

# Religious Education



**Together in God's Love:  
Aim High,  
Stay Strong,  
Be Determined**

# Religious Education Policy January 2024

## Our Vision:

***'Stand firm in the faith; be courageous, be strong. Do everything in love.'* 1 Corinthians 16:13**

In a caring, Christian environment, our **children** will be motivated to develop a love of learning and a curiosity for the world we live in.

Our **staff** will deepen understanding, develop aspirations and enrich the lives of all children, knowing that with God's love we can achieve anything.

Our **school** will be a place where children experience awe and wonder, grow spiritually and flourish as courageous advocates, within our global community.



## Our Mission Statement:



***'Together in God's Love, aim high, stay strong, be determined.'***

Our Mission Statement is the heartbeat of our school and simply means, 'God is with you...Try your best.'

## Our Aims:

To provide a distinctly Christian ethos, that is inviting, inspiring and inclusive, underpinned by our Christian Values and Scripture, where children know and love Jesus.

To inspire our children to have a life-long love of literature, who are given a range of varied and engaging reading experiences.

To provide an enabling environment that encourages creativity, develops confidence and self-esteem and makes a connection with the world outside.

To provide an ambitious and broad education, with enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities, as well as unique experiences, that prepare our children socially and mentally for their future.

## Our Values:

Our Christian Values, which are rooted in scripture, are threaded through our school, our decision making and everything that we do.

**Trust** **Wisdom** **Hope**  
**Endurance** **Friendship**

## **Intent**

At St. David's, we have a Religious Education curriculum that intends to impact every part of school life. We have ensured that we have a rich and varied curriculum that gives children a firm grounding in the principles and practices of Christianity, especially as represented by the Church of England. At St. David's, we believe that Religious Education should provide a contemporary study of religion, preparing all children for later life. We promote respect, tolerance and understanding for the beliefs of all. Our curriculum encourages children to continuously ask questions and seek answers, embedding understanding and providing varied learning opportunities along their journey through school. We help them to grow spiritually and we help pupils understand and respect others, their religious beliefs and lifestyles. In recognition of the multicultural and diverse society in which we live and serve, children in all phases will be given the opportunity to explore different world faiths represented in Britain today. We aim to do this by learning about traditions, lifestyles and festivals celebrated by a variety of religions. We aim to give children an appreciation of the 'awe and wonder' that exists in the world and understand that this was created by God.

## **Implementation**

St. David's follows the Blackburn Diocese 'Questful RE' syllabus, which was updated in 2023. This scheme prescribes units for teachers to cover and sets out expectations for the end of units, which are then adapted by teaching staff to meet the needs of our school family. For each topic, a series of stimulating lessons are planned, with clear, learning-based objectives, incorporating the eight Christian concepts: God, Creation, Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and Kingdom of God. Teachers plan and deliver lessons that involve discussion, written and creative tasks, where children are able to express their views in a safe and respectful environment, using subject-specific vocabulary.

A range of resources are used to stimulate children's thoughts including texts, artwork, video and music. Children are encouraged to express their views and opinions during sessions, by reflecting on thought-provoking questions. Stories from the Bible are regularly discussed and celebrated. Some units of work link closely with world faiths and these faiths are celebrated and discussed frequently during Religious Education lessons. Our Religious Education curriculum promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, ensuring that they are all reflective and responsible citizens. Fundamental British Values are actively promoted in Religious Education lessons, in order to prepare the children for life in modern Britain.

## **Impact**

Through effective teaching and learning, children at St. David's will be able to confidently discuss and explain stories from the Bible and the teachings within them and use this to influence their own lives and behaviours. Children will be provided with a safe space to express their views, ask questions and make decisions about religion. Children, as a result of teaching in Religious Education, will show courageous advocacy and stand up for their own beliefs and any injustices they perceive in the world. We believe Religious Education for children and young people provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life. Our children develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, alongside different world religions and religious traditions. Religious Education enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society from a local to global level. It teaches pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs and helps to challenge prejudice. RE prompts pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to the wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion. We endeavour for the children at St. David's to take forward their learning from Religious Education and allow it to inform their choices and values as they continue on their Christian journey into adulthood.

## **Rationale**

At St. David's, Religious Education will support children in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes through exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of Christianity and other religions in the contemporary world, with such emphasis upon Anglican beliefs and practices as appropriate to our school's situation.

