



# St Leonard's CE(A) First School Policy for Religious Education

**Responsibility of:  
Foundation Governors**

**Developed in consultation with:  
Teaching staff**

**Adopted by the Governing Board:  
Jan 2024**

**Date for review: Jan 2025**

*'Let your light shine before others so that they may see your  
good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'*

*Matthew 5:16*

| Date of last policy reviewed | Changes made   |
|------------------------------|--|
| May 2019                     | Dates were changed.  |
| Jan 2022                     | No changes   |
| Jan 2024                     | Christianity coverage changed to 50%.<br>RE curriculum statements added.<br>Training updated.<br>Floor book included.<br>Section on the 3 disciplines of RE added. |



## St Leonard's CE (A) First School

### Policy for Religious Education (Beliefs and Values)

At St Leonard's CE (A) First school Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining the school's distinctive Christian character. In this school we have decided to refer to RE as '**beliefs and values**' as this helps our pupils to explore and understand what is meant by Religious Education. It was also our approach to revitalising and refreshing the subject within school.

The subject is central to the school's understanding of education and mission, and the commitment that 'the Church at national, diocesan and local level is called to work towards every child and young person having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ' (Going for Growth Report) As a school we recognise that spiritual development lies at the heart of the curriculum. All members of the school community should experience Christianity through the life of the school, as well as through the taught curriculum.

RE teaching at this school will be in line with the recommendations of the Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools, published by the National Society and adopted by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education (2019). Christianity will, therefore, be the majority study in RE as understanding Christianity as a living religion is the foundation of Religious Education in church schools. It is important that this draws on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms. The encounter must be an

open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations and in which real dialogue and education takes place.

Church schools have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and world views. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also be able to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice.

RE teaching also follows the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act (1988), which places RE as part of the basic curriculum; a statutory subject which is an entitlement of all pupils. The school bases its RE provision on the Church of England's 'Understanding Christianity' resources which staff have received training in.

At least 5% of curriculum time will be dedicated to meeting explicitly RE objectives, although the subject may be taught across the curriculum when appropriate. Within this teaching allocation at least half (50%) of subject content will be allocated to an exploration of the Christian faith, and the concepts, beliefs, teachings and practices that lie at its heart.

## **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

**The aims of Religious Education in our school are:**

- To offer a full and positive presentation of living Christianity in an opportunity for encountering the Christian life in Anglican and other contexts, and to enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth, and so to consider important human questions, values and concerns.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions,
- exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

**The outcomes for pupils at the end of their time in our school are that they are able to:**

- Compare and contrast the key beliefs and practices of the religions studied and show how they are connected to believers' lives

- Describe different aspects of belonging to a religion - symbol, story, festival, belief, faith in action, ritual, worship
- Express religious beliefs and ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology and describe what they mean
- Ask questions sensitively about the lives of believers and suggest appropriate answers
- Reflect on the decisions people make - including believers - and suggest possible outcomes
- Compare their own experience and identity with others - including believers
- Reflect and empathise with the big questions of life, suggesting some answers / insights
- Be confident to explore their own spirituality and search for truth
- Value the religious journey of faith
- Develop pupils' ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression

In addition the subject contributes to other areas of education and human experience and plays an important part of the wider programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual - widening pupils vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.

Moral - helping each pupil develop their own informed values.

Social - helping pupils understand some major forces shaping the values in our society.

Cultural - aiding pupils in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and in developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with Citizenship and PSHE. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all pupils.

## **RIGHT TO WITHDRAW**

At St Leonard's CE (A) First school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience, without giving a reason. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to write to the headteacher who will then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided by the school and set out the options open to the parents as set out in education law. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious

matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects. Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE and do not take part in alternative religious education they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff whilst doing work set by their parents which will seek to further their knowledge and understanding of their parents beliefs and values.

## **MANAGEMENT**

The RE curriculum is sequentially planned across year groups and key stages to form a spiral curriculum, offering a depth of learning to pupils.

Pupils gain knowledge, tools for learning and grow in their own understanding, having continual reinforcement of their prior learning.

RE is planned with three disciplines in mind which are equally weighted.

- **Theology** - Believing - Making sense of belief and the text.
- **Human and Social Science** - Living - Understanding impact.
- **Philosophy** - Thinking - Making connections.

**Theology** enables children and young people to grapple with questions that have been raised by religions and beliefs over centuries.

**Human and Social Science** is about thinking through living. Children exploring questions and answers raised in relation to lived reality.

**Philosophy** is 'thinking through thinking', a love of learning. Exploring questions and answers raised through considering the nature of knowledge, existence and morality.

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

As a church school we recognise that it should be a priority to build up staff expertise in RE.

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Producing a scheme of work for the school
- Supporting colleagues in the detailed planning and delivery of RE provision
- Ensuring Religious Education has status within the school
- Keeping in touch with subject developments and disseminating information as appropriate
- Auditing and recording current resources, supplementing resource provision when money is available and disseminating this information to staff
- Undertaking personal development and subject training and ensuring provision for staff INSET
- Monitoring RE provision, practice and outcomes
- Ensuring assessment strategies are in place in line with the Agreed Syllabus

- Creating the RE Development Plan and ensuring its regular review
- Accountability for RE standards in the school
- Meet with member of the Diocesan RE advisory team when possible

### **CURRENT PRACTICE/PRINCIPLES**

- RE is delivered teachers who have all received Understanding Christianity training.
- All pupils have a 'beliefs and values' learning journey workbook, which is a collection of RE work, photographs, prayers and so on. Each class has a floor book where group learning s recorded and reflected upon.
- RE learning is adapted for the needs of all children whilst ensuring that high expectations remain present. Strategies for presenting learning are varied to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to succeed in RE.
- RE lessons contain a 'rich discourse' or 'high quality discussion' allowing children to develop deep understanding.
- Where possible pupils engage with 'lived faith' through visits and visitors.
- Reporting and recording is done annually to parents via a written report.
- Formative assessment is carried out at the end of each unit of work using a checklist of key knowledge and skills. This can then be used at other intervals as retrieval practice. Focused assessment tasks allow pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a range of ways, through drama, music, role-play, artwork and so on.
- Summative assessment is taken from the formative assessment over the year.
- Future priorities at St Leonards for RE are to continue to develop staff skill and knowledge to ensure that RE is always taught with academic rigour. Also to give teachers the growing confidence to challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice and extremism.