



The Diocese of Coventry
Multi Academy Trust

Religious Education POLICY

St John's C of E Academy

Updated:

March 2025

Review date:

March 2027

Policy review and changes noted 2023:

-No changes made

Policy review and changes noted 2025:

-Updated the name 'Coventry and Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus 2024 – 2029'.

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

VISION

To be an excellent school, embedded in Christian values that develops children into confident, happy citizens and provides a platform to flourish in local, global and Christian communities, both today and in the future

MISSION STATEMENT

We will provide high quality teaching, learning and reflection from the teachings and values of Christianity to serve our community and beyond.

Matthew 5:16

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.”

PUPIL MOTTO

I will shine!

God has made each of us unique. Each of us is made in God’s image; each of us is “fearfully and wonderfully made”; this belief forms the bedrock of our community’s identity. We want to honour each child’s uniqueness and help them to aspire not to be like someone else, but to be the best they can be. We live this out through our Behaviour Policy which encourages mutual respect and celebrates good and caring behaviour, always trying our best. We acknowledge that we all make mistakes, which are forgiven, starting afresh each day. We encourage children to have time to reflect through the creation of a safe and caring environment. We affirm each child’s God-given value and help them to flourish, On leaving our school we hope each child will be equipped with the tools for later life; to fully realise their potential in whatever gifts God has given them, and to have the strength to persevere when facing challenges.

I will shine. We will shine as, together, we grow in wisdom, learning from the teachings of Jesus, to serve our community.

Matthew 5:14

SUMMARY

The school ethos is built on a foundation of a warm and friendly atmosphere with strong Christian values. We provide an atmosphere of trust so that children and adults feel safe in all they do. Worship is at the heart of our school. We hold fast to our Christian values and believe that everyone is special in God’s sight. At the center of our school lies an education of depth and quality in a Christian environment. We ensure children grow in the love of God.

Religious Education in a Church School Context

In recognition of our distinctive context, religious education has a high profile, we emphasise:

- a wide range of Christian resources including the Understanding Christianity resource and various artefacts,
- a close link with the local churches, including St Christopher's, New Horizons, and Allesley Park Evangelical Church and Coventry City Mission
- a Christian ethos which permeates the whole curriculum, but is explored in more depth through explicit Religious Education lessons,
- the Christian foundation of the school diversity within Christianity and in other faiths and world views.

1. Aims

Religious education should help pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other major world religions and value systems found in Britain,
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures,
- be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life,
- have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in society,

AT1 – Learning about Religions

This includes:

- identifying, naming, describing and giving accounts in order to build up a coherent picture of each religion,
- explaining the meaning of religious language, stories and symbolism,
- explaining similarities and differences between and within religions.

AT2 – Learning from Religion

This includes:

- giving an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues,
- reflecting on what might be learnt from religion in the light of one's own beliefs and experience,
- identifying and responding to questions of meaning within religion.

2. The legal position of religious education

2.1 Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done after discussion with the Headteacher and when the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on Coventry and Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus 2024-2029 and it meets all the requirements set out in that

document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions. Parents/ carers receive an annual written report of their child's progress in RE.

Curriculum balance and time

We are mindful of the guidance in 'Religious Education in Church of England Schools – A Statement of Entitlement' (2016): *Christianity should be the majority study of RE in every school. In Church schools that should be clearly adhered to.*

- Christianity will form at least two thirds of the RE curriculum in KS1 and KS2
- Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives. (This is separate from and different to time spent in Collective Worship).

3. Teaching and learning style

3.1 We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions.

3.2 Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups. Understanding Christianity encourages an enquiry-based approach.

We recognise that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- deploying classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

4. Curriculum planning in Religious Education

4.1 We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Coventry Agreed Syllabus 2024-2029. We have high expectations of achievement for pupils in RE and ensure that the topics studied include challenge and build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage.

4.3 The class teacher plans for each lesson including consideration for specific learning objectives.

5. Foundation Stage

In Reception class we follow Understanding Christianity and also family customs and routines celebrating the major Christian festivals and other world faith celebrations.

6. Key Stage 1

The Year 1 curriculum focuses on building the basic building blocks of the Christian faith concentrating on the major characters of the Bible through Bible stories. The Year 2 curriculum builds upon the foundations laid in Year 1 and introduces children to other world faiths.

7. Key stage 2

The Key Stage 2 curriculum begins to explore deeper questions of faith drawing on Christian and other world faiths to find perspectives about ultimate questions.

8. Assessment and record keeping

8.1 We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. In line with our marking policy, teachers use questions to develop children's reflection. This is then reviewed at the end of the year against their end of year target.

9. Monitoring

9.1 Children's learning in RE is monitored regularly by the Subject Leader in line with the school monitoring plan, through monitoring planning, observing lessons and evaluating outcomes (see Action Plan)

9.2 The named governor responsible for RE meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

9.3 RE is also specifically assessed through the Diocese of Coventry (SIAMS) under Section 48 of the Education Act

10. Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

10.1 English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. Understanding Christianity requires a high level of Biblical Literacy and this is developed through a variety of age-appropriate Bibles used in each class. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

10.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet.. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

10.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development

We aim to promote children's SMS and C development in all areas of the curriculum but recognize that stimulating and engaging RE allows for greater reflection. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the spiritual and cultural context of their own lives.

11. The role of the subject leaders

The role of the R.E subject leader is:

- To co-ordinate the teaching of R.E within the school
- To monitor the use of the policy and scheme of work.
- To ensure continuity and progression of the teaching and learning of R.E across the key stages and the school.
- To order and maintain resources.
- To manage the R.E budget
- Regularly access professional development provided by the Diocese or other valid source (eg C of E Foundation for Educational Leadership)
- To make staff aware of changes / thinking in R.E
- To liaise with religious leaders in the local community
- To monitor planning
- To scrutinise work
- To carry out discussions with pupils
- To lead on RE days.

12. Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store where there is a separate box of equipment and a collection of religious artefacts for each religion. Each class has their own prayer and reflection area and a bible in the classroom.