



## **Policy for Religious Education – 2014**

### **Ethos Statement (from the Instrument of Governance)**

**“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes the Christian and moral values of love, honesty, forgiveness and respect through the experience it offers to all its pupils.”**

### **Mission Statement**

**“To strive for respect, enjoyment and excellence.”**

### **Values**

“Our school is a Christian school which welcomes children of all faiths from families who share our belief in a nurturing and supportive education. We are committed to:

- ✓ Helping all the children in our care to maximise their potential and develop a love of learning;
- ✓ Building a caring and conscientious school community where children, families and staff feel valued and respected;
- ✓ Equipping all children with the skills for life which will enable them to grow into confident and successful adults, ready to make a positive contribution to life in a multi-cultural society;
- ✓ Ensuring all children are happy, healthy, safe and secure;
- ✓ Encouraging families and the local community to work in partnership with the school to achieve success;
- ✓ Providing all children with the lasting benefits of new experiences in order to broaden their horizons and teach them how to face challenges;
- ✓ Helping all children to develop values and beliefs whilst appreciating and richness and diversity of a multi-cultural society;
- ✓ Celebrating every success.

Our ethos statement, mission statement and values underpin all teaching and learning in our school, including RE, as well as our approach to social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.

We believe that:

“The principal aim of RE in church schools is to aid pupils on their spiritual journey. This will be effected first through offering pupils a firm grounding in the principles and practices of Christianity, especially as represented by the Church of England. In recognition of the society in which all children are growing up, pupils should also be offered the opportunity to explore other faiths represented in Britain today.” (Syllabus for RE: Manchester Diocesan Board of Education).

“Religious Education is a unique and important element in children’s learning. It leads both to the development and understanding of one’s own position and beliefs, as well as an appreciation of the beliefs of others. Through Religious Education pupils can be encouraged to reflect upon those aspects of human life and the natural world which raise questions of the ultimate meaning and purpose and to recognise the spiritual dimension of experience.”

(The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education: Salford LA)

### Religious Education at St Andrew’s

We believe that RE should have an important place within other core and foundation subjects in order to promote the development of the whole child.

Learning about and from religion enriches and extends the understanding of pupils about the world in which they live. Religion is an aspect of life which has reality for the majority of people in the world today, in the past and in all cultures. All pupils should have the opportunity to explore the nature of religion in such a way that their views are based on sound knowledge and thoughtful reflection.

### **The Aims of RE at St Andrew’s**

Through RE pupils will be encouraged to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Humanism.
- Appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and conduct.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues.
- Develop respect for other people and their right to hold different beliefs in a society of diverse beliefs.
- Develop a sensitive and critical interest in the spiritual dimension of life.
- Investigate religious traditions, beliefs and practices.
- Reflect upon experiences and mysteries of life.
- Recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief.

- Develop an awareness of their own identity and worth.
- Appreciate their own cultural identity and worth.
- Be aware of what it is to have religious commitment.
- Understand the importance and influence of religion on societies and cultures.
- Observe, explore and discover from first hand experience and from a variety of sources.
- Express their own responses imaginatively and in a variety of ways.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted in all aspects of school life and across the whole curriculum. However, RE has a particular contribution to make to these aspects of education through subject content, learning experiences, resources and styles of teaching. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them.
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience.
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Pupils' spiritual development is fostered through for example:

- Visits to places of worship, including a church, a mosque, a synagogue and the Manchester Buddhist Centre.
- Prayer and reflection time in acts of collective worship.
- Music

Cultural development arises directly from encountering the six major world faiths and their views on the arts and music. The use of paintings, music, art and artefacts in RE teaching gives pupils the opportunity to experience and engage with a variety of cultural expressions and contexts. Culture encompasses language, beliefs, attitudes, customs, knowledge, skills, ideas, wealth and poverty.

Cultural development is an integral part of the multicultural education which pervades the whole of the life of St Andrew's school because of its multicultural mix. Our school promotes the development of positive and caring attitudes to people of all communities.

### Collective Worship at St Andrew's

A separate policy for Collective Worship is available.

