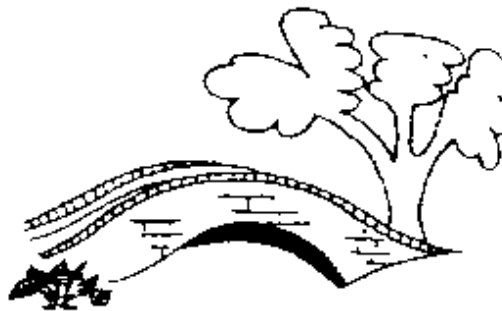


Whixall C.E. Primary School and Nursery

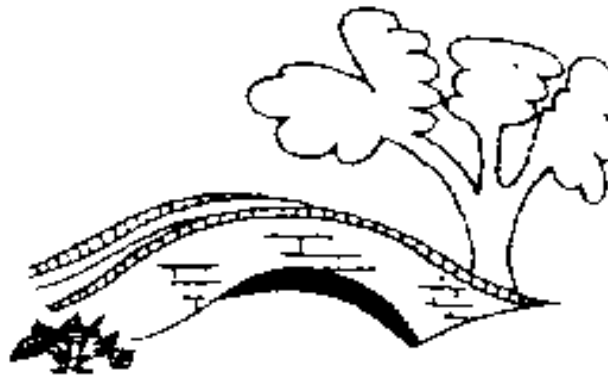


Part of Fields Multi Academy Trust

RE Policy

Policy adopted: September 2018
Agreed by staff and Governors: October 2018
Reviewed: September 2020
To be reviewed: September 2023

“Whixall CE Primary School and Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at all times and expects everybody working with us to share this commitment.”



Through our distinctive Christian ethos, we develop a loving and supportive atmosphere that nurtures the uniqueness and talents of all.

Through our inspiring curriculum, we aim that all children achieve their true potential, embrace challenge and become resilient individuals who are empowered to embrace the fullness of life.

Rationale

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in defining our school's distinctive Christian character. RE is regarded as a core subject within our curriculum. It has a vital role in developing religious literacy and deepening children's understanding of Christianity, in all its forms, and fostering appreciation and understanding of other faith traditions. RE is non-confessional and should be treated as an academic subject in its own right.

As the Church of England document, '**Making a difference? A review of Religious Education in Church of England schools 2014**' recommends, the RE curriculum in all schools should,

".....ensure it provides a more coherent, progressive and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity within the context of the wider exploration of the diversity of religion and belief in the modern world."

".....explore ways of extending pupils' ability to think theologically and engage in theological enquiry as part of their learning in RE."

RE Statement of Entitlement

RE teaching at our school will be in line with the recommendations of the **Statement of Entitlement for Church Schools**, published by the Church of England Education Office (February 2019).

Christianity will, therefore, be at least 50% of RE curriculum time. The teaching of Christianity is core to the teaching of RE in our school. However, as a Church school we have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and Worldviews. As a result, children will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up. They will also learn to appreciate the faith of others and develop a deeper understanding of their own ideas and beliefs. These outcomes must contribute to harmonious relationships within and between communities, promoting social inclusion and combating prejudice and discrimination.

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 for all children. Our school bases its RE provision on the Shropshire Locally Agreed Syllabus (see Appendix 1). In addition, we use the Lichfield Diocesan RE Guidelines, Understanding Christianity, resources and other appropriate materials to enhance learning and teaching.

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 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.

The aims of Religious Education in our school are:

- to help children to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text;
- to help children consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain's cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide;
- to enable all children to develop knowledge and understanding of other major world religions and world views and their impact on society and culture;
- to give children a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions;
- to help children to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of religious texts and teachings and understanding their impact on the lives of believers;
- to develop children's abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of religion and belief, of themselves, the world and human experience;
- 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 nurture understanding, respect and open-mindedness and inspire lifelong engagement with the study of religions and beliefs.

The outcomes for children at our school is that they will be 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 children's ability to interpret and appreciate religious imagery and expression.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

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 (SMSC) development.

