

Religious Education Policy



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Review Date:	Summer 2025
Type of Policy:	Non- Statutory Policy

Revision Number	Date Issued	Prepared by	Approved	Comments
2	Summer 2023	RE TEAM	Ethos committee	

<i>Type of Policy</i>	<i>Tick ✓</i>
DCAT Statutory Policy	
DCAT Non-statutory Policy	✓
DCAT Model Optional Policy	
Academy Policy	
Local Authority Policy	

Vision Statement

The school's Christian vision of ***“With God help we will live kindly, love each other, learn and laugh together”*** was developed with staff, children, governors and families in line with the Church of England's vision for education in 2021 supported by the bible quote of ***Let all that you do be done in love 1 Corinthians 16:***

Ethos

Statement

Recognising our historic foundation, The March Church of England Primary School will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at Parish and Diocesan level.

The March CE School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

For every child to reach their God-given potential

Religious Education is at the heart of our school ethos and vision. We believe that pupils' Religious Education will contribute to helping them to make sense of their life, their shared experiences, key beliefs and concepts. Through thorough, engaging, positive teaching and learning in our church school, pupils will be supported to live and flourish in a multicultural, multi-faith society and demonstrate understanding of the faiths and lives of others as well as themselves.

Aims for Religious Education

Through high quality teaching and learning in Religious Education, we aim to:

- develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions, and world views that offer answers to challenging questions
- support pupils in learning from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning and purpose
- provide opportunities for pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, and enable them to flourish individually within their multi-cultural, multi-faith community
- develop respect and sensitivity to others, in particular those with faiths and beliefs different from their own
- offer pupils opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development

- enable pupils to prepare themselves to face the challenges and responsibilities of adult life, employment and life-long learning

Curriculum

Religious Education is planned and taught based on the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus, making use of the Understanding Christianity resources. This approach allows for a spiral building of skills and knowledge throughout the school, beginning with EYFS.

Within our curriculum we have an enquiry approach to allow children to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith as well as other world faiths and views, ask challenging questions and develop respect and sensitivity toward others. Religious Education provides pupils with the opportunity to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions, and those of others, in engaging ways.

Curriculum time for Religious Education is separate from time spent in Collective Worship although there are strong connections between the two. In most cases, Religious Education is taught weekly to allow a gradual build up of knowledge and skills throughout the year. This can be flexible to allow for memorable moments such as visits or visitors.

Christianity makes up at least 50% of the teaching time in Religious Education. In Early Years, pupils follow resources from Understanding Christianity termly in addition to exploring special stories, celebrations and people from other faiths throughout the year. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about Christianity, Judaism and Islam. References to other faiths represented in our school community are made through the sharing of festivals and celebrations throughout the year. All year groups have an opportunity to bring their learning about different faiths together in comparison units.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Religious Education allows pupils to learn about religious traditions, their significance to worshippers and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables pupils 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 Religious Education curriculum. Religious Education enables pupils to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions.

Each unit of Religious Education is based around a Big question which is introduced at the start of the unit and lesson. Prior learning and recall is assessed before new learning is started in order to tailor lessons to suit the needs of each class. Pupils are given opportunities to revisit their prior learning and add new learning to it; pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they can learn for their own lives from each unit.

Assessment is carried out continually by class teachers and supporting adults, beginning with prior learning, with reference to the Diocesan and West Sussex Guidelines. Learning from

each session is assessed against the LO and Big Question and marked using the school's post it note system to celebrate question and extend. Evidence for these assessments should be taken from verbal responses throughout the session as well as any work recorded in books.

In order for all pupils to achieve their potential in Religious Education, we provide engaging and aspirational learning opportunities for all children, without limiting them, so that challenge is available at all levels. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- grouping the pupils by mixed ability, allowing for children to support and encourage one another
- using discussion or practical tasks for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding
- providing resources, such as word banks, to support less confident pupils
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of pupils
- making use of artefacts, visitors and visits to places of worship
- enabling pupils to record their responses in different ways, such as through artwork or making videos

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We believe that it is the right of every child to receive Religious Education and as such all pupils are offered the opportunity to explore and engage with religious experiences, enabling them to grow spiritually and find meaning in their own way. Children with special educational needs will have equal opportunity to access these experiences. Staff can adapt programmes or find alternative multisensory approaches to meeting individual needs. For some special needs children, the specialist language involved in studying Religious Education can present a problem. Help should be given them in learning and understanding key words and specific language in Religious Education. Similarly, the home language of a family should not be a barrier to learning in Religious Education at Christ Church School. Key words, visual aids and emotion pictures are examples of the support which should be provided. EAL support can provide pre-teaching of key words in advance of the taught unit.

Some pupils in our school come from diverse backgrounds and represent other faiths. Their different experiences, faiths and cultural backgrounds provide a natural resource to enrich the life of our Church school. We are against any discrimination based on ability, colour, faith, gender or race and work towards developing an attitude of respect for one another. Religious Education promotes this attitude; the nature of the subject - as a vehicle to promote spiritual and moral, social and cultural development - encourages inclusion in the fullest sense.

The Legal Position

Religious Education is compulsory for all our pupils unless parents make written application, to the Governors, for their child to be allowed to be withdrawn from these classes. We respect the child's dignity in this situation, aim to provide a purposeful alternative activity, but we would prefer that all children be given the opportunity to study this subject in our church school.

Our teachers support the ethos of our church school and all demonstrate a willingness to teach Religious Education and lead worship. Not all staff in the school are practicing Christians but everyone at interview has declared an enthusiasm to respect and support our church ethos.

Pupils in our Foundation Stage, both Reception and Nursery, follow a programme in Religious Education which supports and is supported by the Early Learning Goals.

Support and Leadership in Religious Education

The subject leader is responsible for improving standards of teaching and learning through:

- monitoring and evaluating provision across the school
- taking a lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent developments through research, attending network meetings or courses
- meeting with other DCAT Religious Education leads to share and discuss best practice
- working with the Ethos and Worship team to evaluate the quality of its Church school

Our Parish Priests both advise and contribute to the R.E. teaching programme. Through working alongside children and staff, they have opportunity to consider areas such as spiritual development which is a more difficult area to assess formally. The involvement of members of the Clergy in teaching Religious Education is highly valued and seen to enhance staff development in this curriculum area.

Within their monitoring programme, the Governors show a keen interest in the development of this subject and alongside it, the spiritual development of our pupils. Governors are kept up to date with developments in Ethos meetings. A named governor takes particular interest in the formation of the scheme of Religious Education, its delivery, monitoring and reporting. They liaise with the Religious Education Leader, observe lessons and participate in monitoring activities.

Communication with Pupils and Parents

At the beginning of each unit, teachers discuss pupils' prior learning. This is used to inform planning and is referred to during each unit, as well as at the end, to fill in new learning and correct misconceptions. Feedback to pupils can happen in both written and verbal form throughout lessons.

Religious Education and religious events are shared with parents in Curriculum Newsletters, the school website, and will be on display in classrooms for parents to see during open-

classroom events. Feedback on pupils' learning and progress within Religious Education and their spiritual development is included in the end of year report along with an overall assessment of where they are working in relation to age related expectations.