

St. Michael's C of E



R.E. Policy

Vision

"Life in all its fullness"

Our vision guides us in all that we hope to be, enabling every part of our community to grow and develop. This means growing in body, mind and spirit in order to flourish and experience the joy and hope of, 'life in all its fullness' (John 10.10).

Awaiting approval from LAB

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Local Advisory Board:	Autumn Term 2026
Date of Next Review:	Autumn Term 2027
Responsible Officer:	Headteacher

Christian vision and values

At St. Michael's C of E Primary School, we offer a distinctly Christian education in an inclusive environment where we encourage all children and young people to learn, enquire and grow. The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in everything that we do. Our Christian Values are explicitly taught in collective worship and referred to throughout the school day.

As a Church of England primary school, our RE policy is rooted in our theologically grounded Christian vision. RE contributes directly to our aim that every child is enabled to flourish and to live "*life in all its fullness*," (John 10:10)

As a community, we have identified values that are woven into the fabric of the school and that we expect all members of the school community - children, staff, governors and clergy to model:

- Koinonia
- Creation
- Endurance
- Wisdom
- Justice
- Hope
- Service

We believe these values empower pupils to develop spiritually and guide their personal development as effective learners and good citizens. Children have regular opportunities to reflect on each value and to develop an understanding of the value in action.

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. It helps educate for dignity and respect, encouraging all to live well together through generous hospitality, faithfulness to our Christian foundation and deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions and worldviews.

Introduction and policy status

At St. Michael's C of E Primary School, pupils and their families can expect a high-quality Religious Education curriculum that is rich, sequential and varied. It enables learners to acquire secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a diverse global living faith, as well as a range of religions and worldviews.

We teach in accordance with the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. The school will review this policy in light of the 2026 Statement of Entitlement as it becomes the reference point for SIAMS inspection from September 2026.

As a Church school, the teaching of Christianity is an important part of our RE curriculum. Through the Understanding Christianity resource and an enquiry approach, pupils engage with significant theological concepts, biblical texts and their own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy.

Links with our school vision and support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the religions and worldviews studied.

Intent for RE: aims and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils to:

- know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through exploration of core beliefs, biblical texts and Christian practice;
- gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the traditions studied;
- engage with challenging questions of meaning, purpose, truth, identity, belonging, values and human experience;
- recognise the place and influence of religion and worldviews in Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and communities locally, nationally and globally;
- develop religious literacy so that they can hold balanced, well-informed and respectful conversations about religion and belief;

- explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of seeing, living, believing and thinking, while respecting the freedom and dignity of others.

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that teaching, learning and resourcing in RE are comparable with other curriculum subjects.

The RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish;
- contributes to British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner, enabling pupils to explore core concepts and questions through meaningful and informed dialogue;
- balances theology, philosophy and human and social sciences so that pupils develop religious literacy and disciplinary understanding;
- enables pupils to acquire rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the diverse and global nature of Christianity;
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, practices and how these contribute to identity in a range of religions and worldviews;
- supports wider curriculum areas and general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, oracy, critical thinking and the respectful expression of thoughts, questions and beliefs;
- uses adaptive teaching strategies so that pupils with SEND, pupils who are disadvantaged, pupils who are more able and pupils with English as an additional language can access challenging learning and demonstrate what they know and understand;
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued as they draw on their own experiences, beliefs and questions.

Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting the school's status as a Church of England school, Christianity should represent at least 50% of RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicit RE objectives however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Throughout the school year we aim to seek a balance between all subject areas. The Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle Syllabus suggests studying two world faiths per phase, with aspects of other faiths and worldviews brought into the teaching of RE through thematic units.

The time allocated for teaching RE at St. Michael's C of E Primary School is

EYFS	Planned through the EYFS Framework and enriched through stories, celebrations, visits, visitors and reflective opportunities
Key Stage 1	60 minutes per week, or equivalent blocked time, with an expectation of at least 36 hours per year
Key Stage 2	75 minutes per week, or equivalent blocked time, with an expectation of at least 45 hours per year
Curriculum balance	At least 50% Christianity across the planned RE curriculum

Scheme of work

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. It has been written in accordance with the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus and is supported by Understanding Christianity where appropriate.

EYFS	Themes emerging from the EYFS Framework, including belonging, special people, special places, stories, celebrations and similarities and differences.
Key Stage 1	Christianity, Islam and Judaism as stand-alone topics and thematic units exploring similarities, differences and lived experience.
Lower Key Stage 2	Christianity, Hindu Dharma and Sikhism as stand-alone topics, with thematic links to prior learning from Key Stage 1.
Upper Key Stage 2	Christianity, Islam and Judaism as stand-alone topics, with thematic units that draw on religions and worldviews studied across the primary curriculum.

