

# **St John Baptist (Southend) CE Primary School**

## **RE POLICY**



The Governing Body at St John Baptist (Southend) CE Primary School believes that everyone is created in the image of God and is of infinite worth: 'So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them,' Genesis 1:27. The school's RE Policy is based on Christian values. In our Christian community, relationships are based on these core values: love, forgiveness, empathy, respect and concern for the whole person.

### **Christian Vision**

'As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' **John 13.34**

At our school, every child flourishes and becomes a "shining light." We achieve this by following Jesus, loving learning, being a friend and standing strong. Guided by our Christian Values, we celebrate our diversity with joy.

### **Mission Statement**

Religious Education supports us in our mission for every child to lead positive, happy and successful lives, and for every child to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). RE promotes our aim to nurture a Christian community, whilst also celebrating and respecting the variety of cultures and beliefs represented in our school. It teaches us how prayer and reflection can help us as we strive to reach our potential. It is carried out in accordance with our Church of England Distinctiveness.

### **Aims for Religious Education**

In Religious Education at St John Baptist School we aim to achieve our Christian Vision set out above in order that pupils might:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its impact on our local community, and on our society today, critically engaging with Biblical text.

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of some of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain today.
- Develop skills and attitudes which will support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Explore some questions of meaning and consider how the world's religions have responded to them.
- Think about their own beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the values of the school community.

St John Baptist School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. The Governors, in consultation with the Head teacher, have adopted the Religious Education Units of Work from 'Discovery RE', and supplement this with material from the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education RE Syllabus, Lewisham Agreed Syllabus, and occasionally elsewhere. We have also developed some units by ourselves. RE has a high profile at St John's and is considered to be a "core" subject alongside English and Mathematics.

### **'Discovery RE' Scheme of Work**

Christianity is taught in every year group and uses an enquiry approach, utilising critical thinking skills. Each Christian enquiry addresses an aspect of Christian theology. The scheme incorporates aspects of the 'Understanding Christianity' materials, launched in 2016, which emphasise theological literacy, gaining knowledge and interpreting source texts in order to enhance children's holistic understanding of Christianity. Each Christianity enquiry has the underpinning Christian concept / core belief made explicit and these are aligned with the 'Understanding Christianity' materials.

RE is taught in half-termly themes, each with a Key Question. Concepts such as Incarnation, Salvation, Creation and the Gospel are developed throughout the school. The school has developed two further units which will be explored in Year 6: The Holy Trinity and Pilgrimage, which includes an actual pilgrimage to a Cathedral.

The balance between studying Christianity and the other world faiths is two-thirds Christianity and one-third other world faiths. RE is taught in weekly lessons supplemented by additional blocks of time when appropriate. At least 10% of curriculum time is dedicated to the teaching and learning of RE.

The other world faiths studied are: Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism.

### **Visits to Places of Worship**

Where possible, we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities. Such experiences help pupils to relate the beliefs and values about which they are learning to real people in the wider community, and also give pupils an opportunity to see the importance of community expressions of faith first hand. Each year group visits a different place of worship so that as the children progress through the school, they experience a full range of faith communities first hand.

### **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Planning for RE is based on three aspects of learning which are colour-coded:

- Green: Personal resonance with or reflection on the concept / belief underlying the subject matter of the enquiry (child's own thoughts, opinions, belief, empathy)
- Blue: Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of that enquiry (subject knowledge)
- Red: Skills of evaluation and critical thinking in relation to the big enquiry question

Teachers assess the children in each class against the criteria for the unit of learning, and within each of the three strands of learning (colour coded as above). The assessment criteria are shared with the children at the beginning of the unit and stuck into each child's RE book, in line with our teaching of Maths and English and the use of our Learning Ladders system. They are grouped into three levels of attainment: Working Towards, Working At and Working Beyond. Teachers then stick the individual assessment targets into the children's books when they have been achieved and exemplified; this

helps the teacher and the child to track their progress throughout a unit of work.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject, we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. We also provide resources to enable the use of ICT in RE.

### **Recording, Marking, Assessment and Reporting**

At the end of each unit of learning, the class teachers complete a whole class assessment, identifying those pupils operating significantly beyond or below expected levels (see table below). The assessment is used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging and there are opportunities for the child to be stretched in their thinking. The assessment is also used by the co-ordinator to track pupil progress through the school. Overall achievement in RE is reported at the end of each term and informs pupil progress meetings.

Marking of children's work is in line with our school assessment policy. Pink clouds are used to enable children to process the feedback provided by teachers and to extend understanding further, as well as an opportunity to give comprehensive answers to key enquiry questions from the unit.

All class teachers maintain RE portfolios. These books contain representative samples of unit learning for learners working at, above or below expected levels. They are available to the children so that they can revisit their previous learning.

### **Management**

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE curriculum leader, in close collaboration with Senior Management and School Governors (Link Governor and Faith Group).

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The curriculum leader attends regular training and professional development, and organises INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary.

Resources are bought with the annually allocated RE budget and stored in a central place for use by all staff.

### **The right of Withdrawal from RE**

At St John Baptist school we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St John Baptist School.