



Sandford St. Martin's
P R I M A R Y S C H O O L

Religious Education Policy 2023-25

Our mission statement: Learn Love Laugh

Safeguarding

If there are any Safeguarding issues that arise from the implementation of this policy, then they should be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding policy. Any safeguarding concerns should be referred directly to the School by telephone or in person for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead along with any concerns relating to the Prevent Strategy.

Equality

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Equality Policy. The general equality duty requires that, in the exercise of their functions, schools must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This school endeavours to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for all.

Our Vision for our School:

To be secure, happy and helpful; believing anything is possible with hard work, faith and dedication. We dare to dream for ourselves and make a difference for others.

Our Mission Statement:

Learn Love Laugh

"And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them together in perfect unity." *Colossians 3 v14*

The legal position of Religious Education (RE)

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'. Sandford St Martin's Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Dorset entitled Understanding Christianity as well as other material including and Discovery RE from the Board of Education, Diocese of Salisbury. This encourages children to ask and answer big questions in R.E.

Aims for teaching Religious Education

At Sandford St Martin's Primary School, we aim that Religious Education will:-

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, oneself, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development;
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious) in the light of what they learn as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives;
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society;
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs. This helps to challenge prejudice;
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. This encourages empathy, generosity and compassion;
- **aim to develop a sense of awe and wonder.**

RE makes the following contributions to other curriculum aims

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Teaching in RE aims to challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about ethnicity, race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights. Pupils are encouraged, through reflecting on the school values, to foster the practices of reconciliation and forgiveness. All pupils regardless of background or ability are able to flourish. The idea that we are one family and all care for each other is at the heart of this.

Our approaches to teaching RE

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. In our CE VA Primary School, it is a Core Subject and held in high regard. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning using the Discovery R.E and Understanding Christianity schemes of work taking into account the need to offer breadth of content.

In order to make RE a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

RE Curriculum plan

To fulfil our obligations as a Church School, we teach two-thirds Christianity and one-third another major world religion in each year group. We teach R.E to all children in school including those in the Reception Class. Class teachers take the responsibility for the teaching of R.E. KS1 allocate 1 hour a week to RE teaching and learning and KS2 allocate 1hr 15mins per week.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus we have agreed that:

- At Key Stage One pupils study Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- At Key Stage Two pupils study:
 - Christianity and Hinduism in Year 3
 - Christianity and Judaism in Year 4
 - Christianity and Islam in Year 5
 - Christianity, Hinduism and Islam in Year 6

RE is taught as a discrete subject across the school in either weekly sessions or blocked days throughout the year. This flexibility we feel produces the best learning for children as they can fully focus on the elements we are teaching and produce quality outcomes for all during a dedicated learning time. RE work is recorded in a separate RE book.

Long term planning maps out the RE topics for each year group and is based on key questions. This work is completed by the RE leaders. Teachers use the Understanding Christianity and Discovery RE resources to produce their short-term planning in RE, which is supported and guided by detailed progression documents created by the RE leads in the school.

Assessment and Recording of RE

Teachers are expected to mark RE in line with the school's Marking Policy and with the same rigour as they would use when marking other core subjects.

Throughout every unit of RE, teachers use their own judgements to adapt any plans and support or challenge the pupils. The Key Questions in the Syllabus form the basis for the teacher assessments.

The teacher will vary the method of assessment according to the needs and abilities of the individual pupil. From this assessment, the class teacher determines whether a child is working below age related expectation (emerging), at age related expectation (expected), or at greater depth (exceeding). It assists in tracking pupil progress and ensuring that pupils are achieving at least in line with other core subjects. Records of assessments are recorded on the school tracking system with RE objectives.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The RE Subject Leaders and Headteacher will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment information, lesson observations, scrutiny of work and planning and child interviews. The Subject leads are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE and for sharing current developments in the subject. This also includes monitoring and ordering resources to ensure there are sufficient materials to teach all the units in the RE curriculum. The Subject Leaders are

responsible for contributing to the Church school self-evaluation process to ensure the effectiveness of RE within the school (Strand 6 and Strand 7 of SIAMS Self Evaluation Form from Sept 2023)

Responsibilities for RE within our school

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and Head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress;
- there is sufficient dedicated weekly curriculum time given to RE; at least 75 mins in KS2 and 1 hour in KS1.

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Sandford St Martin's Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering withdrawal of their child from RE to contact the Head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of RE at Sandford St Martin's Primary School.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents

or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.

- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.



SANDFORD ST MARTIN'S CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy	
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