



YOUR WORD IS A LAMP FOR MY FEET, A LIGHT ON MY PATH.
PSALM 119 VERSE 105

Religious Education Policy

May 2019

**‘Secure in Faith, Learning
Together’**

St Thomas's Primary School R.E. Policy

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. The character of the school is Anglican and all the children are taught Religious Education in the Christian tradition, to give them the experience and understanding of the Christian Church and its associated beliefs as required. They are also introduced to the beliefs and values of other principal world religions represented in this country, in order to gain insight and tolerance of other faiths, as required by the Trust Deed of the school and the 1996 and 1998 Education Acts.

Our Mission Statement is: - 'Secure in faith. Learning together'

The aim of the school is to ensure the moral, spiritual, physical, social and emotional development of each child in a caring atmosphere that recognises and values the Christian foundations and ethos of our school. The children will experience Christian life and worship through the strong and harmonious links between School and Church.

We believe every child is made in God's image, is freely loved by God, and should be freely loved by the church school. Every child has a God given right to become a member of the church family. They should be encouraged to grow in knowledge and understanding of God and to develop a relationship with Him.

Aims and Objectives

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on

society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.

- To develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious.
- To become active global citizens and courageous advocates serving their neighbours.
- To understand how a religious faith can help during difficult times.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values. (RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016)

Teaching and Learning

RE is of the highest standard and we always strive for excellence reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

RE is at the heart of our curriculum and we follow the Blackburn Diocese Syllabus Questful RE which is endorsed by the Liverpool Diocese. We base our teaching and learning style on the key principle that good teaching in R.E allows children to both learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious concepts and ideas mean to them. We want our children to be informed, confident and questful.

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 R.E curriculum.

All children in school have one hour per week of R.E teaching in their classrooms following the Liverpool Diocese recommendations. The Diocesan Syllabus is implemented as

prescribed and includes activities chosen from the suggestions included in each unit plan. It is supported and enhanced by the national Understanding Christianity resource. Other faiths are covered through the diocesan syllabus and are further referenced as deemed appropriate by the class teachers and in Collective Worship. School has adopted Heartsmart to further enrich the curriculum. This is a resource to enrich our delivery of PSHE and SMSC and its aim is to build resilience, strengthen emotional intelligence and develop active empathy in the hearts of our children. Fundamentally it is about loving and accepting ourselves as well as loving and responding well to others. Differentiation is part of the planning process as are assessment opportunities and activities. Children work in a variety of ways depending on the purpose of the work involved. They may work individually, in pairs, groups or as a whole class to fulfil the curriculum objectives. They will always be encouraged to respect and appreciate the contribution made by others.

Aspects of the syllabus are linked with other curriculum areas eg: English, History, Geography, Art, Drama, Music and P.S.H.E. & Citizenship and as such active learning techniques such as art, role play, dance and music may be appropriate ways to enhance the teaching and learning of RE.

Resources

We have a variety of Christian and World Faith resources in school including books, artefacts, Godly Play and ICT resources that can be used for R.E teaching and learning. Quality books as recommended within the syllabus are stored centrally and are accessible to all. Members of St Thomas' Church regularly visit different classes in school to support our teaching of R.E

As Religion cannot be set apart from life and regarded solely as a 'school subject' being inherent in everything we say or do, both the explicit and implicit aspects of R. E. are seen as

important, the latter being reflected in the whole school ethos. (This policy should be read alongside our PSHE policy and SMSC and British Values statements). We provide opportunities for celebration, sharing, prayer and reflection.

The outcome of observations and assessments are reported to parents on the Annual School Report.

Early Years Foundation Stage.

We teach Religious Education to all the children in school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage this builds upon the children's first hand experiences. The activities planned relate to those suggested in the Diocesan syllabus with reference to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Visits to Church

The children visit St Thomas's church to learn about people, signs, symbols, furniture, etc inside and outside of the church as part of the curriculum. We visit church for Harvest and our annual Carol Service and also for parish and community projects like Try Praying. Whenever possible Year One visit Liverpool Cathedral as part of their work on Advent and Year Six also attend the Leavers' Service. We use a variety of interactive resources to research and experience buildings from a variety of other faiths.

Visitors including those of other faiths assist with the teaching of Religious Education and Collective Worship. Clergy in charge lead worship weekly and help with other aspects of R.E. teaching. Other members of the congregation of St. Thomas' also come into school, or accompany the children on visits to church, to pass on their expertise and knowledge.

R.E. and inclusion

The Religious Education curriculum is accessible to all pupils and we adhere to the guidance from Valuing All God's Children. Teachers are required to set high expectations for every child ensuring work sufficiently stretches all children-including those children who are working above the expected standard. In addition, work is planned at an appropriate level for those children who are working below expectations or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are no barriers to progress and attainment. Our school provides a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value. (Church of England 2017). The teaching opportunities for children for whom English is an additional language help develop their grasp of English and aim for children to access all subjects. Children are encouraged to debate issues as well as encouraged to develop high level questioning skills in order to steer their own learning.

Equality Duty (2010) and Valuing all God's Children (2017)

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps promote equality at this school.

Resources

The majority of resources for Religious Education are kept in the cupboard outside the Y2 classroom, including reference books, Bible Stories and a collection of religious artefacts. There are also Bible stories and other RE books available in the school library. A range of Bibles are kept on the bookshelf in the hall. Godly Play resources are kept in the cupboard outside

Y3. Resources to support worship, including music are kept in the cupboard in the hall. Spending on new books and resources to teach all the units is reviewed each year and appropriate new resources are added out of the allocated budget for R.E.

Health and Safety

The need to take the appropriate precautions concerning hygiene and allergies should be considered when preparing and/or tasting food linked to religious festivals

Any visit out of school must have an appropriate risk assessment form completed prior to the visit taking place. (See the relevant policies).

Assessment and Monitoring

The Headteacher and Deputy who is the R.E. subject leader are responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. Whole school moderation ensures consistency in assessment and progression.

By using the syllabus provided by the diocese, we hope we provide continuity and progression for the children across all aspects of RE and across key stages.

Teachers review children's progress informally during all lessons and more formally when reviewing the evidence gathered over a unit of work. Assessment and recording sheets provided by the diocese are completed by teachers after every unit of work and then passed to the RE co-ordinator who monitors progress and attainment throughout school. Children considered to be working beyond year group expectations are moderated by the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.

Evidence of the work done in RE can be found in the children's individual RE books, floorbooks, worship reflection books and wall displays and further evidenced in the ways children and adults treat and respect each other. Throughout the year

lessons are observed, pupils interviewed and floor books and RE books scrutinised.

There is a section on the school report for RE.

Staff Development

Relevant INSET is provided by the Headteacher, subject leader and others (including the diocese) to ensure the curriculum remains relevant and staff are supported in their teaching of RE.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at a suitable outcome.

May 2019

Review date July 2020