



# St. Mary Magdalene

*C of E Primary School*

Love to learn, learn to love

## Religious Education Policy

As a Christian school, we believe that Christ has called us in every aspect of our working together to live out our vision.

### Our School Vision

We pride ourselves on being a diverse community where kindness and compassion are celebrated. In valuing all as God's children, we are committed to promoting the development of the whole child. We nurture academic habits and creativity across a range of subjects by providing aspirational opportunities to widen horizons.

Our Christian vision is underpinned by the teaching of Jesus through the story of the Good Samaritan. We want all children at St Mary Magdalene to:

***'Love your neighbour as yourself'***

Underpinning our vision are our 'Loving Three' values: love, wisdom and joy. Opportunities to develop in these three areas are seized throughout our curriculum and are demonstrated through pupil work and classroom experience.

### How we aim to achieve our vision through the RE curriculum

We believe the most loving thing to do is to provide our children with an excellent education. We aim to do this through the effective delivery of a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum which show opportunities to deliberately practise activities that will in time, embed and deepen knowledge thus enabling children to make connections between topics and build a conceptual understanding.

Our curriculum is carefully designed to meet the requirements of the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus for RE and The Statement of Entitlement for Church schools. At St Mary Magdalene we believe that it is imperative that we deliver a curriculum that prepares our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. As a diverse community we believe that teaching about different religions and worldviews helps to unite us and gives us the opportunity to celebrate each of our children's uniqueness and experience.

## Aims and Objectives

### The Principal Aim of RE

- 1.1 Religious education enables children to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that they can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own and others' ideas and ways of living.

### The threefold aim of RE

- 1.2 In accordance with the Sandwell syllabus our RE curriculum aims to support all pupils to **make sense of belief, understand and discuss the impact of belief**, and to **make connections** between the concepts, beliefs, religious practices and ideas that they have studied.

- 1.3 At St Mary Magdalene School, we aim to do this by teaching Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church. and by 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 the other principal religions, especially those that are the main faiths of children within our school. We provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of people, including through the study of non- religious worldviews.

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

- ✓ Know about and understand the beliefs and practices of Christianity and the other principal religions and worldviews represented in Sandwell and the UK.
- ✓ Promote and provide opportunities for spiritual, social and cultural development.
- ✓ Be able to reflect on their own experiences and our shared human experience so that they can develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.
- ✓ Develop an understanding of religious traditions, what it means to be committed to a religious tradition and to appreciate the cultural differences in Britain today.
- ✓ Develop investigative and research skills and make reasoned judgements about religious issues.
- ✓ Develop respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching them other people's views and celebrate the diversity in society.

## **2. The Legal Position of Religious Education**

- 2.1** 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 reception class who are less than five years old.

## **3. The Right to Withdraw**

- 3.1** In line with the ERA we allow 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.

## **3. Teaching and Learning Styles**

- 3.1** We encourage the use of a range of teaching and learning styles in R.E. We aim to use a range of stimulus to enhance learning in lessons. Examples of this include but are not limited to; the use of religious stories and sharing biblical texts, speaking and listening activities, such as whole class and small groups discussions, examining videos, role play and drama, responding to and creating artwork and more traditional ways of recording including drawing and written tasks.

- 3.2** Where possible, we organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come to the school and talk to the children.

- 3.3** Whole school collective worship gives the school further opportunities to develop religious understanding and to share their developing knowledge and understanding with others.

## **4. Meeting the needs of pupils**

- 4.1** We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities and experience, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by planning activities that can be scaffolded and adapted to meet the children's needs. We do this by:

- ✓ Providing resources or modifying tasks to scaffold learning and to ensure that children of all abilities can access and contribute to the lesson.
- ✓ Providing opportunities for the children to challenge themselves by choosing to complete a depth activity.
- ✓ Using other adults where appropriate to support the work of individuals or groups of children.
- ✓ Setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.

## 5. Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

5.1 Our religious education curriculum plan was created in accordance with the LA's Agreed Syllabus and The Statement of Entitlement for Church schools. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build on prior learning. Across school we teach the principal religions as follows.

Foundation Stage	Beginning to learn about religion and worldviews found among the children in the class
Key Stage 1	Beginning to learn about Christianity + Sikhi + Islam
Key Stage 2	Learning more about Christianity + Sikhi + Islam Beginning to learn about Hinduism + Judaism

5.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (Whole school long-term plans, yearly overviews and individual lesson plans). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each half term during each Key Stage. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with other stakeholders, including the Christian Distinctiveness Advisor from LDBE. RE is taught weekly in each class. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 we will revisit some of our religious education curriculum in conjunction with other subjects where a clear link exists, however our RE curriculum is taught in stand-alone units. Often Religious education objectives are revisited and extended during topics based on historical Britain and during work based around different countries.

5.3 Our class yearly overviews include the end of unit outcomes for each unit, key vocabulary to teach, prior knowledge and links to further learning throughout the RE curriculum as well as a learning sequence to support staff to know what to teach as part of each unit of work. The RE subject leader shares these plans with staff and reviews these plans when necessary.

5.4 The class teacher plans for each lesson using learning objectives and expected outcomes from the yearly overviews. Each lesson has a Walt, key vocabulary, an element of retrieval practice to encourage pupils to know and remember more and then new lesson content. Class teachers have access to exemplar unit plans from Sandwell Sacre and access to the Understanding Christianity resource to support them to plan effective lesson activities.

5.5 The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral, and social teaching. It also compliments our RHSE curriculum.

## 6. The Foundation Stage

6.1 We teach Religious Education to all children in the school including those in the Reception class.

6.2 In Reception class, Religious Education is taught through the topics covered during the year. As the Reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the

objectives set out in the EYFS Statutory guidance and Development Matters, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

### **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.

## **7. Assessment for Learning**

**7.1** As in all subjects the teachers and staff use assessment for learning techniques to ensure work is well pitched and provides the necessary challenge for all learners. Questions are planned and used to deepen thinking and teachers check regularly throughout the lesson on the progress of all learners. 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 and further understanding in line with the school Marking Policy.

**7.2** The RE subject leader monitors books and looks at samples of children's work. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school. Feedback is given to staff which includes areas of strength and areas of development.

## **8. Resources**

**8.1** 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 religious faith. There are Bibles for both Key Stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. Visual, sensory, and spiritual resources are available for different learning needs.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

**9.1** The RE curriculum leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. She/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, keeping informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. The leader contributes, to school development and improvement aims. The RE leader informs the Headteacher and Governors of current areas of achievement and future areas for development.

**This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.**