

# Chilton Foliat C of E (VA) Primary School

## Religious Education Policy

Mission statement:

We strive to improve heart and mind'

*Cor et Mentem Colere Nitimur*

Introduction 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'  
Matthew 23: 37-38 (The pursuit of excellence)

Our School Values: Courage, Truth, Forgiveness, Respect, Trust, Perseverance, Friendship, Compassion, Service, Generosity, Justice and Thankfulness.

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes: "a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013). According to the 2011 Statement of Entitlement to RE in C of E schools the aims of Religious Education in church schools are:

- 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 the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents.
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

Also from 2014:

- To teach children the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

At Chilton Foliat School, we aim that Religious Education will:

- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.
- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- Enable pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery.

However RE alone cannot achieve these aims; they are part of our whole school ethos and with the love of God, we learn, care, grow and share.

Teaching and Learning About Christianity.

Christianity is the major religion, which is studied in our school. At least two thirds of our RE teaching will be about Christianity. Understanding Christianity as a living religion is the foundation of pupils' Religious Education in school. 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. Pupils will be enabled to deepen their understanding of God as encountered and taught by Christians.

Teaching and Learning About Other Faiths and Worldviews

Church schools have a duty to foster an accurate and increasing understanding of world religions and worldviews. 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.

How is RE is Organised?

The RE coordinator is Lara Jepson and the RE appointed Governor is Penny Williams

- We deliver RE with units of work from Understanding Christianity and Discovery RE.
- We have developed a whole school subject plan for RE.
- We believe that RE is about subject knowledge, critical / evaluative thinking and personal spiritual development.
- RE is an important part of the whole education of the child and threads throughout the curriculum.

- RE will be allocated at least 5 - 10% of curriculum time. ☑ RE will be taught to all pupils unless any parent exercises their right for their child to be withdrawn (see below in 'The Right of Withdrawal from RE').
- RE is sometimes taught in the form of a whole school RE Day which covers a unit of work for each class in a creative and engaging way, allowing for a deeper understanding to be explored.

### Our Approach

RE should always be appropriate to the age, aptitude and ability of the pupils, in a meaningful and relevant way. RE will be well planned, adopting a range of teaching strategies including class, group and individual learning activities. The use of art, drama, music, story, artefacts, discussion and questioning, reflection, visits and visitors are all vehicles for effective teaching and learning in RE.

### Special Needs

To ensure inclusion for all pupils, teachers will respond to pupils diverse learning needs and set suitable and appropriate tasks.

### The Right of Withdrawal From RE

As a Church Aided school we aim for the involvement of all children in the RE teaching although parents have the right to withdraw children from RE and should contact the Head teacher if they wish to arrange this. However, the Christian ethos of the school is conveyed throughout the curriculum and children cannot be withdrawn from this experience.

### Managing the Right of Withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. ☑ Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.

- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

### Recording and Assessment

Assessment should be part of the teaching and learning process and planned into the programme of study. Over the academic year both AT1 and AT2 should be assessed 3 times a year. Assessment will take place in a variety of different ways, including oral question-and-answer sessions based on discussion and reflections on completed work. Evidence of work can be found in children's individual RE books, which continue with them throughout the school and Class folders/floor books.

### Role of The Co-Ordinator and Governors

At Chilton Foliat School the RE Co-ordinator is Mrs Jepson, who is responsible for planning and monitoring RE teaching across the school, supporting staff on themed days and in the EYFS. The Co-ordinator is also responsible for organising and replenishing resources and for monitoring progression within the school.

All governors must bear in mind the principles of the Church of England, of the Trust Deed and of the Ethos Statement of the school in relation to the core elements of governance. It is the role of the foundation governor to put all decisions and discussions within the context of the Christian foundation of the school. Penny Williams, one of the school's Foundation Governors, has the role of monitoring RE at the school on behalf of the governing body.

**Provision for Monitoring and Review** The teaching and learning of RE will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Head teacher, the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and the nominated Foundation Governor. Strengths and areas for development will be highlighted and noted.

The RE Policy itself should be reviewed every two years.