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### Policy and Guidelines for Religious Education

#### VISION [what we want to see]

'At St Mary's, inspired by Christian values, we are excited by our learning, proud of our achievements, determined to be the best we can be and caring of all of God's creation'.

#### MISSION [what we will do]

- Through excellent teaching we will deliver an inspirational curriculum we will enable every child to make the very best progress
- We will work in partnership with children and families to further promote confidence and self esteem
- We will prepare children to confidently face the challenges of growing up in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- We will provide children with an understanding of local, national and global communities and faiths.
- With St Mary's Church, Brookside Methodist, and other local churches, we will further develop understanding of gospel values in action through worship and across the curriculum

#### **Safeguarding Statement of Intent**

St Marys Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be

protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at to the school. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

St Marys Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people through rigorous application of Safer Recruitment processes. All applications for staff positions in the school are thoroughly vetted in accordance with policy. DBS checks are undertaken for all staff and for volunteers who work on a regular basis in school.

## **1. THEOLOGICAL BASIS.**

As a Church of England school we attach great importance to Christian values, including respect, acceptance, understanding, justice and human rights for all. These are underpinned by the following theological statement:

'God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God: God created them, male and female he created them and God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good'. Genesis 1:27 and 31.

Through our ethos, values, Collective worship, Religious Education and the whole curriculum, we promote discussion of a common sense of identity and support diversity, giving staff and children alike the opportunity to develop an understanding of how different people, communities and faiths can be united by shared values and common experiences.

Religious Education occupies a special place in the curriculum at St Mary's School. As a Church of England, Voluntary Aided School, the Religious Education curriculum has special significance, and is overseen by the Governors in accordance with the Trust Deed. It has core curriculum status.

The study of R.E. plays an essential part in facilitating the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of the children throughout the school. It has many cross curricular links to all National Curriculum areas of study as well as to PSHE and Citizenship. It also plays a significant part in our commitment to Christian values and community cohesion. The RE modules are also supported in the daily act of worship, including worship singing practice, where the theology of the words of songs and hymns are explained and used for reflection and prayer.

The teaching and learning within Religious Education supports children to develop both their knowledge and understanding about Christian teaching, the Bible, different faiths, and in addition fosters the ethos within the school, which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, to behave appropriately and to care about and be accepting of each other.

## **2. RE AIMS TO HELP CHILDREN:**

- Acquire a sound knowledge of Christianity through the study of the Bible, Christian beliefs and practices and traditions, as well as learning about the origins and development of the Christian religion.

- Learn both about and from the beliefs and religious practices of different world religions and through this gain a level of religious understanding based on accurate knowledge.
- Develop the ability to infer meaning from Bible and other religious stories, and to interpret religious language and symbols.
- Understand the important influence that Christianity and the Christian experience has had throughout history, right up to the present day in regard to the spiritual, cultural, social and moral development of society and how this can contribute to community cohesion in a multi-cultural, multi-faith society.
- Understand the values, attitudes and lifestyles that the Christian faith supports and through this understanding help the children build positive relationships within, the school community their families, and the wider community.
- To understand that Christian values are across Christian traditions and different Faiths and can be shared by all.
- Develop spiritually through encouraging sensitive exploration of personal experiences and reflection on feelings and emotions engendered by human relationships and the relationship with the natural world.
- Know that what they experience RE. is coherent with the development of religious understanding in Collective worship

### **3. THE RE SCHEME OF WORK**

The Religious Education Scheme of Work aims to provide a range of activities that are age appropriate. It is based on: The Diocese of St Albans guidance: The Barnet agreed syllabus: Understanding Christianity, Southwark Diocesan syllabus, Discovery RE scheme. Each year group has a weekly lesson which can, through cross curricular planning, be extended into other curriculum time and areas. It is expected that all children will record their learning in RE regular, and as writing skills develop, this should be a piece of writing once a week, with an extended piece of writing at least half each half term. Worksheets which restrict the children's ability to express their understanding should not be used.

Knowledge and understanding are developed through cross curricular planning and learning can be recorded not only in literacy but will usually be in dedicated RE books. This ensures that adequate time is given to good quality recording which further develops understanding.

Differentiation will be organised by class teachers as necessary in response to the diversity of needs in the teaching group, and in keeping with the school's Teaching and Learning and Feedback policies.

The Scheme of Work ensures continuity and progression and gives children the opportunity to develop attitudes and skills, widen their experiences and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian Faith, the Bible, different faiths and the world they live in.

Clear objectives should be planned for each lesson, along with learning steps, although where discussion and tasks are open ended, many other ideas and concepts are likely to emerge and teachers need to take

professional decisions about allowing learning to be generated by lesson outcomes. By assessing this during and after lessons, the following lesson will be planned to extend learning further.

Capturing children's responses during discussion times is done by teachers or support staff. Where possible these should be placed in RE books as part of the recording.