## **RE and SEN**

All pupils are presented with the opportunity to experience success and enjoyment in RE regardless of gender, ability or race.

### **Planning**

The RE content is clearly identified in teacher planning. Lesson plans and ideas may be drawn from the Salford agreed syllabus. Medium term planning identifies broad coverage and general learning objectives based upon the agreed syllabus which has been designed to provide breadth and balance, continuity and progression.

### **Attitudes in RE**

Attitudes such as respect, care and concern are promoted through all areas of school life. There are some attitudes that are fundamental to RE because they are important for entering fully into the study of religions and learning from that experience. These attitudes are as follows:

#### *Commitment – this includes:*

- Understanding the importance of commitment to a set of beliefs or value by which to live one's life.
- Willingness to develop a positive approach to life.
- The ability to learn about and from other faiths whilst maintaining one's own beliefs and practices.

#### *Respect – this includes:*

- Respecting those who have different beliefs and customs from one's own.
- Recognising the rights of others to hold their own views.
- Avoiding the use of ridicule.
- Discerning what is worthy of respect.
- Appreciating that people's religious convictions are often deeply held.
- Recognising the needs and concerns of others.

#### *Fairness – this includes:*

- Listening to the views of others without prejudice.
- Careful consideration of other views.
- Willingness to consider evidence and argument.
- Readiness to look beyond surface impressions.

#### *Self-understanding – this includes:*

- Developing a mature sense of self-worth and value.
- Discerning the personal relevance of religious questions.

#### *Enquiry – this includes:*

- Curiosity and a desire to seek the truth.
- An ability to recognise ambiguities and paradox.
- The desire to search for the meaning of life.
- Being prepared to recognise bias and prejudice in oneself.
- Willingness to value insight, imagination and rationality as ways of perceiving reality.

### **Skills and processes in religious education**

The following skills are central to religious education, and should be reflected in attainment targets and in learning opportunities:

*Investigating – this includes:*

- Asking relevant questions.
- Using different types of sources as a way of gathering information.
- Identifying the various elements which contribute to an understanding of religious beliefs and practices.

*Interpreting – this includes:*

- Drawing meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism.
- Understanding religious terminology.
- Interpreting religious language.
- Understanding how people of different faiths derive meaning from their own religious texts.

*Reflecting – this includes:*

- Reflecting on feelings, relationships, experience, ultimate questions, beliefs and practices.

*Empathising – this includes:*

- Recognising in others feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow.
- Considering the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others.
- Seeing the world through the eyes of others, and seeing issues from their point of view.

*Evaluating – this includes:*

- Using belief, evidence and argument to debate issues of religious significance.
- Assessing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience.

*Analysing – this includes:*

- Distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact
- Distinguishing the significant features of different religions

*Synthesising – this includes:*

- Where applicable, linking significant features of religions together in a coherent pattern.

*Applying – this includes:*

- Applying knowledge and understanding of religions to the interactions between religion, the individual, the community, the nation and international life.
- Identifying the interplay between key religious values and values in a secular society.

*Expressing – this includes:*

- Explaining concepts, rituals and practices
- Articulating matters of deep conviction and concern
- Responding to religious issues through a variety of media

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

RE teaching has two attainment targets. The first of these is *Learning about Religions*, which includes the ability to:

- Develop a coherent picture of each religion by identifying, naming and describing its important features.
- Explain the meaning of religious language, story and symbolism.
- Explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

The second of these is *Learning from Religion*, which includes the ability to:

- Give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues.
- Reflect on what might be learnt from religions in the light of one's own beliefs and experience.
- Identify and respond to questions of meaning within religions.

## **Level descriptors for RE**

### **Learning about religions**

Children can:

#### **Level 1**

- Recall elements of stories which include some religious beliefs/ideas.
- Recognise selected features of religious practice.
- Recognise different forms of religious expression.

### Level 2

- Demonstrate factual knowledge of some religious beliefs/ideas.
- Demonstrate factual knowledge of some religious practices.
- Begin to identify messages and meanings behind examples of religious expression.

