

Swainby and Potto Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Mission Statement for Swainby and Potto Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Small School, Big Family

As a Church of `England Voluntary Aided Primary School, we hold the Christian values of hope, wisdom, peace, justice, friendship and trust at the heart of everything we do. We will equip all of our school family members with the skills and attributes necessary to fulfil their potential in the wider world. Through our engaging curriculum and high standards and expectations, underpinned by our Christian foundation, we strive to enable our young people to be creative problem solvers, connected with, and having reverence for, the outdoors and the environment. It is our mission to make learning irresistible for all.

*“...studying RE can give children and young people tools with which to examine beliefs, attitudes and values that mould us and guide us in life.”
(Archbishop of York 2013)*

Rationale

A commitment to high quality, transformative religious education in Church schools is a core part of a school’s Christian distinctiveness. RE is an academic subject but also provides opportunity for children to understand what it means to be a religious believer in the world today and to encounter the values of the Christian community of the school that they are a part of. RE in the Church school should support children to recognise and act on the insights, principles, beliefs, attitude and values that should influence inspire or guide them in life.’ York Diocesan Syllabus 2012)

At Swainby and Potto Church of England (Aided) Primary School, religious education is taught in accordance with the York Diocesan Syllabus for RE.

Religious education is part of the basic curriculum and is an **entitlement** for all registered pupils on the school roll including Reception children. The purpose of religious education is to enable children to learn about religions and beliefs (AT1) and to learn from religions and beliefs. (AT2)

AT1 Learning about religions and beliefs

Developing knowledge and understanding of religions: Enquiring into, investigating and building knowledge of religions and beliefs. This includes investigating, thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

AT2 Learning from religions and beliefs

Developing investigative, reasoning and evaluation skills: Questioning, exploring, reflecting upon, interpreting and justifying ideas about human experience in the light of religions and beliefs studied. This includes communicating reflections, responses and personal and critical evaluations about questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific religions studied.

Enquiry in RE

RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience.

An enquiry process makes sense of the learning cycle that these attainment targets envisage: pupils should raise questions, gather information, and develop knowledge and understanding (AT1). They should engage with the religious material they study for themselves, enquiring into and reflecting on questions for themselves. They should respond in increasingly insightful ways (AT2)

Aim

In the diocese of York, religious education should help pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and Expression of truth
- Develop their own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and belief
- Encounter Christianity as the religion that shapes British culture and Heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- Learn about the other principal religions of Britain their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the life of their adherents
(York Diocesan Syllabus (2012))

RE and Entitlement in Church of England Schools

In the Diocese of York, pupils are entitled to RE which enables these outcomes at the end of their primary education. Pupils are able to:

- Explore ultimate questions, including religious and spiritual questions, for themselves;
- Respond sensitively to the idea of life as a journey and think about how their journey is going;
- Understand the core of Christian beliefs, identifying what impact belief may have
- Explore the meaning and application of some sacred texts, including teaching and stories from the Bible, moving towards their own understandings and interpretations

- Respond to teaching about Christian visions of life simply for themselves
- Recognise and describe some examples of the variety of ways of living in different Christian communities
- Begin to respond sensitively to Christian ideas and visions for themselves
- Show understanding of and respect for the different religions and beliefs in Britain
- Describe and explain similarity and difference in aspects of belief and practice in religions studied
- Engage with life as a search for truth

Distinctiveness

To ensure that pupils make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the Anglican tradition, religious education at Swainby and Potto Primary School will include opportunities to:

- Explore the experience of the Church's year;
- Study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs;
- Visit places of worship, especially the local parish Church and York Minster, to develop the understanding of the church as a living community;
- Welcome visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life;
- Learn about and from the life, teaching and example of Jesus Christ through the gospels
- Explore and discover Christianity nationally and globally and to recognise and learn from diversity within Christianity
- See the Christian faith in the context of religious diversity, learning about and from other major religions and beliefs in the UK
- Face the challenges of diversity with respect

Objectives

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the early years, children's learning in religious education sits very firmly within the areas of personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world. Learning will enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others and to learn how to form positive and respectful relationships. Children will begin to understand and value the differences of individuals and groups within their own immediate community. This will include an exploration of Christian values. Children will also have opportunity to develop their emerging spiritual, moral and cultural awareness.

