

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Religious Education Guidance

September 2016

Background

Our school is situated within an increasingly diverse community, reflecting a multi-faith and multi-racial community, which we recognise and value. The school aims to reflect the local community while ensuring that the Christian foundations are still maintained.

While St Mary's is a Church school we are committed to respecting individual beliefs. Upon entrance to the school, parents/ carers are made aware of the Christian basis of our teaching. It is therefore unlikely that parents/ carers would wish to exercise their legal right of withdrawal. However, should such a case arise, the parents/ carers concerned should consult the Head teacher.

Mission Statement

St Mary's Church of England Primary School aims to provide a caring, stable, stimulating environment where all children can develop to their full potential. Staff are committed to ensuring that the children's time at school is productive and successful. We aim to raise achievement in all aspects of the curriculum; developing self-confidence, motivation, self-reliance and co-operation.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and serve the local community by welcoming children from all backgrounds and faiths. Whilst our ethos is positively Christian, we value and respect the diversity of our community and aim to set all children on life's path through compassion, thoughtfulness and understanding of one another and respect for one another's differences.

We believe that parents and teachers have a responsibility to ensure that children leave school with:

- good basic skills in English, maths and ICT
- a love of learning
- good social skills
- a sense of responsibility towards society
- the confidence to stand up for themselves
- the knowledge that they are special in God's eyes

...so that they are well equipped for a successful future.

St Mary's Motto

Go shine in the world!

Our school motto is 'Go Shine in the World'. When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12. We, at St Mary's, "shine" by following the example of Jesus.

Our school Christian values are:

Perseverance, Courage, Forgiveness, Thankfulness, Responsibility, Truthfulness, Equality and Justice.

These values underpin everything we do and are reflected in the way the whole school community works together.

Nurturing spirituality

Children are capable of deep spiritual experiences from an early age. Before they even find words to express it they become aware of something other than themselves and their small worlds, something that is inspiring and good. An understanding of God is already within children and we are asked to give them the verbal vocabulary to express what they already experience.

Through liturgy and through everyday experiences, children come to know that they are not alone in their spiritual beliefs and that there are ways of communicating with and about their spiritual nature.

Spiritual and Moral Development

Spiritual and Moral Development is a life-long process and in the life of the children, is shared between parents/ carers, the school and the wider community. We acknowledge the wide variety of beliefs that make up our community; however our policy reflects the Christian focus of our school. Therefore we seek to foster values and morals based on Christian teaching, which are also shared by the major world faiths. Key ideas and words that have been identified as being particularly appropriate when exploring spiritual and moral concepts and include the following:

- Life, birth, creation, death
- Sleep, refreshment, renewal
- Friendship, fidelity, love, passion, patience
- Imagination, inspiration, enlightenment
- Elation, delight, joy, gladness, laughter
- Sorrow, sadness, grief, reconciliation, forgiveness, self control
- Injustice, pain, suffering, anger, courage, shame, guilt
- Kindness, gratefulness
- Pity, compassion
- Wonder, awe, reverence, adoration
- Splendour, beauty, perfection
- Stillness, calm, peace, silence, tranquillity, harmony
- Light, darkness
- Eternity, mystery, infinity
- Hope, dream, fact, fantasy
- Insight, intuition, belief, faith, trust
- Truth, certainty, uncertainty, proof

Poems, stories, paintings, photographs, natural objects, and music are some of the ways that children can be encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective.

Religious Education in Church Schools

In the life of faith of a Church school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of Christian education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore, religious education is never one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Church school.

Expectation of classroom Religious Education

Excellence in religious education will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified objectives and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.

The objective of religious education is to include analysis and reflection, critical appreciation of sources and examples, and a real sense of progression through the different stages of education.

Scheme of work

The school uses the *Discovery RE* Scheme of work as the basis for our RE programme which is adapted to ensure that it is at least 2/3 Christian based teaching across the year. This is mapped into year groups, schemes of work and then onto weekly planning formats by the class teacher. The RE leader is responsible for reviewing and updating curriculum maps annually.

Resources

Class Worship/Reflection Area

Each classroom has a Worship/Reflection Area which displays a bible, candle, a cross, a prayer tree and prayers that are used every day.

Class RE display

Each class should have an RE display in place, showcasing recent work and supporting learning.

Teaching resources

Each class teacher has a copy of their appropriate handbook and scheme of work. Additional resources to support planning, teaching and learning are located in the topic

resource cupboard. Teachers also receive additional resources from the School Library Service (SLS) to enhance their RE lessons.

Each religion covered in RE lessons has a topic box which is located in the RE resource cupboard. Each box contains artefacts, photographs and helpful activities to deliver the curriculum.

Planning

Teachers use the *Discovery RE* scheme of work to plan differentiated work for pupils in RE lessons. In Year 5 and 6 the children complete 3 pieces of extended writing per term in order for level 4 and 5 to be attained.

Assessment

There are two attainment targets in Religious Education

- AT1 Knowledge an understanding of religion (learning *about* religion- content)
- AT2 Reflection on meaning (learning *from* religion- skills)

Termly assessments should be made by teachers for each pupil. These assessments should be recorded on the Whole Class RE assessment grid and on individual RE Pupil Assessment Records.