



ST. CHAD'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it” **Proverbs 22:6**

Religious Education Policy

At St Chad's, Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate 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. Religious Education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people.

At St Chad's we aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and try to address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help our pupils learn from religions as well as about religions.

The aims of Religious Education at St Chad's are to help children:

- Develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in today's society;
- Develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- Be able to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- Develop an understanding of religious traditions and to appreciate the cultural differences in our local community and today's society;

- Develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- Have respect for other peoples' views and to celebrate the diversity in our school community and the wider world;
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery at the world around us.

Religious Education at St Chad's encourages learners to:

- Consider challenging questions of 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;
- Understand the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures;
- Learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring questions of meaning and their own beliefs;
- Learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed responses to religious, moral and social issues;
- Develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a global society;
- Develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

Religious Education at St Chad's enhances learners':

- Awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression;
- Ability to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education at St Chad's develops pupils' skills of:

- Enquiry and response through the use of religious vocabulary, questioning and empathy;

- Reflection, expression, application, analysis and evaluation of beliefs, values and practices, and the communication of personal responses to these.

Learning and Teaching in Religious Education at St Chad's

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. 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 RE curriculum.

Our learning and teaching in RE enables children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking. We organise visits to local places of worship, and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups. They might prepare presentations on a computer, or using art resources, and share these in assemblies.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks);
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.

Curriculum planning in Religious Education at St Chad's

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the Oldham SACRE Agreed Religious Education Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build on prior learning. We offer opportunities

for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. We carry out the curriculum planning in Religious Education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group.

We teach Religious Education topics in conjunction with other subjects, where appropriate. Some of our medium-term (termly) topics have a particular historical or PSHE focus. In Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on the study of religious themes and topics in their own right.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The RE subject leader meets with teaching staff and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning, in Key stage 1, on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics. In Key Stage 2, the topics are carefully mapped so that all children have the opportunity to learn, explore and question key religious concepts.

Using the Oldham SACRE materials, each class teacher writes the plans for every lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Religious Education in EYFS at St Chad's

We teach Religious Education to all children in the school, including those in the Reception class. Children in Foundation Stage regularly have the opportunity to explore and learn about the Christian values which underpin the ethos of the school.

In Reception classes, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the Reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas at St Chad's

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the English sessions have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and development of speaking and listening skills.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Through our Religious Education lessons we explore with children the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we consider how a range of religions view topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility, especially in relation to the core British Values. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through Religious Education at St Chad's, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Computing and ICT Tools

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enhances Religious Education, wherever and whenever it is appropriate, across all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet and computer programmes. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Children may use *PowerPoint* to help them make presentations on various topics, such as sacred symbols in different world religions. Younger children can take photographs of the class acting out a Bible story. They can then make a class storybook or PicCollage of it, by adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text. Alternatively, using desktop software, they might create a special book where each pupil has her or his own page. Digital cameras and video recorders can be used to record a visit

to a place of worship, and pupils can also find the various artefacts in churches by doing virtual tours on church websites.

RE and Inclusion at St Chad's

We teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Religious Education teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Inclusion; Disability; Non-Discrimination and Access; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, our assessment processes guide us to look at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is always matched to the child's needs. We ensure that all pupils are able to access to the full range of activities involved in Religious Education learning. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Mosque, for example) and one that involves a journey, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment of RE at St Chad's

Children demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a *PowerPoint* presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Sometimes, teachers will assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher will assess the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make independent and guided judgements about how they might improve their work in the future. The teacher will record the attainment grades awarded at the end of a unit of work in his or her mark book. This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Each child's attainment and progress in RE is tracked using Target Tracker and is reported annually to parents, in their end of year written school report.

Resourcing RE at St Chad's

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education teaching units. We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. There is a set of Bibles for both key stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in Religious Education. The school library has a good supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.

Monitoring and Reviewing of RE at St Chad's

The RE Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. The RE Coordinator is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. The subject leader presents the Executive Head teacher with an annual report which evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Signed: Frankie Marsh

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