

St. Michael's CE Primary School



Religious Education (RE) Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on: Autumn 2026

Signed (Chair): *Beryl Fielder*

Scheduled Review Date: *Autumn 2029*

Why Religious Education?

Religious Education (RE) is central to the life and curriculum of St. Michael's CE Primary School and contributes to our distinctively Christian character. Our school vision, "For every child to live an abundant life!", is rooted in John 10:10. Through high-quality RE, pupils develop religious literacy, theological understanding, curiosity and the ability to engage thoughtfully with questions of meaning, purpose, belief and values.

RE enables pupils to develop secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of other religions and worldviews. It provides opportunities to reflect critically, make connections, ask increasingly challenging questions and respond respectfully to beliefs and perspectives that may be different from their own.

Aims of Religious Education

Through RE, we aim to:

- develop secure and progressively deep knowledge and understanding of Christianity, including Anglican tradition and practice;
- develop knowledge and understanding of other major religions and worldviews, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, as appropriate within the SDBE syllabus;
- enable pupils to explore theological and philosophical questions about life, meaning, purpose, truth, belief and faith;
- develop pupils' ability to think critically, explain ideas, use evidence, make connections and form reasoned responses;
- provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences without assuming or requiring a particular personal faith position;
- promote respect, empathy and informed understanding of people from different faith backgrounds and those of no religious faith;
- contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and support them to participate thoughtfully in a diverse society.

How do we teach RE?

RE is taught as a distinct and academically rigorous curriculum subject. The school follows the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education and uses the associated guidance and resources to support curriculum planning, teaching and assessment. Christianity has a substantial place within the curriculum, alongside systematic study of other religions and worldviews.

Teaching is planned to build knowledge, vocabulary and disciplinary thinking over time.

Lessons use a range of approaches, including enquiry, discussion, interpretation of texts and sources, reflection, comparison, creative response and reasoned written or oral explanation.

Cross-curricular links may enrich RE, but they do not replace the discrete teaching of the subject.

Teaching is inclusive and appropriately adapted so that all pupils can access ambitious RE learning. Teachers identify and address misconceptions, revisit prior learning and provide suitable support and challenge.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

Parents and carers have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE. The school encourages parents or carers considering withdrawal to discuss this with the Headteacher so that the nature and purpose of the RE curriculum can be explained. Where withdrawal is requested, appropriate arrangements will be made in accordance with statutory requirements.

Assessment

Assessment is integral to teaching and is used to identify what pupils know, understand and can do, to inform next steps and to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. Assessment is based on the learning outcomes and assessment expectations within the SDBE syllabus rather than National Curriculum levels.

The St. Michael's RE curriculum uses the SDBE assessment lenses to help teachers plan for progression and gather evidence of pupils' developing religious literacy and disciplinary thinking. The lenses provide a shared language for considering how pupils engage with religious content and increasingly sophisticated questions. Teachers should refer to the current SDBE syllabus and assessment materials when planning and making judgements.

Green Pen Questions (GPQs) are used purposefully to revisit prior knowledge, probe understanding, address misconceptions and promote deeper thinking. They form part of formative assessment and should be closely linked to the intended learning rather than used as a stand-alone assessment measure.

Teachers draw on a range of evidence, including pupils' discussions, written work, responses to key questions, use of religious vocabulary, interpretation of sources and end-of-unit tasks. Judgements are made using the school's agreed assessment descriptors: Working Towards (WT), Expected (E) and Greater Depth (GD), informed by the SDBE expectations for the relevant unit and lens.

Assessment information is reviewed centrally to identify strengths, gaps and patterns in attainment. Moderation, book scrutiny and professional dialogue are used to support consistency and accuracy of teacher judgement.

Resources

The SDBE syllabus and associated materials provide the core framework for curriculum planning. Classrooms and shared resource areas should contain appropriate, accurate and respectful resources for the religions and worldviews being studied. Staff are supported to develop subject knowledge through professional dialogue, SDBE guidance, training and subject leadership support.

Displays and sacred spaces

Every classroom has a designated prayer corner or sacred space, including a Bible, cross and other appropriate resources. RE displays should celebrate pupils' learning and may include key vocabulary, theological concepts, significant questions and examples of pupils' responses. Displays should represent religions and worldviews accurately and respectfully.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE Subject Leader and senior leaders monitor the quality and impact of RE through a proportionate range of activities, including curriculum review, book scrutiny, lesson visits, pupil voice, assessment information and professional discussion with teachers. Monitoring considers curriculum coverage, progression, the quality of pupils' thinking and use of subject-specific vocabulary, inclusion and the accuracy and consistency of assessment.

Findings from monitoring inform subject development, staff support and professional development.

The Faith Committee may contribute through book looks, pupil discussions and faith walks and will report relevant findings to the Governing Body. Governors maintain oversight of the quality and distinctiveness of RE and review this policy every three years.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2029, or earlier where changes to statutory, Church of England or SDBE guidance require it.