#### **4. ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING.**

In accordance with the Assessment policy, assessment should take into account how the child's learning is developing and can include any of the following as appropriate:

- It is expected that the standard of presentation in RE is the same as for all other subjects including handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar whilst maintaining the integrity of the RE learning steps.
- Teacher/ teaching assistant observation, using prepared class list with objectives at the heading, post its, labels , brief written comments of significant moments recorded during or after the lesson and attached to the recorded learning as appropriate.
- Plenary feedback from group work
- Response in writing or pictures.
- Discussion with individuals or groups.
- Children's self-assessment e.g. 'Today I went to church and now I know that babies are baptised in a font' and 'I can statements.'
- Marking recorded learning should be in accordance with the Feedback Policy to ensure time for reflection on outcomes and to indicate areas for future development. It is important that feedback relates to the development of skills and understanding related to RE.

Assessment should take into account:

- The child's understanding of the objective planned
- The individual response of the child, not in relation to others
- Ability to question and raise questions
- What the child needs to do next to improve

Assessment for learning is ongoing during lessons and provides feedback to the child.

Summative assessment is completed at the end of each RE focus. This information is then used in written and verbal reporting to parents. Teachers will also take this in to account in planning for further learning.

Assessment will be against the learning objectives for the half term and should be recorded as: 'working at the expected level, working below or working above' This should be recorded on grids provided and will contribute to an understanding of standards for each pupil and for each class. These assessment should also be used in reporting to parents, including written reports

#### **5. TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE**

Religious Education should be taught by class teachers. This enables the class teacher who has in depth knowledge of the curriculum for the year group to make both vital cross curricular and personal, social, moral and spiritual links. It falls to all staff to foster the developmental aspects of the Scheme of Work

and Christian values such as mutual respect, care for one another, empathy and consideration, in accordance with the Vision Statement, Aims and Values.

When delivering the Religious Education curriculum, teachers will use a variety of teaching methods in accordance with the school policy on teaching and learning. Time must be allowed for thinking, reflection and response, working as a whole class, in groups or pairs as appropriate. A range of possible teaching and learning strategies are:

- Use artifacts
- Make educational visits
- Invite visitors in to talk to the children to foster the growth of knowledge and understanding.
- Drama improvisation in groups
- Hot seating
- Tableaux – Freeze Frames
- Focused discussion creating response charts
- Drawing: e.g. ‘my special place’ ‘a special place in church’
- Art: e.g. a reflective tree, leaves to contain phrases such as hopes for the coming year, fears about moving on
- ‘Close your eyes and imagine.....then draw or do a pattern in different shapes and colours to describe an emotion or reaction
- Targeted questioning and dialogue
- Questioning a character.
- Poetry
- Acrostics on a name or theme
- Play script
- Newspaper report
- Recontextualise e.g. the feeding of the 5,000 in school! Bringing a story into present day experience. What might happen today?
- Track the feelings and reactions of a character in a short video clip
- Diary: a day in the life of....
- Works of art... 10 things to notice, 3 questions to ask, which character are you?

Religious education is a dynamic area of study, giving learners the opportunity to develop a whole range of learning and thinking styles, question and raise questions, explore and investigate the boundaries of knowledge and understanding, support spiritual and moral development, develop character, empathy and emotional intelligence, and engage in debate about fundamental questions of life and existence, whilst formulating their own response to belief and faith. It has much to contribute to all curriculum areas, not only in its width of approach to developing children as learners, but also in expressing the Christian values upon which St Mary’s school is founded.

Signed ..... RE Leader Revised November 2019

## RE GUIDELINES

### Areas of Learning

As written in the policy document the Scheme of Work gives each child the opportunity to:

- Develop positive attitudes of self-worth as well as positive attitudes to others, the world, God's creation and learning.
- develop an understanding of and apply Christian values
- develop a range of skills for example to examine evidence and make judgments
- gain religious understanding through a range of experiences
- Deepen their knowledge about Christianity, the Bible, other faiths and the world they live in through the study of themes within both Key Stages.

These areas of learning are all interdependent as laid out below.

#### 1. Attitudes

**To self** To foster a feeling of self-worth, a sense of identity both individually and collectively, and understand that we are unique but all of equal value to God, and that God loves each person the same.

**To others** An appreciation and acceptance of others, acknowledging the need to communicate, co-operate and share with others, developing a respect for their views and beliefs, and become more sensitive to their needs, developing a sense of justice. Looking beyond ourselves to the needs of others, the homeless, and refugees.

**To the World** Respect and care for the environment which is part of God's creation, developing a delight at the variety and diversity in the world and developing concern and care for all living things.

**Wonder and Awe** Of God's gifts, an acknowledgement that God has a purpose for each of us, enjoyment and wonder of being alive.

**To learning** Encourage the children to have a curiosity to know more and understand better, a determination to realise their potential through recognising their own abilities and limitations and a sense of satisfaction and achievement.