By the end of the Foundation Stage children will have opportunities to:

- Explore some features of religions and beliefs e.g. special times, special objects.

- Access first - hand opportunities to experience artefacts stories and visitors
- Ask their own questions
- Develop the ability to respond to structured opportunities for quiet reflection and to express their ideas through play, art, music and other media

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1 children can use play, curiosity and teamwork to explore what matters to them and to learn to value them. They will be able to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and develop a sense of belonging.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils will have opportunities to learn about and from Christianity, the Anglican tradition and Judaism to.

- Ask increasingly perceptive and relevant questions
- Talk about beliefs in God and express their own ideas simply
- Begin to undertake their own independent investigations.
- Relate their learning to their experience, finding parallels between features of religion and belief and their own lives
- Begin to explain the role, which stories and practices play in the lives of believers
- Encounter and respond to a range of Bible stories, the example of Jesus Christ, some Christian artefacts and other religious materials
- Engage imaginatively with resources
- Begin to evaluate different aspects of religion e.g. family, celebrations and worship
- Develop a framework of understanding within which to locate their learning in religious education

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, religious education offers opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and be broad minded and open hearted in their encounters with faith. By the end of Key Stage 2, through their learning about and from Christianity, the Anglican tradition, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism pupils will have opportunities to:

- Learn to recognise the impact of Christianity, locally, nationally and globally, connecting up different aspects of religion and life
- Learn about the Bible alongside other sacred texts and consider their meanings Extend their ability to undertake sustained independent enquiries into religions and beliefs
- Find out about similarities and differences between Christianity and other religions and beliefs
- Use key words and concepts of the subject, such as ‘belief’ or ‘myth’ to develop their own questioning and enquiry

- Use higher order thinking skills such as investigation, interpretation, analysis and evaluation
- Investigate specific examples of religious belief and practice and relate these to their own ideas
- Recognise diversity in religion and belief, evaluating different points of view sensitively and thinking about respect for all
- Handle ideas and arguments about matters to do with belief and practice with increasing confidence

Teaching and Learning

In a Church of England aided primary school the importance of religious education in a church school should be reflected in high achievement as an outcome of effective teaching and learning

Effective teaching and learning in RE is characterised by:

- Clear understanding, on the part of governors, teachers and pupils, about the underlying purpose of RE
- Imaginative use of challenging and evocative resources to stimulate the pupils' imagination and encourage them to explore their personal responses
- Sustained learning, linked to work in other areas of the curriculum, notably English, art, drama and music
- Careful use of creative activities that support and enhance the central focus of learning in RE rather than detract from it
- Effective use of teachers' subject knowledge to ensure a staged development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding
- A high expectation about pupils' ability to use the skills of enquiry

Managing the RE Curriculum

In Voluntary Aided schools the management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors in association with the headteacher. Responsibility for the provision of RE lies with the governors, in accordance with the school's trust deed.. At Swainby and Potto, the Chair of Governors, headteacher and Key Stage 2 teacher have oversight of the RE curriculum. They operate as a faculty, which meets half termly to review progress and to ensure that the needs of the subject are fully met

Time allocation

In line with national expectations, RE should receive 5% of curriculum time. In order to provide more than the minimum entitlement and in recognition of the subject's core status, pupils at Swainby and Potto are provided with additional learning opportunities through blocked units of teaching about and from Christianity

Teachers are encouraged to explore a variety of patterns of delivery for example, special RE days or themed weeks which allow for more **sustained** learning and stronger links with other areas of the curriculum

Planning and Assessment.

