have a separate policy for Collective Worship).

### **Religious Education Curriculum**

At Rainhill St. Ann's Religious Education lies at the heart of the curriculum.

- We follow the Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE (Questful RE) which reflects the National Framework for RE. This is supplemented by "Understanding Christianity" (Church of England Education) which supports the teaching of Christianity.
- At least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE
- RE is taught as a discrete subject at Key Stages 1 and 2 but is integrated within the Foundation Stage Framework (1 hour a week).
- Christianity plays a central role in RE at Rainhill St. Ann's, taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time available
- Appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is also included (Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism), typically this is through our World Faith Focus Days.

Our RE curriculum maintains a balanced approach of embracing the explicit teaching of Christian concepts and God's big salvation story. It is hoped that the content of the syllabus will give pupils a deeper understanding of Christianity. Through an open investigative enquiry approach the pupils will be given the sense of being on a quest of discovery. A key feature of

the syllabus is the large number of questions included in each unit. The purpose of these questions is to give pupils opportunity to investigate, reflect, evaluate and make meaning. In doing so they will discover more about themselves, their relationships with others, their relationship with the world around them and their relationship with God.

Taught within an environment where Christianity is witnessed and experienced in action, pupils will experience, explore and encounter a wide range of creative and challenging activities that will help them to discover the answers to fundamental questions such as these:

- Who am I and what does it mean to be me?
- In what ways do/can I relate to others?
- How/where can I encounter God?
- What does it mean to have faith?
- How can I make a positive contribution to the world in which I live?
- What values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are important to me?
- Who/what influences and inspires me?

### **Christian Distinctiveness**

As an Anglican church school we provide the following experiences for our pupils:

- encouragement of mutual respect based on Christian values, where pupils and teachers are able to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule.
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the place of doubt and certainty in a maturing faith
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith.
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith.
- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year.
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church and the Anglican Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community.
- welcoming visitors from the local parish and the community to share their experience of Christian belief and life.
- liaise with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur
- support for all pupils
- develop a deeper understanding of Christianity of a world wide faith with a range of denominations to extend children's appreciation and understanding of Worship in all its rich variety.
- confident use of religious language.
- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts.
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence.
- a reflection area in each classroom and several prayer spaces inside and outside school that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection.
- the facility to listen to contemporary and traditional hymns and spiritual songs.
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.

### **Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development**

We believe that Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education.

Spiritual development enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment (see below for more detail).

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.

### **Spiritual Development**

At St Ann's Church of England Primary School, spirituality is understood as our relationships with each other and God (see pupil, parent and staff survey). It is an act of being fully human and discovering and revealing ourselves through love. Having a shared understanding amongst the community means individuals' spirituality can be nurtured. This understanding is explored and experienced during collective worship through our Anglican practices. Most typically this includes through the Bible stories that are re-told (including through song), the stillness, prayers and the personal reflections shared. Providing the time and opportunity for children to relive their stories and reflect on why they are valuable to them, allows the children to express an emotional reaction to their personal experiences. The ability to live the emotion again, in the retelling of a significant moment, provides the means for children to move to the land of the spirit. And at the heart of the vast majority of their stories, is love. This is often revealed through four aspects; awareness of self, their relationship with others, a response to the beauty of the natural world and exploration of the beyond. Asking the questions 'What would Jesus do?' or 'Who would Jesus be?' demands children to consider the nature of our 'being' and the values and virtues we are living out. A moment of stillness makes space for just 'being,' for noticing and encourages everyone to be present to the self, to others, to the world and to the divine.

Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum in the following ways:

- Daily act of collective worship designed to nurture everyone's spiritual development through story, song, prayer, reflection, symbols, natural objects
- Regular Worship through Song led by Church choir director
- Half termly pupil led collective worship
- Weekly RE lessons which offer an opportunity for reflection
- Half termly church services
- KS2 Communion services
- Y5 & 6 Confirmation classes
- Spontaneous prayer or action in response to personal, local, national and global events e.g. sending cards to the library, get well messages to pupils who are in hospital
- Regular writing of prayers which are displayed as an outward expression of our love e.g. war in Ukraine, death of Queen Elizabeth II
- Prayer spaces in every classroom and other central places
- Awe and wonder moments throughout the curriculum e.g. Literature shared during English lessons, PSHE lessons promoting mindfulness or use of debate, Natural Disasters Geography unit in Y6, growth in Science, study of visual arts in Art & Design
- Opportunity to visit 14 external places that nurture pupils' cultural development through our Cultural Offer
- Focus Weeks, including Stand Up Speak Up week (see IQ5 for further detail)
- Shared experiences e.g. Jubilee family picnic, STAR day – charity fund raising day (see IQ5 for further detail), making Christingles
- Outdoor learning e.g. in woodland

- Celebrations e.g. talent show, Worship through Praise, school production, birthday cards from school, texts/ emails of praise

### **Diversity**

At Rainhill St. Ann's, we believe that Religious Education 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 at Rainhill St. Ann's, we 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.
- to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule.
- have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.
- to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- 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.

### **SEND Provision**

Being an inclusive school, we make RE lessons accessible to all pupils regardless of their ability. Work is differentiated in a variety of ways. All pupils are encouraged to participate within Religious Education whether this is through the media of story, art, music, drama, dance or ICT.

### **Assessment.**

*Assessment for Learning* is in evidence in all Religious Education lessons. Lessons have clear learning objectives and learning outcomes and these are made very clear to the children at the start of each lesson. Throughout the lessons there are opportunities for questioning, reflection, peer and self-assessment.

Ongoing assessment of pupils' work is carried out to gauge pupils' knowledge and understanding. Assessments are recorded and analysed and show at which stage children are working at:

- working towards the expected standard,
- working at the expected standard or
- working within the expected standard but at greater depth

### **Parental Rights of Withdrawal from Religious Education Lessons**

'The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England or Methodist Church Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England or Methodist Church 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.'