### Level 3

- Explain meanings contained in a religious story that might be given to believers.
- Describe how some of the key features of religions are used in festivals and practices.
- Make simple links between examples of religious expression and the belief, ideas and feelings which underline them.

### Level 4

- Identify the principal beliefs, ideas and teachings of the religions studied.
- Describe the significance to believers of key features of religious life and practice.
- Show how religious beliefs, ideas and feelings can be expressed in a variety of forms, explaining any symbolism.

### Level 5

- Compare and contrast some religious beliefs, ideas and teachings and identify those shared by different religions.
- Compare and contrast selected features of religious life and practice.
- Compare and contrast some of the ways in which believers express their principal beliefs, ideas and teachings.

## **Learning from religions**

Pupils can:

### Level 1

- Identify aspects of their own experience and feelings.
- Respond to things which they find interesting or puzzling in the light of their own experiences and thoughts.
- Identify what is of value and concern to themselves, giving a reason.

### Level 2

- Identify aspects of others' experiences and feelings including religious aspects.
- Identify some experiences which cause people to wonder and question including questions which are difficult to answer.
- Identify what is of value and concern to others including those with a faith commitment, suggesting reasons for their importance.

### Level 3

- Understand that there are connections between their personal experiences and those of others and say what influences their lives.
- Compare their own and other people's ideas about questions which are difficult to answer.
- Make links between values and commitments, including religious ones and their own attitudes and behaviour.

### Level 4

- Ask a range of questions about people's identity, personality and experience, including those from a religious tradition, and suggest appropriate answers.
- Ask a range of questions about puzzling aspects of life and experience and suggest answers, including religious ones.
- Ask a range of questions about choices and decisions and suggest what moral and/or religious implications may be involved.

### Level 5

- Recognise and express feelings about their own identity in the light of their learning.
- Express their own ideas and beliefs in relation to a range of ultimate questions.
- Express their own values and commitments, recognising their origins, and review them in the light of other people's values and commitments.

### Organisation

It is important that all teachers, whatever their personal belief or standpoint, feel secure and comfortable in the teaching of RE. A variety of approaches will be used to develop the skills of enquiry, questioning, and discussion based on the exploration of evidence of religion through a variety of media including religious artefacts, books, pictures, IT, educational visits and visitors. At St Andrew's we are fortunate to have visitors who are willing to come into school to talk to pupils about their religious beliefs. Visits to places of worship are included as an integral part of the scheme of work.

RE lends itself to cross-curricular links and wherever possible links will be made with literacy, creative curriculum lessons, art and music.

### Parental Right To Withdraw

At St Andrew's we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or PSHCE.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St Andrew's.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.

- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

### Resources

A resource box for each major faith covered in the syllabus is available to teachers. IT resources, RE resource books, DVDs and teaching materials are also available. Salford's Schools' Library service also provides loans for RE topics.

### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and revised in line with the developments in the agreed syllabus as they occur.

### Subject Development Plan – **RE** for 2013 2014 – Shaun Worsley

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| Name: Shaun Worsley   |   |   |
| Subject Area: RE  |   |   |
| Vision Statement <b><i>To maintain a balanced, comprehensive RE curriculum and use teaching of RE to embed key Literacy skills and improve reading and writing throughout St Andrew's school.</i></b> |   |   |
| Actions   | Impact  | How will the impact be measured.  |
| To give children opportunities to write through RE.   | Children become more fluent thinkers and writers.             | Average class APS for writing progress increases above 'expected' in 4 out of 6 classes.            |
| To ensure breadth of coverage throughout RE syllabus.   | All major religions (plus Humanism) given sufficient coverage | Work/ planning scrutiny   |
| To ensure St Andrew's RE curriculum is in line with national requirements.  | Children's knowledge of all major religions sound             | Coordinator to attend hub meetings as necessary<br>Check SACRE link on Salford LA website regularly |
| Resources: May be required for teaching Humanism (all other areas of RE syllabus well-provided for)   |   |   |
| Budget: £250 (to be shared with any resources needed for PSHCE)   |   |   |
| Any Training: RE hub meetings (usually after school so no supply cost)  |   |   |