## **Entitlement**

Religious Education in our Church School lies at the very heart of our curriculum. Religious Education comprises of at least 10%, of our teaching timetable. Within the curriculum time allocated to Religious Education, Christianity occupies a minimum of 70% of the time, up to a maximum of 80%. Therefore, 20% to 30% of Religious Education curriculum time is devoted to the world faiths, Islam and Judaism, and Hinduism in Reception. To further support staff in their subject knowledge and confidence in to teach about world faiths, our INSET on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 was 'Teaching and Learning about Islam', led by Imran Kotwal from Muslim Learning Services.

Our long-term plan has been agreed by our Governors and is published on our school website and can be accessed [here](#).

## **Religious Education Subject Leadership**

The Religious Education subject leader will:

- raise the profile of Religious Education at St. David's;
- lead and manage the Religious Education effectively and have an 'expert' knowledge of the Religious Education curriculum overview, including all unit/topics across the whole school;
- confidently articulate the Religious Education curriculum design and have a clear and ambitious vision for Religious Education (Intent, Implementation and Impact);
- monitor, evaluate and enhance the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education;
- ensure that there is clear progression in knowledge, skills and vocabulary in Religious Education, across school;
- support, guide and motivate colleagues in their CPD, as well as build capacity across the school;
- identify the subject's needs in the context of whole school priorities and produce a Religious Education School Development Plan annually;
- audit Religious Education resources and identify resource needs and costings in Religious Education School Development Plans, managing allocated budgets effectively;
- provide strategic direction and development of Religious Education across the school;
- develop their own expertise through training and evidence-based research and investigate how implementations are embedding;
- effectively communicate with the Religious Education link Governor, sharing and celebrating Religious Education;
- review and update the Religious Education Policy, as necessary.

## **Religious Education across the Curriculum**

Although Religious Education is taught as an implicit subject within our school, it does provide many opportunities for links with other curriculum areas, particularly English, PSHE, History, Geography and the creative arts. In addition, there are strong links between Religious Education and cross curricular themes and dimensions, including multi-cultural education, equal opportunities, citizenship and health education. As stated previously, it also has strong links with collective worship.

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 our English lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and spiritual development, and this is our 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.

Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin choices and behaviour. 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**

At St. David's, we recognise that a child's personal development plays an important role in their ability to learn and achieve. As such, we aim to provide opportunities that enable children to explore and develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) through Religious Education. Spiritual development within RE in our school enriches and encourages the children's discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offers children a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches children's understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

Currently, we are developing our Spirituality curriculum, in line with Dr. Kate Middleton and Rebecca Nye's principles. We are in the stages of dissemination to all stakeholders and policies will be updated accordingly once shared.



St. David Haigh & Aspull CofE Primary School

'Bringing light and life into a soul' - Dr Kate Middleton



# S P I R I T

**Smile** - 'Delighting in all things small'

- Gratitude
- Finding joy in everyday
- Optimism
- Creativity
- Awe and wonder
- Actively seeking

**Present** - 'Being absorbed in the present moment'

- Engaged in learning or play
- Clear focus
- Peace
- Able to move on
- Accepting and embracing the now

**Interlinked** - 'Not too attached to self'

- Too Much Selfie Isn't Healthy
- Understanding their impact on others and the world
- Sportsmanship
- Forgiveness
- Tolerance and accepting

**Reveal** - 'Searching for meaning'

- Curiosity
- Completing your own research
- Checking your sources
- Asking why
- Eager to learn
- Reflection

**Impact** - 'Discovering purpose'

- Purposefully choosing to impact the world around us
- Where do they fit into the world?
- Individuality
- Courageous advocacy linking to justice
- How are you resilient, even in bad situations?

**Thrive** - 'Open to more'

- Motivation
- Welcoming change
- Seeking opportunities
- Ambition
- Independence

Principles taken from the work of Rebecca Nye.