Spiritual	Widening children's vision of themselves and their own experience, within the context of a growing awareness and understanding of God.
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Moral	Helping each child develop their own informed values.
Social	Helping children understand some major forces shaping the values of our society.
Cultural	Aiding children in exploring aspects of their own cultural heritage, and developing positive attitudes towards diversity.

Additional links will be found across the curriculum especially with **personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE)** and **British values**. RE can also make a positive contribution to enhancing creativity and enjoyment and ensure the well-being of all children.

The management of RE

RE is given equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing. Children's achievement in RE should be equal to or better than comparable subjects. Our teachers share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development.

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

In RE children will be encouraged / have opportunities to:

- think theologically and explore 'big' questions;
- give an informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith;
- develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply the Bible text;
- engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none;
- recognise that faith is a particular way of understanding and responding to God and the world;
- analyse and explain the varied nature and traditions of the Christian community;
- show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning;
- reflect sensitively on areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth;
- reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions;
- express religious ideas with the appropriate language, vocabulary and terminology;
- be confident in expressing and nurturing their own faith journey.

Right to withdrawal - see Appendix 2

At our 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 children or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects. Where a child is withdrawn from RE and does 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.

Current RE practice and principles

Whixall CE Primary school is a church school with a strong practice of giving children the opportunity to explore faith and religion. We believe it is fundamental to prepare children for adulthood in a world which is diverse in nature and we give them the tools to act responsibly and respectfully with those of faith and none.

Planning and delivery

RE is delivered by one member of staff at our school, taking into account children with additional SEN. Teachers follow a long-term plan based on Understanding Christianity and the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus.

RE is delivered through questioning and exploration. Teachers develop understanding at different levels through supporting with questioning and reasoning, and extending to greater depth. Recording of RE when appropriate is again supported and scaffolded as required.

Assessment and monitoring

Through appropriate questioning and exploration, children's understanding of a key area can be assessed. This is used both for informing future planning and as a summative assessment at the end of a key topic. This is then recorded for monitoring. Parents are informed of progress through parent consultation meetings and end of year reports. Monitoring is also carried out through book trawls and pupil voice. Monitoring is reported to the Quality of Education Governor. Christian Distinctiveness is an agenda item for full governing body meetings and includes teaching and learning in RE.

Future developments

We aim to continue to raise the profile of RE through high-quality teaching and through staff CPD. Through application for RE quality mark (Gold), we will further highlight the significance and importance of this core subject.

Shropshire Agreed Syllabus

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/media/790336/SYLLABUS-Shropshire-SACRE-2021.pdf>

Appendix 2

Guidance for schools and academies on the right to withdrawal from Religious Education March 2017

Religious Education

The government guidance *Religious Education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010* states that:

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those who withdraw by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over)

In voluntary controlled schools and academies, religious education must be provided in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus provided by the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) of the local authority in which the school is situated.

In voluntary aided schools and academies, the decision on the content of religious education rests with the Governing Body, and should be in line with the Trust Deeds of the school.

In all forms of church school, the religious education provided should contribute to the Christian character of the school, and this is an aspect of the school's work which is subject to the ***Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)***, whether VC, VA or academy.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. 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 such as history or citizenship. (Non-statutory Guidance 2010)***

Any parent considering withdrawal must contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns relating to the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the school.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

It is important that the school makes clear on its website and through other forms of communication, the RE syllabus being taught in school. There needs to be a clear understanding of the relevance of the RE curriculum and how it respects children's own beliefs. It is good practice to review requests to withdraw from RE and collective worship annually.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Whether the parents wish their children to be withdrawn from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it.
- Parents can withdraw their child from a specific activity, such as a visit to a place of worship, and not withdraw their child from the remainder of the RE.
- Where pupils are withdrawn from RE or collective worship, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or incur extra cost.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn from RE, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This could be provided at the school or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided. Outside arrangements are permitted providing the necessary safeguarding procedures are in place and the LA or Trust Board is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from withdrawal will only affect the start or end of a school session (***Non-statutory Guidance 2010***)

It is important that schools are fully aware of issues surrounding religion, race and culture and ensure that parental right to withdrawal requests do not hamper their responsibilities to ensure equality for all and the promotion of British Values.