

ST. MICHAEL'S C.E. (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL



Religious Education Policy – Policy Guidance

Religious Education in a Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

Mission statement

We will prepare the children at St. Michael's school for life, by giving them the opportunity to fulfil their potential within a happy caring Christian environment, where every individual is valued. Teaching, especially learning, is at the heart of this happy caring Christian Community.

Each member of our school community is committed to:

- high standards for all
- meeting the needs of pupils as unique individuals
- Teamwork, each stakeholder using their gifts and talents to build up the community as a whole.
- Ongoing staff development and learning
- Improve

We believe in offering as many enriching educational and life experiences for our pupils in order to develop their social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.

"I have come that everyone may have life and have it to the full" John 10.10

Although Religious Education and Collective worship complement each other, we see them as distinctive parts of the school day.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

St Michael's School maintains close links with St Michael's church and each Monday, where Parish commitments allow, the Priest in Charge leads Worship. Assemblies of Collective Worship happen daily, and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the Head and staff lead. Themes are diverse and relate to Seasonal Events, Charities, World Issues, Christian Values and Stories from the Bible and other religions.

Religious Education lies at the heart of our curriculum. We have RE and theme days, but each week the children receive one hour RE (5%) of the curriculum. Christianity plays a central role in RE taking up between two thirds to three quarters of the time. We include a focus on other religions in the Spring Term.

It is essential that the religious curriculum maintains a balanced approach between Learning about Religion – Attainment Target One and Learning from Religion - Attainment Target Two.

Learning about Religion

We learn about:

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, His action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals Himself ultimately in Jesus his son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals Himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

Learning from Religion

We learn from:

- An empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- Responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- Example of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Religious Education in Church Schools should help pupils to:

- Reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- Reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- See how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- Understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- Develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- Recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- Begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- Develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- Experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- Engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- Become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- Find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- Understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition

It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of the other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths.

Therefore RE in Church Schools should also help pupils to:

- Learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- Recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- Recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- Enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- Enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

Religious Education Curriculum in our Church School offers:

- Opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year;
- Study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs;
- Visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church and a Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the church as a living community;
- Welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life;
- Liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur;
- Skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions;
- Set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts;
- The facility to listen to Christian 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions;
- Access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence;
- A sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection;

Religious Education in our Church School should enable:

- Pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule or criticism;
- Pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- Pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- Pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- Pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- Pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development:

Spiritual development within RE in a Church School enriches and encouraged the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Moral development 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 enriches 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 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.

(Reference to SEN provision Resources Assessment and record keeping)

Parental Rights of Withdrawal

'The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life the school.'

If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

Attitudes in Religion

At St Michael's it is vital that religious education encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. The following four attitudes are essential for good learning in Religious Education.

- Self Awareness
- Respect for all
- Open mindedness
- Appreciation and Wonder.

See detailed explanation of these attitudes in the Skills and Attitudes Chapter of the RE syllabus.

Pupils learning about the content of RE takes place alongside the development of their skills.

- Investigation
- Expression
- Interpretation
- Reflection
- Empathetic Skills
- Application
- Discernment
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

At St Michael's Religion plays a significant part of promoting citizenship, and PHSE.

We have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board's syllabus as recommended by Manchester Diocese July 2015.

R.E. Co-Ordinator / Head



Renewed date: ...Nov 2016

Formally Approved by the Full Governing Body November 2016.