The principles of good planning apply to RE as much as to any other subject in the curriculum. Planning for RE should ensure all pupils have a high quality, coherent and progressive experience of the subject.

In planning RE, teachers will consider the following three things:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- How will we organise the learning?
- How will we measure success?

Two Types of Assessment

In making assessment of pupils' work it is important to distinguish between:

- Assessment *for* Learning
- Assessment *of* Learning.

Assessment *for* learning involves the use of classroom assessment to *improve learning*
Assessment *of* learning simply measures what learners know or can do.

Assessment and National Expectations in RE

The two Attainment Targets for RE set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of the key stage. The key indicators of attainment in RE are contained in three strands for each Attainment Target as follows:

Attainment Target 1: Learning about religions and beliefs

- Knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources;
- Knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles;
- Knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning.

Attainment Target 2: Learning from religion and beliefs

- Skills of asking and responding to questions of identity, diversity and belonging;
- Skills of asking and responding to questions of meaning, purpose and truth;
- Skills of asking and responding to questions of values and aims;

The Attainment Targets consist of 8 Level Descriptors of increasing difficulty. Each Level Description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate.

The Level Descriptors provide the basis to make judgments about pupils' performance at the end of each key stage. The non-statutory national framework for religious education (2004) was designed to help improve the consistency and effectiveness of assessment in RE nationally and incorporated the national levels of expectation. The levels have since been translated into Pupil-speak 'can do' levels. (For reference a copy of these are attached to this policy)

The contribution of RE to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

'While RE is often a subject that is a key driver in providing opportunities for SMSC development, it is of course a whole school and cross curricular responsibility that will lie at the heart of successful practice in the Church school. In the Church school RE leads this area in the same way the English curriculum leads on literacy skills. (York Diocesan Syllabus 2013)

Spiritual development

Spiritual development within RE in a church school enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Moral development

Moral development in RE in a church school 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

Social development in RE in a church school develops 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

Cultural development in RE in a church school 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.¹

¹ For more detailed information on examples of the kind of outcomes which Church schools may want from their SMSC development work see York Diocesan Syllabus pgs 19 – 31

Equal opportunities

The school believes that it is important for **all children** to have access to opportunities for spiritual development and awareness and for understanding of religions and beliefs. Structured learning objectives are designed to support the less able and to extend the more able in ways, which are sensitive to issues relating to personal belief and practice, cultural beliefs and lifestyles.

Reporting to parents.

Religious education is included in the annual report to parents.

Monitoring the RE curriculum

Religious Education is a specific remit of the school's Distinctiveness Committee, which reports to the full governing Body. Religious Education is included in the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation procedures supported by the National Society's self-evaluation model document.