## **Inclusion**

At St. David's, we teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Religious Education forms part of our school curriculum policy, to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We are very mindful of the learning needs of all of our children and those with Special Educational Needs are supported via effective planning, quality first teaching and assessment, adaptive teaching as necessary, high expectations, suitable resources and recording formats. We consider the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs). Through our Religious Education teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress within each lesson. We strive to meet the needs of 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. We believe that the curriculum should be accessible to all children. This is made possible through scaffolded support, small group work, use of Knowledge Organisers and word banks, or extra time to complete learning tasks. Advice is sought from outside agencies as appropriate, to ensure an inclusive approach. If teaching staff require additional support to meet the needs of any child, they consult our SENDCo.

## **Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

All children at St. David's, are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated through the use of adaptive teaching to meet their needs as necessary. There is equality of access to the whole curriculum. No child is denied access to any part of the curriculum unless specific physical needs or religious/cultural considerations make it inappropriate. At St. David's, we are committed to providing all children with a curriculum that provides equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination. Staff ensure that all children are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child. All staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents on CPOMS and draw them to the attention of the Assistant Headteachers and Executive Headteacher.

We plan Religious Education lessons and activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender, culture, race, special educational needs or disability, and language background. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion, and to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive and respectful attitudes towards others. Care is taken when selecting resources to ensure that a range of perspectives and viewpoints are represented, including those of men and women from different racial, national and religious groups. Careful consideration is taken to avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability. Through the teaching of Religious Education, we aim to develop awareness of ethnic, cultural and economic diversity of human society and to foster positive attitudes to all people. We deal with any issues clearly and sensitively, if they arise.

## **Resources**

At St. David's we have access to all resources provided as part of the online 'Questful RE' syllabus. We are building up 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. There are bibles and holy books from other World Faiths, for both key stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. The school library has a supply of Religious Education topic books and computer software to support the children's individual research.

## **Assessment and Recording**

The assessment and expectations of RE in the Blackburn Diocesan syllabus are based on the Ladder of Expectation which provides symbols that link to the end of Key Stage expectations detailed within the syllabus. Each unit has the expectations outlined to provide guidance for assessment. Evidence is collected in the following ways:

- Class Religious Education Floor Book containing the following: brief summaries of discussions, photographs of role play, samples of work, things that have interested them. It also serves as a working document that can be shared beyond the classroom for example: with staff, governors, parents and inspectors;
- Individual work in children's books;
- Photographs of displays;
- Records of the Religious Education subject leader's monitoring: scrutiny of work and lesson observations.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by the:
- Senior Leadership Team;
- Head of School Improvement;
- Religious Education Subject Leaders;
- Religious Education Governor;
- Class teachers.

All teachers are responsible for monitoring standards in their class. Religious Education Subject Leaders, under the direction of the Senior Leadership Team, take the lead in this. Monitoring will take place according to the current school cycle. Using whole school priorities, identified by the Senior Leadership Team, subject leaders are responsible for producing a School Development Plan for Religious Education, to allow for progression and development of the subject. Religious Education Subject Leaders will also monitor children's work books and long term and medium-term plans, to ensure that the Programmes of Study are being effectively taught and match the needs and abilities of the pupils. Subject leaders have curriculum release time and directed time, in which to fulfil their role.

Religious Education subject leaders are responsible for:

- monitoring the standard of work and the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education and pupils' progress and standards;
- supporting colleagues in the planning, teaching and assessment of Religious Education (through the use of 'book looks', pupil voice, lesson observations, discussion with teachers, subject audit, data analysis, and other monitoring activities that may be required), providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in school;
- monitoring and reviewing the implementation of policy and units of work;
- ensuring there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to monitor progress and attainment in Religious Education;
- monitoring and analysing assessments, holding teachers to account;
- liaising with the Executive Headteacher and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of Religious Education across the school.



### **Staff Support and Training**

St. David's believes that all staff should be involved in a continuing process of improvement. Our school is committed to fostering a positive ethos of continuous learning. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which a school is able to motivate and develop its staff community. CPD is intended to support teachers and to equip them with the skills and knowledge required to keep pace with the rapidly changing educational and professional environment.

This development takes place at a number of levels: individual, team, whole school, across our Learning Together Trust and through wider networks. CPD supports and reflects the ethos, Christian Values and vision of the school. The Religious Education subject leader's role is to provide professional leadership and management for the subject to secure high-quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.

### **Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided Academy**

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any school. The Worship and Religious Education provided by our school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation is also 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 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 a request for a withdrawal is made, the headteacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation.