

St. John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Ratification Date:	January 2024	Headteacher: Chair of Governors:	Carolyn Wilkinson Jean Watson
Review Date:	January 2025	Headteacher: Chair of Governors:	

School Vision:

St John's Gosport Church of England Primary School endeavours to provide a happy, safe, caring community rooted in Christian values; where everyone is valued and grows to their full potential.

John 10:10 – I came so that they may have life – life in all its fullness

Mission Statement:

At St John's Gosport Church of England Primary School we aim to achieve our vision by providing a broad balanced curriculum and learning experiences that develop our children in body, mind and spirit; setting high standards for all, confident that we can achieve success. Thus ensuring that when our children leave us they are independent learners, who are well equipped to be responsible citizens of the future and reach their potential.

Safeguarding at St John's C of E Primary School is carried out in line with the statutory guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' published by the Department for Education

Policy for Religious Education (RE)

The 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum and that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.' Religious Education encompasses non-religious world views.

Introduction

As a school we are committed to providing high-quality religious education (RE) through a curriculum that inspires our children, is accessible to all and is firmly rooted in the teachings of Jesus. We strive to enable our children to thrive and succeed, through reaching their academic potential and developing their sense of identity, belonging, purpose and faith.

RE is central to the purpose of St John's Church of England Primary School because as a church school, we see that the Christian faith informs all aspects of our life together.

RE in St John's Church of England Primary School explores how individuals and communities make meaning and sense of their lives through exploring some of the major religions of the world as well as non-religious world views. It enables pupils to know about, understand and respond to the important and ultimate questions of life. RE is taught in such a way that it inspires pupils to explore, develop and affirm their own faith and values and have respect for the faith, beliefs and values of others. It is not the practice of this school to preach to, or seek to convert children.

The Church of England Education Office publish a 'Statement of Entitlement' for RE which has been considered in the formation of this policy.

At this school, RE supports and strengthens the vision, ethos and values which are at the heart of what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. The importance placed on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Aims of Religious Education

Specifically, RE aims to enable pupils of all abilities and stages of development to:

1. Develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian beliefs and practices so that they understand the importance of the Bible, the role of the church and recognise that for Christians their faith provides a way of interpreting life and its meaning.
2. Develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of some of the other principal religions and non-religious world views in Britain.
3. Understand how belief impacts on culture, relationships, values and lifestyle.
4. Understand how belief can be expressed in a variety of ways including art, dance, music, ritual celebration and in different cultural settings.
5. Develop spiritually, morally, culturally and socially by helping them to reflect upon personal feelings, responses and relationships.
6. Explore ways in which religious values and teaching have an impact on actions and decisions for people of faith.
7. Be supported in their own search for meaning and purpose in life.
8. Develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.

9. Develop attitudes of respect, sensitivity, open mindedness and self-esteem.

Legal Framework

St John's Church of England Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, therefore RE is the responsibility of the governors and 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, to adopt elements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE 'Living Difference IV' and supplement this with the Understanding Christianity resource to ensure that two thirds of the curriculum time is spent on Christianity.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons, but as RE is central to the life and identity of St John's Church of England Primary School, we would ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

Teaching and Learning

1. RE planning at St John's Church of England Primary School, follows the Living Difference cycle of enquiry (communicate, apply, inquire, contextualise and evaluate) which is based around a concept. During each unit of work, children will be given the opportunity to think as theologians, social scientists and philosophers.

2. There are clear learning outcomes for all units of work, based on the appropriate expectations as set out in the RE syllabus Living Difference IV.

3. The RE curriculum ensures that there is continuity and progression for pupils.

4. A range of teaching and learning activities ensure that pupils learn effectively and with interest.

5. Attainment in RE forms part of the pupils' annual report to parents.

6. RE is taught as a discrete subject.

7. A range of visitors are invited to support the teaching of RE, and where possible, there are planned visits to places of worship.

8. In this school the faiths taught in RE at KS1 are Christianity and Sikhi, at LKS2 Christianity and Judaism and at UKS2, Christianity and Islam as well as the non-religious world view Humanism.

9. RE is prioritised within the organisation of the curriculum. It is taught weekly except when it is appropriate to block it for example a religious festival. This allows the children to be fully immersed in each enquiry. RE is taught for 6 hours per half term in KS1 (36 hours per year) and 7.5 hours per half term in KS2 (45 hours per year).

Approaches to Teaching RE

High quality knowledge rich, learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning using the locally agreed syllabus Living Difference IV and Understanding Christianity materials.

RE is delivered in ways that make it a lively, active subject by employing a variety of teaching methods; including technology, art, music, discussion, the development of metacognitive skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible pupils should have opportunities to encounter members of local faith communities through visits to places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

Assessment and Monitoring of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and monitoring, learning intentions for each lesson are shared with the pupils. Tasks are set which are linked to the learning intentions. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the development of their knowledge and skills to enable them to assess their own progress in RE and to understand how to improve their RE work. Teachers are responsible for the regular assessment of pupils in their class through evaluating their responses to the tasks set and in response to this, ensure that the learning is appropriately challenging.

Each half term, teachers assess against part of the cycle of enquiry, as agreed with the RE lead, and record which pupils are achieving, above, at or below their age-related expectations. The data provided is used by the subject leader to track pupil progress throughout the school and reflect and act on the impact of the RE teaching and learning in the school. Monitoring and Evaluation of RE Standards of teaching and learning are regularly completed as part of the agreed cycle. Governors are involved in determining the monitoring cycle and participate in it. This includes the usual methods of lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice and analysis of assessment data.

Reporting to parents

On an annual basis, the school reports to parents on achievement in RE based on teacher judgement. The RE lead plays a vital role in monitoring RE within the school and is responsible for providing evidence of how RE contributes to the life of the school as part of the SIAMS self-evaluation process.

Subject Leadership

1. The RE subject leader supports and monitors the subject.
2. The RE subject leader ensures that his/her subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by means of regular training
3. The RE subject leader ensures that staff receive adequate training in the teaching and assessment of RE.
4. The RE subject leader regularly monitors the quality of RE teaching across the school.
5. The RE subject leader liaises with the governor who holds responsibility for RE and reports regularly to the governing body on progress and attainment in RE.
6. The RE subject leader and head teacher ensure that the principles set out the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement for RE are implemented.

Resources

There are boxes of resources for each of the major world faiths in the resources area. There are a wide range of books relating to Christianity, other world religions and non-religious world views in the school library and the resources area. The RE lead has NATRE membership and access to the Understanding Christianity website and resources. The Portsmouth Diocesan Educational Advisor provides additional resources.

The contribution that RE makes to School Self Evaluation

RE makes a significant contribution to the SIAMS inspection schedule, across many of the seven strands as well as having its own strand as a Church of England aided school.

The contribution of RE to other curriculum aims:

The school's Christian values

RE contributes to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values of Love, Courage and Respect. Making connections between the values and learning in RE brings about greater understanding of these values, where they come from and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

SMSC 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 are 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.

RE at St John's Church of England Primary School plays a key role in helping our children to develop a moral strength and spiritual depth and prepares them for living a fulfilled life in a society that is marked by rapid change.