

# St John & St James Church of England Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Document Information			
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## **VISION & AIMS OF THE SCHOOL**

'I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full'.

John 10 verse 10

Our vision is to create an inclusive community of aspirational learners, children, families and colleagues, working collaboratively and respectfully within a happy, nurturing environment where all flourish and achieve. Pupils are given extensive opportunities through an exciting and engaging curriculum, through which our Christian values are woven.

**Christian Values-** Respect; Community; Forgiveness; Thankfulness; Peace; Perseverance

### **Introduction-**

St John and St James Church of England Primary school is an inclusive primary school situated in Enfield close to the border with Haringay. This policy is intended to assist staff and pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of Religious Education (RE) and is set within the Church of England's Vision for Education, The Church of England's Entitlement for Religious Education and the school's vision and associated Christian values.

As a Church of England school, we aim to provide a happy nurturing environment which will enable all pupils to flourish and achieve. Through religious education we aim to develop an understanding and knowledge of Christianity, whilst developing knowledge and respect for other faiths and world views. We promote an attitude of mutual respect and responsibility alongside a recognition of the importance of strong links between home, school and the local community.

### **What is RE-**

RE is a core and academic subject at St John and St James. We use an enquiry based curriculum based around big questions that enable pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other World faiths and world views. RE provides all pupils with the opportunity to ask deeper questions and to begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

Our RE curriculum covers theology (what people believe), philosophy (what people think) and human and social science (how people live). Children have the opportunity to explore their curiosity and deeper their understanding of themselves and others.

## **INTENT**

- 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 contribute to the development of pupils own spiritual/philosophical convictions exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.
- To understand and respect the beliefs and religions of those of all faiths and none.

The RE syllabus offers pupils the:

- opportunity to be critical thinkers.
- opportunity to ask deep and meaningful questions.
- opportunity to make connections within and across religions and worldviews.
- opportunity to reflect, respond, and express their own opinions and beliefs.
- opportunity to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldview belief systems, values and practices.

## **Legal Requirements-**

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education or Collective Worship. We would however hope, in the light of our induction process and home school agreement, that this will not be necessary as parents who have specifically chosen our school will wish their children to fully participate in Religious Education and Collective Worship. Parents who wish to withdraw their child must provide written notification to this effect. Arrangements will be made for any child withdrawn and suitable supervision provided for them.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Our approach to the teaching of Religious Education at St John and St James.**

RE is a core subject at St John and St James, given equal status with other National Curriculum subjects. Our approach to teaching RE is based on our vision of children living 'Life in all its fullness' so our exciting and engaging curriculum encourages children to consider challenging questions of the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

The Governors of St John and St James have adopted the LDBS' RE Syllabus as the curriculum for the teaching of RE.

Teachers use the LDBS units of learning and adapt them so that lessons are tailored to meet the needs of all children. The LDBS syllabus is designed to have content that is two thirds Christian and one third other major world faiths.

### **The syllabus offers units of learning that**

- Are rooted in theological concepts, strong subject knowledge and content.
- Promote critical engagement with Biblical and sacred texts.
- Offer challenge and an in depth exploration of religion/belief and practices.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop empathy towards people of similar or different religions or worldviews to their own.

- Show progression of learning both in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills across the primary age range.

#### **To ensure the teaching of RE supports and enhances**

- The Christian vision of our school.
- Contributes significantly to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural developments of our pupils.
- Takes note of the Religious Education Church of England Schools-Statement of Entitlement.

#### **Within every unit, the sequence of learning is as follows**

- **Enquire**-Engage with the big and subsidiary questions which focus on theology.
- **Investigate/Explore**-What is the religious content and context being explored? How deep can we go? This 'explore' stage of the enquiry is where pupils will be primarily learning about religion and belief. In order for this to be effective the following strategies are used:
  - Interpreting and analysing sacred texts.
  - Using challenging and controversial questions.
  - Extended pieces of writing.
  - Discussions which continually ask 'Have we gone deep enough yet?'
  - Pupils engage with authentic religious believers eg face to face, via videos, podcasts, skype etc
  - Grapple with complex theological concepts , questions and issues.
- **Evaluate, Communicate**- What is our understanding of the concept? What impact does the concept have on the lives of believers? What difference does this belief /practice make? The aim of this part of the enquiry is to encourage dialogue about the learning. Children use skills of analysis and evaluation. The focus is on the impact of belief or practice on the religious or belief community being studied.
- **Reflect on/Express**-What is our understanding and response to the enquiry question when considered from the perspective of the faith and belief traditions that have been encountered? What is our personal response? It is always based on knowledge and understanding, not values or SMSC development.