#### 2. Skills

- To think and act responsibly
- To ask and answer questions
- To examine evidence and make judgments
- To respond sensitively to the needs of others

### **3. Experiences**

It is important to give children a range of experiences which will help their religious understanding. According to the age of the children these will include:-

- a) Visits to places of worship;
- b) Studies of local churches;
- c) Meeting with other Christians or Church leaders to hear about their faith;
- d) Reading the Bible and other Christian writings; Reading from the writings of different religions,
- e) The presentation of Biblical stories and other religious stories in a variety of ways;
- f) Participation in celebrations relating to major Christian festivals;
- g) Celebration of festivals from different faiths
- h) Participation with understanding in acts of Christian worship;
- i) Learning about the practices and beliefs of those different faiths;
- j) Looking at life from the perspective of others.

### **KEY STAGE 1 AIMS OF THEMES**

#### **Sacred Writings**

To enable children to:

- begin to acquire sound knowledge of key biblical stories from New and Old Testaments
- become familiar with stories from a wide range of traditions
- promote spiritual development

#### **Festivals and Celebrations**

To enable children to:

- understand why and how people celebrate special festivals
- begin to understand elements common to many celebrations
- begin to find out about stories, customs and traditions associated with major Christian festivals and those of other traditions
- to affirm individual pupils to give them opportunities to share in each other's celebration
- promote spiritual development

#### **People**

To enable children to:

- begin to be aware of notable people within the history of the church
- become aware of notable people within the church community
- begin to be aware of key figures in major faith traditions

#### **Places of Worship**

To enable children to:

- identify and talk about places of worship in the local community
- develop an awareness of religious worship through visiting a place of worship or handling artifacts used in worship and expressing their own ideas about God and prayer
- begin to understand what worship means to a believer
- recognise some architectural features of a church

#### **Symbols**

To enable children to:

- see, hear about, handle certain religious symbols used in Christianity and other faith traditions
- understand that symbols have a significance and meaning in the context of religion and promote pupils spiritual development

### **Prayer**

To enable children to

- understand that, for believers, prayer is a communication with God
- be introduced to some of the ways in which people pray
- appreciate why people pray

### **The Natural World**

To enable children to:

- begin to become aware of the beauty, patterns and rhythms of the natural world through experiencing and exploring its sights, sounds, textures and colours
- express feelings associated with their response to the natural world
- begin to appreciate and care for their own immediate environment and living things
- become aware of the cycle of life

### **Bible**

To enable children to:

- become aware of the different types of literature contained in the Bible, especially stories
- become aware of the importance of the Bible in the lives of some people
- become familiar with life in Bible times
- see Bibles used in worship

## **KEY STAGE 2 AIMS OF THEMES**

### **Sacred Writings**

To enable children to:

- learn more about stories and happenings from the Bible
- know something of the origins, language, script and use within communities of some sacred writings
- appreciate what makes a book holy
- promote pupils spiritual and moral development

### **Festivals and Celebrations**

To enable children to:

- begin to understand that there is a symbolic meaning in how special occasions are celebrated
- explore ways in which some of the major festivals are celebrated
- explore some of the key ideas associated with festivals and feasts and begin to appreciate how these are expressed symbolically
- learn about the order of festivals within the churches year

### **People**

To enable children to:

- find out about the leaders within other world faiths

- know about the life of Jesus and other key religious figures against the background of their time
- find out about the lives of people that were/are influenced by their faith
- learn about key figures involved in the spread of Christianity

### **Places of Worship**

To enable children to:

- be introduced to places of worship
- know about internal and external features of Christian and other places of worship
- perceive and respond to the atmosphere of special places
- show sensitivity towards the beliefs of others by behaving appropriately in places of worship
- extend their appreciation of what worship means to a believer

### **Symbols**

To enable children to:

- be familiar with key symbols used in Christianity and other faiths
- be aware that symbols are deeply significant within a faith context

and promote spiritual development

### **Prayer**

To enable children to:

- understand that prayer is a communication with God
- extend their understanding as to how people pray
- appreciate why people pray
- promote spiritual development

### **The Natural World**

To enable children to:

- develop awareness of the responsibilities of humans as custodians of the Natural World
- know that life depends upon the Natural World
- explore aspects of the Natural World that raise questions

### **Bible**

To enable children to:

- begin to understand the characteristics and use of different types of literature within the Bible
- to raise the profile of the Bible as a holy book and its importance to believers
- understand how the Bible can be
- promote spiritual development

### **WORLD FAITHS**

A range of different faiths are covered in the syllabus. Teachers should be aware of the great variety of cultures, faiths and faith traditions in their class and ensure that RE supports and affirms these.

### **WORLD VIEWS:**

It is recognized that there are many world views other than religious views. The school will respect and support views other than those related to religion.