



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

### **Religious Education Policy**

**Spring Term 2022**

#### ***"Many Hearts Make A School"***

*It is our vision to follow in the footsteps of Jesus: dreaming big; working hard; not giving up; never stopping learning and being kind.*

*We achieve this through our associated Christian Values of: love, honesty, forgiveness, dedication and sharing.*

*Our vision, Christian values and school motto enable every person in our family to thrive. We are a warm, welcoming school where everyone matters. Our school community shows kindness and caring towards each other and our local and global communities. We dream for all of our children to grow up to be happy, kind-hearted, caring, responsible and successful members of God's creation.*

# **Trinity St. Mary's C. of E. Primary School**

## **Religious Education Policy**

Trinity St Mary's C of E Primary School will provide a happy, caring, family environment where pupils feel inspired. We know that every pupil matters – whatever their skills and abilities, whatever their background and whatever their aspirations. Belonging to a safe and nurturing community, founded on strong Christian values, pupils will develop an array of skills that will equip them to meet the challenges of our ever changing world and to make their own positive contribution to our global society.

### **The Legal Position**

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

Trinity St Mary's C of E Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus and supplement this with material from the Diocese and elsewhere. Currently the school uses "Understanding Christianity" for all teaching regarding Christianity.

## **Rationale and Aims**

At Trinity St Mary's C of E Primary School we aim that Religious Education will:-

- **provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery**

**R.E. also contributes to the wider curriculum in a number of ways; including:**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

### **Personal development and well-being**

R.E. plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps pupils and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

**The school community** – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

**The community within which the school is located** – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

**The UK community** – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

**The global community** – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

R.E. subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

### **The school's approach to teaching R.E.**

R.E. has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided through careful planning using: the RE Syllabus, Diocesan advice, Understanding Christianity and other high quality resources identified by teachers.

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.

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.

### **Organisation:**

We have an RE coordinator who works closely with the Church School Working Party, Headteacher and Collective Worship Group. The quality of RE is monitored by our Headteacher and Governing Body.

R.E. is generally taught as a specific subject every week – in accordance with how our curriculum is organised and taught. Every effort is made to link the areas covered by the RE Syllabus to the curriculum topics taught, and/or with other areas of school life including worship / PSHE.

Resources for R.E. are kept in the staffroom and specific resources are ordered to support areas from the RE Syllabus as required.

### **Assessment and Recording of RE**

Teachers deliver cold tasks at the start of teaching to assess children's competencies and hot tasks at the end of a unit to assess progress. Every term assessments are made against age related expectations. Written reports are sent home to parents annually.

### **Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE**

The co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data, through lesson observations, through work sampling and through pupil interviews.

This information will feed into the Church school self-evaluation process (SIAMS) and will be reported to governors.

### **Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teacher and Governors)**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and Headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers are aware of R.E.'s contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- R.E. is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the Headteacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE. In these circumstances, the Headteacher will seek advice from their Diocese and LA.

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

At Trinity St Mary's C of E Primary 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. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Trinity St Mary's C of E Primary School.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.

- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

**Signed on behalf of the governing body:**

**Date:**

**To be reviewed Spring 2025:**