#### **Access to the curriculum**

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating RE curriculum that builds on the differing experiences pupils bring. All children have equal access to the whole RE curriculum and are given opportunities to develop their skills, understand new concepts and develop understanding and knowledge. Some children may need support to access text or communicate their ideas, differentiated resources will ensure children are able to overcome these barriers to access a full and meaningful curriculum. All children are treated with equal respect, worth and value regardless of race, colour, background, gender, sexuality, learning need or learning ability.

#### **Time allocation-**

RE is taught weekly in every year group and is clear on all timetables EYFS for 45 mins, KS1 and KS2 for 1 hour each week. Additional time is given to RE through RE days, visits and visitors, work on the 'All about Jesus' books which go with the children as they move through the school, and cross curricular sessions linked to Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

#### **Environment and resources**

At St John and St James we aim to provide an exciting and engaging RE curriculum. As part of each unit, teachers ensure there is a balance between learning about religion and learning from religion. Evidence of learning is captured through a variety of means, including written work, pictures, photos, poetry, and other forms of recording.

RE is taught through stimulating classroom discussions, practical activities, group work, and individual work with an emphasis on the exploration of challenging questions which develop the following higher order skills:

Investigation - questioning, enquiring, acquiring knowledge, describing, naming, vocabulary

Comprehension - explaining, discussing, understanding, recalling, expressing.

Expression - explaining, articulating, responding, own point of view

Reflection - thinking, exploring, feelings, beliefs and relationships.

Empathy - understanding feelings, beliefs, and points of view of others.

Application - interpreting, demonstrating, illustrating, dramatising, selecting, identifying similarities and differences.

Analysis - distinguishing between belief and fact, comparing and contrasting, critical questioning.

Synthesis- making links between features of religions

Evaluation - appraising, formulating arguments, predicting and assessing

The following strategies are used in RE lessons

Collaborative learning

Use of artefacts

Visits and visitors

Multimedia

Cross-curricular links eg role play, drama, music, poetry and dance

Silence and reflection

Differentiated activities appropriate for the pupils knowledge and understanding in RE

A variety of stimulating resources are used in the teaching of RE across the school. These include books, artefacts, music, photos, internet, and other multimedia resources. Visits to the local church are a regular feature of the school year as well as to other Christian churches and other places of worship.

Throughout our teaching there is an emphasis on respect, a sense of community, forgiveness, thankfulness, peace and perseverance.

## **IMPACT**

### **Planning monitoring and assessment**

Each year group works from the long term plan which follows the LDBS suggested model plan. Teachers use the LDBS units of learning and adapt them so that lessons are tailored to the needs of the specific cohort.

At the beginning of every new unit the children have a title page to refer to which contains the 'big questions' and relevant vocabulary. Classroom displays show the 'big questions', children's questions, vocabulary and some examples of what the children have been learning.

### **Monitoring standards and Quality of teaching and learning**

Standards and achievement in RE are monitored by the RE leader and Senior Leadership Team to ensure there is coverage and progression through learning walks, lesson observations, sampling of books and discussions with staff and pupils. Books are marked in line with the schools marking policy.

RE books are monitored 3 times a year and feedback given to individual teachers. The RE leader is available to give support and advice to staff.

### **Assessment and reporting**

Children receive feedback from teachers in line with the schools marking policy and next step questions provide opportunities for children to reflect and deepen their understanding.

Teachers use the LDBS assessment questions to monitor pupils' progress in RE which is then added to the school's data management system.

The RE leader tracks progress of vulnerable children in case studies, as they move up through the school.

### **Parents and Carers-**

As a school, we recognise that a partnership with parents and carers is essential to help our children flourish. Parents and carers are kept informed and are encouraged to discuss their child's learning through parent consultation evenings. Progress in RE is also shared on children's annual reports. The long term plan, progression of skills and curriculum overview are published on our website for parents. Children are encouraged to discuss and share their RE learning at home.

### **Leadership and Management of RE**

It is the responsibility of the RE lead:

- To keep up to date with developments in RE, attending all LDBS training sessions and forming links with other Church of England schools.
- To monitor and evaluate the planning and teaching of RE across the school in collaboration with SLT.
- To support staff in the teaching of RE across the school through team planning, teaching and moderation.
- To offer advice about resources and manage the resources in school.
- To lead the review of policies and the impact of the LDBS syllabus on raising standards in RE.
- To plan and lead INSET to build on curriculum knowledge and pedagogy of effective RE teaching.
- To work closely with the schools SLT to identify training needs of individuals, teams and the whole school.