



**St. Mark's C of E Primary School  
RE Policy**

<b>Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2025</b>
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2026</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>

## St. Mark's C of E Primary School RE Policy

### Vision

*'Everyone welcomed. Everyone included. Everyone belongs.'*

#### **"But I came to give life - life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)**

At St Mark's CE Primary School, we strive to bring all together as one loving family. Through strong relationships, we offer a sense of belonging by nurturing all to flourish as unique and responsible children of God.

### Christian Values

At St. Mark's C of E Primary School, we offer a distinctly Christian education in an inclusive environment where we encourage all children and young people to learn, enquire and grow. The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in everything that we do. Our Christian Values are explicitly taught in collective worship and referred to throughout the school day.

As a community, we have identified five values that are woven into the very fabric of the school, which we expect all members of the school community – children, staff, governors and clergy – to model: Our school values are compassion, trust, justice, courage and respect.

We believe these values are empowering our pupils to develop their spirituality and guiding them in personal development as effective learners and good citizens. Children have regular opportunities to reflect on each value and to develop an understanding of the value in action.

Religious education 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. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

### Introduction

At St. Mark's C of E Primary school, pupils and their families can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. We teach according to the Durham and Newcastle Diocese Syllabus. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is an important part of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the religion and world views studied.

### Intent for RE / Aims and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence of Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

### Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects. This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy\* *\*Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief. ([Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.](#))*
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

### Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-2.

### Allocation of Time

Throughout the school year we aim to seek a balance between all subject areas. As a Church aided School at least 50% of R.E. teaching time is to be devoted to Christianity. The Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus suggests studying two world faiths per phase, aspects of other faiths will be brought into the teaching of R.E through thematic units. It is recommended that RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two.

The time allocated for teaching RE at St. Mark's C of E Primary School is:

EYFS	Planned within the EYFS Framework
KS1	60 minutes a week
KS2	75 minutes a week

### Scheme of Work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in accordance with the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Agreed Syllabus.

EYFS	Themes emerging from the EYFS Framework
KS1	Christianity, Islam and Judaism as stand-alone topics and then thematic units which look at the way these religions are similar or differ from each other.
Lower KS2	Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism as stand-alone topics and then thematic units which look at these religions and those from KS1.
Upper KS2	Christianity, Islam and Judaism as stand-alone topics and then thematic units which look at these religions and a range of those from LKS2 and KS1.

## Teaching and learning style

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. The curriculum provides fully for the needs of all pupils, engaging and challenging them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures. Our RE curriculum introduces pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. The curriculum provides opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Pupils experience opportunities to learn by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about 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. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

## RE and inclusion

We live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society and encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We intend to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another so that all may be included, regardless of race & culture. We believe that all children irrespective of race, ability and gender should have equal access to the RE curriculum. Children with special educational needs will work on the same content but there will be differentiation in accordance with the Inclusion policy.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Learning through Religious Education plays a significant contribution to the children's spiritual development. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions what is right and wrong. Children learn how society has changed and develop skills to become good citizens. They study their own rich cultural heritage and developing an understanding of how this culture is enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today, based on British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## Cross-Curricular Links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

## Impact

### Assessment for learning

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. We do this formatively during the lessons, and also by ongoing assessment and quizzing to evaluate what the children have learned. Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and inform future planning. The RE teacher assesses the children's progress based on their achievement of the learning objectives in lessons. All written work is produced, it is marked in line with the school policy on marking.

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work such as Understanding Christianity. Diocese of York September 2023
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Newcastle and Durham Diocese Agreed Syllabus
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the disciplinary knowledge and skills which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

### Monitoring and review

We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all other subjects that we teach in the school. The RE Subject leader monitors planning and delivery on a termly basis and findings are shared with SLT and teachers. The Head Teacher and Subject Leader also reports to the LAB on the progress of children in RE like any other core subject. The LAB's standard committee has the responsibility of monitoring the success of our teaching of RE.

### Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over). (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28)

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. We ask that and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.