



Religious Education Policy

Reviewed July 2024

Policy Approved by: _____

At meeting on: _____

Religious Education Policy

School Vision

“We shine like stars to achieve and make a difference in the world, knowing that with God, all things are possible.”

Religious Education is a core subject and is of the highest standard in our school, always striving for excellence, reflecting our school’s distinctive Christian character.

AIMS AND PHILOSOPHY

As a voluntary-aided joint Anglican/Methodist school, our Christian ethos and school vision underpins everything we do in school. Our main aim in RE is to support each child along their moral and spiritual journey. Our school has chosen to use the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus Questful RE and the Methodist Units of work in teaching Christianity for the RE curriculum. They are specifically designed for Church Schools like ours, who believe they are the heart of the mission of the Church in modern society.

A firm grounding in the principles and practices of Christianity is offered to all children, in particular, the principles of the Church of England and the Methodist Church. There are also many opportunities across school to explore some of the various significant faiths represented in Britain today. Although the teaching of RE and Collective Worship naturally complement each other and support our children’s religious journey, they are managed separately to ensure outstanding standards are maintained.

Our pupils and their families can expect a rich and varied RE curriculum, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and respect for all other faiths. We aim to provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to have knowledge and to understand and make links between the beliefs, practices and values of the range of significant faiths and world views studied. Our curriculum follows an enquiry-based approach that engages with biblical text and helps develop religious literacy. There are strong links to our school Christian values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are an integral part of our RE curriculum; they have a significant positive impact on our pupils.

Christianity is the majority study in school and our long-term planning adheres to this. Throughout school, at least 1 hour a week is dedicated to the delivery of specific, discrete RE lessons. As well as days allocated to specific celebrations and learning based on RE.

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- 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 with respect and understanding.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual and philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016.

Appropriate to age at the end of their education in Church schools the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

This can be expressed in more detail and distinctively as:

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.

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;
- Examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Religious Education in our school should also help pupils to:

- Learn *about* other significant 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 in our school should help pupils to:

- Reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- See how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- Understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's post-modern society;
- Develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- Begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- Develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- Engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- Become courageous advocates/ Agents of Change, serving their neighbour;
- Find a reason for hope in a troubled world.

Religious Education in our school should enable:

- Pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- 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.

In our school, pupils and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

The process of spiritual growth is a lifelong one, and is something that can obviously not be 'achieved' during compulsory schooling. However, the school has a particular responsibility to help pupils acquire the equipment they need for this journey, and to point out the markers during this important stage of their spiritual life.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

A variety of approaches are used when teaching RE at primary level. When planning lessons, teachers consider which strategies are most appropriate to achieve a particular objective, taking into account ability, age, experience and learning styles. This is why our lessons include many creative approaches including art, drama and music. The focus is on the total development of the child, so a holistic approach is encouraged. Material for pupils may therefore include objectives and activities that relate to worship, citizenship or other curriculum areas, as well as RE.

The curriculum is enriched by visitors/visits to places of worship and visitors/visits to Christian churches in our local area. Regular celebrations within the school family with the use of art, drama and music, all serve to enhance the religious and spiritual values of our school.

In conjunction with the agreed syllabus, there is the Methodist Church Guidance on the teaching of Christianity currently used in Year 6, and Years 4 and 2 in the next terms.

These planned units of work relate to:-

Belonging together: Why does it matter to be part of a community? What can we learn about Christians and community life?

Warm Hearts: What does it feel like to experience God's presence? The life of John Wesley
Commitment to Christianity: Is it long ago and far away, or is it here and now?

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Each unit of the syllabus gives suggested assessment activities which use a variety of teaching approaches. These activities form part of the teaching and learning process. Children are also encouraged to develop the skill of self-assessment and learning grids are used to begin each unit of work.

One purpose of assessment is to inform teachers of their pupils' understanding, in order that the next steps may be effectively planned. This is an ongoing process, and may include:

- observation of children at work
- discussion and questioning
- assessment of written work or artwork

These methods will provide the teacher with information that will form the basis of annual report to parents.

Summative assessment is also important to provide a picture of where each child is overall at a particular point in time. End of unit statements provide broad guidance as to what they might expect from pupils of the 'expected' standard when the given material has been covered. These will provide evidence of progress when used as

assessment objectives. Pupils also have self-assessment grids where they assess their own ability through what they know and what they still have questions about.

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

The RE Co-ordinator and Headteacher meet regularly and the Governor assigned to RE at least twice a year. This may be to discuss the curriculum, monitoring or any new developments in the teaching of RE. Feedback will be given to the whole school staff whenever the working group considers appropriate. This will be done via the regular staff meetings or one to one.

Monitoring responsibility rests with the governing body, Headteacher and the RE Co-ordinator. Storage of RE resources is located mainly within the atrium area.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All teaching and non-teaching staff at Aspull Church Primary School are responsible for ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic origin, orientation or social circumstances have access to the whole curriculum and make the greatest possible progress.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The individual needs of children must be taken into account when planning RE, to ensure that individual needs are being met. Differentiation for these children and more able may be by:

1. Task - different tasks set which allow each child/group to achieve the same learning objectives.
2. Outcome - the activities set allow for different outcomes across the full ability range with the class.
3. Support - the teacher or learning support assistant may give differing amounts of time or resources to particular children; or may use different language to explain things.

Principles for Inclusion including SEND pupils, EAL pupils and Able Pupils:

All children will be provided with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in RE. All children will have equality of opportunity to achieve their potential. In planning and teaching RE, teachers will have due regard for the following principles:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- Ensuring challenge and extension when and where appropriate

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

At Aspull Church Primary School, we recognise and welcome the wealth of resources that parents have to offer. We actively encourage parents to become involved in aspects of religious education in school e.g. by accompanying classes on trips to places of worship and joining together for celebrations and ceremonies. We are keen to nurture our special links with Aspull Methodist Church and St Elizabeth's C of E Church. Ministers have taken part in RE lessons and visit regularly to take Collective Worship.

As a school, we also seek to demonstrate our Christian values to the local community. Various groups are invited to join us in worship throughout the Christian calendar, and are also welcome to participate in the life of the school on secular occasions.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England and Methodist Church Foundation. It is 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 and Methodist Church ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of 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.

Parents may request the governing body to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing body **should** make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing body be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request would then fail.

