



**ST MARY'S CofE
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



"Be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love".

RE Policy

**St Mary's
Church of England Primary School**

Context

- **St Mary's C of E Primary School** is a primary school, serving children in the age range of 4-11 years.
- We deliver Religious Education (RE) in line with the Leicestershire Diocesan guidelines
- **St Mary's C of E Primary School** recognises and values the religious backgrounds and non-religious backgrounds of each of our pupils. We intend to be sensitive to the home background of all and therefore work to ensure that RE is accessible to all pupils and teachers of any religious persuasion or none.
- We have a strong understanding of how RE can play a leading role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- At **St Mary's** we know how relationships with members of local communities and local faith communities can enrich pupils' experiences in RE and we strive to cultivate and maintain these relationships.

Legal requirements

RE at **St Mary's** will meet legal requirements by:

- Its inclusion in the curriculum of all registered pupils. In primary school, this is a requirement for all pupils in Reception to Year 6.
- Reflecting the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.
- Teaching RE in accordance with the Leicestershire Diocesan guidelines.

Aims

Our aims of RE are that pupils will:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and among individuals
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.

Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

These aims are taken from A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England and Wales (Religious Education Council 2013).

Place in the curriculum

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

All state schools ... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

(DfE, The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, July 2013, p.4)

The *Curriculum Framework for RE (2013)* is the latest in a chain of documents to recognise RE as a core subject and it is regarded as such at **St Mary's**.

We make cross-curricular links with other subjects where those links are beneficial for pupils' learning and progress in RE. On occasions when strong cross-curricular links cannot be forged with other subjects, RE is taught as a discrete subject.

We recognise that RE can make a positive contribution to much of pupils' life in school. It can be linked especially well to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, Citizenship (including social cohesion) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic education and we strive to make good links where we can.

In order to maximise the impact of RE sessions and pupils' progress in this subject, we teach RE in week blocks and in designated regular RE lessons at **St Mary's**.

Timing

At **St Mary's** each class has a weekly RE lesson

EYFS approx. 30 minutes

KS1 approx. 50 minutes

KS2 approx. 50 – 60 minutes

Learning and teaching in RE

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings should be used in effective RE sessions. RE may be taught using art, music, discussion as well as writing.

St Mary's recognises that 'enquiry' can be instrumental to good learning in RE and we aim to help pupils develop skills to enquire independently. Pupils should be given time to reflect and generate pertinent questions where appropriate and teachers of RE should ensure that the

atmosphere in an RE session is conducive to question raising and reflective thought whenever appropriate.

We appreciate the positive impact that local communities and local faith communities can have on pupils' experiences in RE. **St Mary's** caters for this by aiming conduct visits to a place of worship in each year group/key stage and inviting visitors from faith communities into RE lessons.

It is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

Religions and worldviews

St Mary's has followed the *recommendations* of the Leicestershire Local Agreed Syllabus for RE and Diocesan guidelines and has selected the following religions and worldviews for focused study in each key stage. All key stages will consider people who do not have a religious belief where it is appropriate to do so.

EYFS: Christianity

KS1: Christianity, Judaism and Islam

KS2: Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Humanism as well as non-religious beliefs

Planning

St Mary's uses the new Leicestershire syllabus and Understanding Christianity to form the basis of its schemes of work. In accordance with these syllabuses, pupils will study the units laid out in the long term overview.

All aims of RE are planned for throughout the units of work.

If teachers feel the need to develop their subject knowledge in order to teach these units, they can do so in a number of ways. For example: reading the information in the Christianity today folder, discussion with the Subject Leader and personal research. Additionally, the Subject Leader provides Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions for all members of staff.

Inclusion

Our whole school inclusion policies apply to RE.

Teachers are aware that pupils who have barriers to learning in other areas may have a strong interest in and aptitude for RE. All pupils should be encouraged to progress to their full potential and a variety of teaching methods (e.g. use of art, drama, ICT) should be employed to ensure that this is possible.

Pupils who are Gifted and Talented in RE are given opportunities to demonstrate and develop their strengths.

Some pupils have positive and deep experiences of religion from their lives outside of school. While there is no doubt that these experiences should be valued, they do not necessarily relate to pupils' ability in RE.

Assessment

We plan for pupils to make progress across all aims of RE and measure pupils' achievements by assessing all pupils after each unit of work.

Pupils' attainment in RE throughout the school will be tracked by the Subject Leader in order to ensure that RE provision in **St Mary's** is successful.

As required by law, we report pupils' attainment in RE in written form to parents once a year.

Resources

Teachers make good use of resources in order to ensure that RE lessons are inspiring for pupils and effectively promote progress.

Teachers model how to handle religious artefacts respectfully and sensitively and encourage pupils to follow their example.

Visits and visitors

St Mary's understands the importance of visits and visitors to a pupil's experience of RE. We aim to arrange one visit for each KS1 and KS2 class. During their time at **St Mary's**, pupils will have the opportunity to visit places of worship.

Where possible visitors from faith communities and the general community can make an important contribution to RE and appropriate visitors are invited to RE lessons at fitting points in schemes of work.

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for overseeing teaching and learning in RE at **St Mary's**. This role includes:

- attendance of and contribution to RISE Multi Academy Trust-wide RE subject meetings
- ensuring staff are familiar with our approach to RE and the requirements for planning
- ensure RE is discussed at pupil progress meetings
- supporting staff with planning and delivery of RE
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE and
- providing and sourcing in-service training (INSET) for staff where necessary.

Right of withdrawal

Pupils' families and faith communities have the right to encourage religious nurture of the children, fostering their faith. It is the responsibility of the school to provide Religious Education for all its pupils.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children either partly or wholly from RE. In addition, teachers have the right not to teach the subject. Our approach to RE, however, has been constructed in the hope that parents and teachers will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons should inform the Headteacher in writing/contact the school office at their earliest convenience. At this point the school will honour the parental request without delay.