Date for review: 2016

	AT1 Learning about religion How pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:			AT2 Learning from religion How pupils, in the light of their learning about religion, express their responses and insights with regard to questions and issues about:		
Level	beliefs, teachings and sources	practices and ways of life	forms of expression	identity and belonging	meaning, purpose and truth	values and commitments
	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can
1	remember a Christian (Hindu, etc.) story and talk about it	use the right names for things that are special to Buddhists (Jews, etc)	recognise religious art, symbols and words and talk about them	talk about things that happen to me	talk about what I find interesting or puzzling	talk about what is important to me and to other people
	e.g. talk about the story of Diwali	e.g. say "That is a Church", or "She's praying" when my teacher shows me a picture	e.g. say "That is a Star of David" when my teacher shows me a picture	e.g. talk about how I felt when my baby brother was born	e.g. say "I like the bit when Krishna helped his friend"	e.g. talk about how I felt when I gave a present to my friend and how I think that made my friend feel
2	tell a Christian (Sikh, etc.) story and say some things that people believe	talk about some of the things that are the same for different religious people	say what some Christian (Muslim, etc) symbols stand for and say what some of the art (music, etc) is about	ask about what happens to others with respect for their feelings	talk about some things in stories that make people ask questions	talk about what is important to me and to others with respect for their feelings
	e.g. tell the story of the birth of Jesus say that Christians believe in God	e.g. say that Christians and Sikhs both have holy books	e.g. say that the cross reminds Christians that Jesus died on a cross; e.g. say that some people dance, sing, recite for God	e.g. say "Was Jonah hurt after being inside the big fish?"	e.g. say "It was mysterious when God spoke to Moses"	e.g. say "I agree with the rule about not stealing as stealing is not fair"
3	describe what a believer might learn from a religious story	describe some of the things that are the same and different for religious people	use religious words to describe some of the different ways in which people show their beliefs	compare some of the things that influence me with those that influence other people	ask important questions about life and compare my ideas with those of other people	link things that are important to me and other people with the way I think and behave
	e.g. make a connection between the story of the forming of the Khalsa and the need for Sikhs to be brave in times of trouble	e.g. note how Muslims and Sikhs both treat their holy books with respect by keeping them higher than other books e.g note that Muslims and Christians both pray but in different ways	e.g. label a picture of Shiva Nataraja to show links with Hindu beliefs about God	e.g. talk about how Jesus influenced his disciples and how friends influence them	e.g. ask why many people believe in life after death, give their view and compare with a particular religious view	e.g. talk about how listening to a story about generosity might make them behave when they hear about people who are suffering

Level	beliefs, teachings and sources	practices and ways of life	forms of expression	identity and belonging	meaning, purpose and truth	values and commitments
	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can
4	make links between the beliefs (teachings, sources, etc.) of different religious groups and show how they are connected to believers' lives	use the right religious words to describe and compare what practices and experiences may be involved in belonging to different religious groups	express religious beliefs (ideas, feelings, etc) in a range of styles and words used by believers and suggest what they mean	ask questions about who we are and where we belong, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired and influenced myself and others	ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and suggest a range of answers which might be given by me as well as members of different religious groups or individuals	ask questions about the moral decisions I and other people make, and suggest what might happen as a result of different decisions, including those made with reference to religious beliefs / values
	e.g. make links between Qur'anic and Biblical sources and Muslim and Jewish charities e.g. connect some sayings of Jesus with different Christian beliefs about animals	e.g. use some Pali or Sanskrit terms in describing two different Buddhist types of meditation e.g. compare the way that Hindus and Buddhists might meditate	e.g. draw and label the key features inside two churches, indicating their meaning for those who worship there	e.g. write an imaginary interview with a member of a minority religious community, referring to the beliefs which sustain them	e.g. write some questions about life after death and provide answers that refer to resurrection and reincarnation	e.g. write a report about the environment and suggest what might happen depending on different moral choices that could be made
5	suggest reasons for the similar and different beliefs which people hold, and explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to important questions about life and morality	describe why people belong to religions and explain how similarities and differences within and between religions can make a difference to the lives of individuals and communities	use a wide religious vocabulary in suggesting reasons for the similarities and differences in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression found within and between religions	give my own and others' views on questions about who we are and where we belong and on the challenges of belonging to a religion and explain what inspires and influences me	ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life and suggest answers which relate to the search for truth and my own and others' lives	ask questions about things that are important to me and to other people and suggest answers which relate to my own and others' lives
	e.g. compare different Jewish beliefs about the Messiah and say how different interpretations may come about, using biblical and other texts to illustrate their answers	e.g. write an account of Hajj which explains why many Shi'a Muslims will go on to visit the tomb of Ali because they believe that he was the rightful successor to the Prophet Muhammad	e.g. produce a survey of different forms of creative religious expression and suggestions for similarities and differences between them	e.g. write a 'question and answer' style report on what it may like to be a member of a religious community in Britain today and outline what impresses them about this religious identity and community	e.g. write a short story which raises questions about what is 'true' and which relates to their own personal search for meaning in life	e.g. write a report on a moral issue in the news, interviewing key people in the debate and including religious views and the potential impact of those views on their own and others' lives

