



Kirkstall St. Stephen's

RE Policy

May 2024

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

KSS School Vision:

We are cherished, we are challenged, we are children of God.

- We are **cherished** – we aim to create a caring environment where all children and staff feel welcome, valued, supported and respected.
- We are **challenged**- through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, where achievements are recognised but it is also safe to fail, increasing our resilience.
- We are **children of God** – we recognise the value of each and every individual, encouraging every-one's unique spiritual development and potential.

In the light of the Mission Statement, Inclusion and Assessment Policies and intent, this is the policy statement for the delivery of RE at Kirkstall St Stephen's Primary School.

Intent for RE

Every child who leaves Kirkstall St. Stephen's will have a sense of religion and belief and will have had the opportunity to reflect on their own ideas and ways of living. We challenge the children by exploring big questions about life, to find out what people believe and what difference it makes to how they live. Children learn to respect other faiths and beliefs, recognising that all people should be cherished and are of equal value. The pupil's own opinions and beliefs are valued and respected, and there are many opportunities to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We want pupils to have the confidence to conduct balanced and informed conversations about RE. RE encourages self-understanding and helps pupils' self-esteem, reflecting our school vision that they are cherished. The content of RE is challenging and encourages pupils' mental, cognitive and linguistic development. It particularly supports critical thinking skills, investigation, application and interpretation. RE lessons encourage attitudes of empathy, wonder, open-mindedness, working with others and a sense of community.

Curriculum design

In order to fulfil this RE is balanced between three disciplines. These are:

- Theology • Philosophy • Human/Social Sciences

Theology (the way beliefs shape how humans understand themselves, each other and the world around them)

Our curriculum has strong emphasis on exploring the beliefs of Christians, Muslims and Sikhi in particular, with some reference to non-religious views. This incorporates the phenomenology approach (the nuts and bolts of religion) and concept cracking (weighing up evidence for different beliefs). This is encouraged by the use of big questions for each topic. There is also some investigation of how beliefs are applied differently in different contexts.

Human/Social Sciences (the ways in which religion and beliefs impact on human living)

Most of the topics include some exploration of the way these beliefs might impact on a person or community and what difference it makes to the way they live their lives. This incorporates the interpretive approach (studying experiences of individuals). This is a method we are going to further develop in Reception using the Belonging and believing books. There are also opportunities which incorporate the spiritual development approach of David Hay, experiencing religions and religious practice. Pupils are encouraged to use their

senses, role play, reflection and led in guided fantasy. Our visits to places of worship (churches, Mosque and Gurdwara) also give our pupils a chance to investigate further.

Philosophy (asking questions about what humans can know and how they can know it) Pupils are encouraged to ask questions about what is reasonable to believe – we use dialogue, discussion and debate to encourage pupils to think about the world and their place in it. This incorporates a human development approach, allowing pupils to respond for themselves and explore what they think. There are also opportunities to discuss ethical issues of right, wrong, good and evil. With the younger children the use of Godly play techniques helps them to wonder and ask questions.

Inclusion

Our whole school inclusion, English as an additional language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies apply to RE.

RE has an important role in challenging stereotypical views and developing a positive appreciation of others. The curriculum builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education. Pupils from any religious background or none are encouraged to express their beliefs in a respectful and open atmosphere.

Teachers are aware that pupils who have barriers to learning in other areas may have a strong interest in and aptitude for RE. All pupils should be encouraged to progress to their full potential and a variety of teaching methods (e.g. use of art, drama, ICT) should be employed to ensure that this is possible.

Pupils who are gifted and talented in RE are given opportunities to demonstrate and develop their strengths.

Some pupils have positive and deep experiences of religion from their lives outside of school. While there is no doubt that these experiences should be valued, they do not necessarily relate to pupils' ability in RE.

Withdrawal

Pupils' families and faith communities have the right to encourage religious nurture of the children, fostering their faith. It is the responsibility of the school to provide Religious Education for all its pupils.

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from RE. They are asked to contact the head teacher to make arrangements. No reasons have to be given but parents are encouraged to discuss with the head teacher the issues concerning withdrawal. Children who are withdrawn will be fully supervised in another part of the school. Our approach to RE, however, has been constructed in the hope that parents will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

Provision

Kirkstall St Stephen's follows the Diocesan guidelines for the teaching of RE in accordance with the Trust Deed. (See appendix 1)

RE is taught as an identifiable subject although there are links with other curricular areas. In accordance with the Diocesan Guidelines, we expect that the following hours are the *minimum* hours devoted to RE:

- Key stage 1 – 36 hours per year.
- Key stage 2 – 45 hours per year.

Christianity, Judaism and Islam will be taught in both Key Stages. Sikhism will be introduced at KS2. We also explore non-religious worldviews. Other faiths may be celebrated or mentioned as part of discussion or in other curricular areas and, but they will not form part of our main RE curriculum.

Monitoring & Assessment

The children's work is assessed against the KSS Progression of Skills and knowledge in RE. Evidence for making these judgments will be gathered through discussion and observation of the pupil during the lesson and by the child's recording of the activities in their RE books. All levels are based upon teacher assessment. Children are also given the opportunity to fully participate in the assessment process, through peer, self and group assessments.

Children are monitored on a regular basis to check progress through the use of Learning Journey Checklists and Foundation Trackers. Assessment and Recording is an integral part of the teaching process at KSS. Assessment is used to inform planning and to facilitate differentiation. The assessment of children's work is on-going to ensure that understanding is being achieved and that progress is being made. Areas concerned with reflection and response can be difficult to assess, the experience itself may well be more important than any attempt to assess. However pupils are encouraged to reflect and respond through creative activities.

Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress in the annual report in which progress and achievements are stated.

Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for formulating, agreeing and adopting the policy. Governors will then on an ongoing basis:

- Determine the nature of Religious Education in accordance with the requirements of the Trust Deed.
- Work in partnership with the Head teacher and staff of the school in formulating and augmenting the RE Policy.
- Monitoring the delivery of RE by a Foundation Governor

Staff responsibilities

The subject Co-ordinator:

- needs to be up to date with information pertaining to R.E.
- needs to be familiar with The Leeds Diocesan Syllabus.
- is responsible for advising and informing the Head teacher and the Governors.
- is responsible for advising and supporting staff.
- is responsible for maintaining and procuring appropriate resources.
- is responsible for monitoring and keeping under review the implementation of the policy.
- is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Units of Work.
- is responsible for assessing with the RE teachers the children's standards of achievement in RE.
- is responsible for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of RE in the school.

- is responsible for ensuring that the school is up to date with SIAMS inspection framework.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The RE policy will be reviewed every two years. The teaching of the subject will be monitored by reviewing the medium and long-term plans and carrying out learning walks and book scrutinies, with positive feedback and identifying areas for improvement.

Regular pupil interviews will be undertaken. This will be evidenced and used to ascertain the following – Is RE enjoyable? Are the children making progress in RE? How do they know? Staff will also be consulted on a regular basis regarding any training that might be needed.

- This policy has been adopted by the governors in consultation with the RE Subject Leader and should be read in conjunction with other school policy documents and the Leeds Diocesan RE Syllabus.

Appendix 1

Trust Deed Statement

“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing 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 pupils”