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. The curriculum provides for the needs of all pupils, engaging and challenging them through the exploration of core concepts and questions.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn by:

- posing and discussing big and challenging questions;
- reading, interpreting and critically analysing texts, including sacred and significant texts;
- interpreting information from different sources;
- researching information for themselves;
- listening to and discussing ideas with the teacher, peers and visitors;
- engaging in pair and group work;
- exploring artefacts, art, photographs, music, music, drama, film and digital media;
- experiencing visits and visitors, including links with the parish church and wider faith communities;
- taking part in outdoor learning where appropriate;
- taking time for reflection, stillness, prayer spaces or thoughtful response where appropriate.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about religion, belief, race, culture and identity. Lessons present religions and worldviews in their richness and diversity in a sensitive, accurate and respectful way. Questions, views and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

RE, inclusion and adaptive teaching

We live in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society and encourage respect for, and understanding of, the religions, cultures and worldviews represented locally, nationally and globally. We seek to follow Jesus' example to love and serve one another so that all may be included.

All pupils, irrespective of race, culture, religion or belief, disability, SEND, sex, socio-economic background, prior attainment or individual need, should have equal access to the RE curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs will access the same broad curriculum content, with adaptive teaching, scaffolding, support, resources, vocabulary work, alternative recording methods or adult support used where appropriate.

Sensitive content will be handled carefully and respectfully. Staff will ensure that no pupil is expected to speak as a representative of a faith, culture or worldview, unless they freely choose to share their own experience.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Learning through Religious Education makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual development. It gives pupils opportunities to ask questions of meaning and purpose; reflect on awe, wonder and mystery; consider what is right and wrong; and explore how people live well together.

Pupils study their own rich cultural heritage and develop an understanding of how it is enriched by the diverse and multi-cultural society of Britain today. RE supports British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Cross-curricular links

Cross-curricular work is encouraged, in line with the whole-school approach to teaching and learning. Religious Education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, oracy, interpretation, respectful disagreement and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.

RE also contributes to pupils' SMSC development and supports learning in subjects such as English, art, drama, history, geography, computing, music, PSHE/RSE and citizenship.

Impact, assessment and progress

We assess children in order to ensure that they make good progress in RE. Assessment is mainly formative and is used to support teaching and learning, inform future planning and identify gaps in knowledge, vocabulary and understanding. Assessment in religious education will:

- be directly related to the expectations of the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus and the school's scheme of work;
- identify pupils' development in substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and personal knowledge, rather than only the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- recognise key concepts, vocabulary, enquiry skills and the ability to make connections across units;
- use clear criteria for marking and assessment, following the school's marking and feedback policy;
- include pupil self-assessment and reflection where appropriate;
- enable effective tracking of pupil progress and identification of areas for curriculum development;
- support meaningful reporting to parents and carers.

Monitoring, leadership and governance

We monitor teaching and learning in RE in the same way as other curriculum subjects. The RE Subject Leader monitors planning, teaching, pupil work, assessment information and pupil voice on a regular basis. Findings are shared with senior leaders and staff, and are used to inform subject development planning.

The Headteacher and RE Subject Leader report to the Local Advisory Board on the quality and impact of RE. Governors are encouraged to understand the school's RE provision, its link to the Christian vision and the expectations for RE in a Church of England school.

The policy should be read alongside the school's curriculum policy, teaching and learning policy, marking and feedback policy, SEND and inclusion policy, equality information and objectives, collective worship policy, SMSC provision and safeguarding policy.

Legal requirements and parental withdrawal

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full-time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request, or by their own request if aged 18 or over.

The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in Key Stage 1 is different from that relating to the subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to all registered pupils at the school, it includes pupils in Reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or playgroups.

We recognise the legal right of parents and carers to withdraw their child from all or part of Religious Education. Parents and carers do not need to give a reason for withdrawal. However, as RE is a core part of the curriculum in a Church of England school, we hope that all children admitted to St. Michael's will participate fully in RE.

The school aims to provide an open, respectful and inclusive curriculum that can be taught to all pupils, by all staff. Any parent or carer considering withdrawal is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Headteacher so that the nature and aims of RE can be explained and any questions can be explored. Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the Headteacher and a record will be kept.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE, the school will supervise the pupil but is not required to provide alternative teaching. The school will work with parents and carers to agree reasonable arrangements that do not adversely affect the pupil or the school's provision for other pupils.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, RE Subject Leader and Local Advisory Board, or earlier if statutory requirements, diocesan guidance, SIAMS expectations or school curriculum arrangements change.

References and supporting guidance

- Church of England / National Society: Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education in Church Schools.
- SIAMS Framework for Anglican and Methodist Schools.
- Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education.
- Understanding Christianity resource.
- School curriculum, SEND, equality, collective worship, safeguarding and teaching and learning policies.