



## Christ Church C of E [VA] Primary School



### Religious Education Policy

#### Mission Statement

At Christ Church C of E Primary school we value all children and encourage them to reach their full potential. During their time at this school children will grow up in a healthy, safe and secure environment. They will enjoy an enriched curriculum, gaining a real respect for themselves, for each other and the whole of their exciting world. This will nurture them towards developing socially and spiritually as well as academically.

#### RE Mission Statement

Our intention is that our Christian ethos and values, in conjunction with a broad Religious Education (RE) curriculum and excellent teaching and learning, engage the whole Christ Church community in rich spiritual and religious growth, exploring values and beliefs of Christianity and other world faiths and identifying with and respecting those of other cultures.

#### Governance & Syllabus

Christ Church is a Voluntary Aided School so both the management of RE and determining the nature of RE in our school is a distinctive role of the whole Governing Body and head teacher, who have adopted the Dioceses of Durham & Newcastle RE Syllabus which reflects the National Framework for RE, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS and as such is in accordance with the Trust Deed and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Collective Worship Policy.

#### Teaching & Learning - Christianity

It is central to our Voluntary Aided status that that at least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE, of which up to three quarters is devoted to Christianity and it's central role in our school, with at least one quarter learning about other faiths and world views.

Our Religious Education curriculum maintains a balance between Learning about Religion (Attainment Target 1) and Learning from Religion (Attainment Target 2):

#### Learning about Religion

We learn about

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

#### Learning from Religion

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

### **Religious Education in Christ Church will help pupils to:**

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

### **Teaching & Learning – Other World Faiths**

It is essential in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of the other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths. Judaism is studied in Key Stage 1 and Islam in Key Stage 2.

#### **Pupils will:**

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

### **Specific RE experiences at Christ Church**

- Pupils experience the Church's year through weekly collective worship in Christ Church, with special services for parents and the wider community at festival and celebration times including Easter Eucharist
- Pupils study the immediate local Christian community especially the stories of the Northern Saints, eg. Barnabas in Schools workshops
- Pupils regularly visit Christ Church to learn about it's Christian history and that of it's community. Pupils also visit Newcastle Cathedral. Early Years and KS1 children visit St Mary's Monkseaton regularly to participate in Godly Play sessions. These visits foster a deeper understanding of the Church as a living community
- Members of the local parish community visit to share their experience of Christian belief and life and both the Pastoral Assistant and members of the congregation and regularly involved in school life, eg. running our community choir, a craft club, organising Christmas Child Shoebox appeal, as well as weekly reading support work.
- Pupils develop skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions.
- In school and church pupils to listen to Christian 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions
- Pupils have access to a wealth of Christian artefacts and those from other world religions that are used with care, respect and confidence (from Church House Resource Centre and North Tyneside Libraries Service)

- In school we have a small reflection area that can be used by all as a focus for prayer and silent reflection

### **Proactive Exploration of Personal Faith at Christ Church**

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society

### **RE's role in enriching our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Spiritual development is enriched by pupils' exploration of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Moral development is enriched through study of the teachings of Jesus Christ, which contribute to pupils building a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

Social development is enriched by pupils' understanding what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice.

Cultural development is enriched through a growing understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

### **SEN provision (including Gifted and Talented pupils)**

All pupils are offered opportunity to explore and engage with religious experiences, enabling them to grow spiritually and find meaning in their own way. Children with special educational needs will have equal opportunity to access these experiences through a variety of teaching methods and strategies that are matched to age, ability, capability and interest. Extra support within the classroom is provided where possible. Children who are gifted and talented in RE will be challenged to research and discuss religious concepts and ideas in greater depth.

### **Resources**

Church House and North Tyneside Library Loan Service provide an unrivalled richness of resources which are local, convenient and well used by school. There is a core bank of books and artefacts within school. Our clergy are a valued resource, assisting in the teaching of RE and providing staff with knowledge, expertise and resources.

### **Assessment, expectations and record keeping**

Assessment has been in line with guidance within the Newcastle & Durham Dioceses RE Syllabus which was based on QCA National Expectations (8 Level Scale) 2004. A new system of assessment without levels is newly in place, indicating an individual's level of security ("developing, secure and exceeding") with curriculum objectives. Children have their own RE books and each class has an RE scrapbook. There is regular scrutiny of teaching, learning and work and a portfolio shows an overview of RE work within school.

## **Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School**

Religious Education is compulsory for all our pupils unless parents make a written application, to the Governors, for their child to be allowed to be withdrawn from these classes. We respect the child's dignity in this situation and aim to provide a purposeful alternative activity, but we would prefer that all children be given the opportunity to study this subject in our church school.

Where necessary, the Head Teacher retains a list of children whose parents have elected to withdraw them from RE and/or collective worship.

## **Ambition**

The whole school community at Christ Church is committed to aiming for the highest possible standard of achievement for each individual pupil.

We hope that children will reflect on religious teaching and develop their own beliefs and moral code, whilst maintaining a respect for the beliefs of others and a respect for the environment as a whole.

## **Policy review**

Bi-annually by the RE Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher.

RE Co-ordinator - Ms Rebecca Dance

Head Teacher – Mrs Gill Taylor

September 2015