

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

St. Chad's – a successful, inspirational learning community taking the courage to: innovate; ignite curiosity; learn creatively; love unconditionally; and serve others.

Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St. Chad's School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn *from* religions as well as *about* religions.

The objectives of teaching religious education in our school are to help children:

- develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions and value systems found in Britain;
- 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 Britain today;
- develop investigative and research skills, and make reasoned judgements about religious issues;
- have respect for other people's views, and celebrate the diversity in society;
- experience the breath and variety of the Christian community;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious.

Our school Values:

Respect Resilience Resourcefulness Responsibility

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the foundation class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although only after they have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE which fulfils all legal requirements and the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2016. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and learning style

RE is an integral part of the school's Christian ethos, is reflected in our aims and school values and is incorporated into the whole school curriculum. The major part of RE teaching and learning focusses on Christianity, in recognition of the foundation of the school. The introduction of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam provides an awareness of other faiths. A minimum of 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE.

Although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, at St Chad's we recognise the importance that they are managed separately.

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 teaching and learning styles in RE enable 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. Sometimes they prepare presentations on a computer 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

The scheme of work adopted by St Chad's CofE Primary School is the Blackburn and Manchester Diocese Religious Education Syllabus for Church Schools. The scheme reflects the National Framework for RE, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. The Oldham Agreed Syllabus is used as a point of reference.

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, especially at Key Stage 1. Some of our medium-term (termly) topics could have a particular historical focus and 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 keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics.

Class teachers are responsible for planning RE lessons in line with Manchester Diocese Religious Education Syllabus for Church Schools. Specific learning objectives and expected outcomes are taken from the outline planning provided by the Diocese of Manchester. The RE subject leader has informal professional dialogue with class teachers around this.

The Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

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 Development Matters document, which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Contribution of RE to the teaching in other curriculum areas

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 literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is RE's way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information, in order to develop their writing ability.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So for example, we contribute to the discussion of 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. 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 in our school, 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.

RE and ICT

Information and communication technology enhances religious education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. The children select and analyse information, using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Older children 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 of it, by adding in speech bubbles and a narrative text. Alternatively, using desktop software, they can create a special book where each pupil has her or his own page;

they also make a cover and binding for the book, and draw up a set of rules for its use. A digital video camera can record a visit to a place of worship, and pupils can find the various artefacts in churches by doing virtual tours on church websites.

RE and inclusion

At our school, 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 hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, the most able, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching matches the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to religious education.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in religious education. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a visit to a Mosque, for example, 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 for learning

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. Teachers will assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older children are encouraged to make 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. This information is then 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 reported annually to parents, in their end of year written school report.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to facilitate all our religious education teaching units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store. There is a set of bibles for both key stages, and a collection of religious artefacts that 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.

Parental right of withdrawal.

If a parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious education at St Chad's, then the school must comply. The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parents from religious education. Parents who wish to exercise this right must first contact the Head teacher. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Head teacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an alternative accommodation suitable for the child.

Monitoring and review

The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. She 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 headteacher with an annual report, which evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. She has specially allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Signed: Gemma Crispin (RE subject lead)
G.Crispin

Sophie Nelson (Head of School)
S. Nelson

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Date for review: September 2021.