



RE Policy

Implementation date: Autumn 2022

Renewal date: Summer 2023

Curriculum Rationale

We have the following goals in all curriculum areas:

S**uccess** – We celebrate individuality, and the success that each child has, and we recognise that this will take a variety of forms.

M**otivation** – We aim for all of our children to be motivated young people who have a desire to do their best and try their hardest.

C**onfidence** – We provide a nurturing environment where all our pupils develop confidence in themselves to be successful members of their community.

A**spiration** - We are aspirational for our children, providing a curriculum that ensures each learner has the opportunity to reach their true potential.

These aims are achieved by adhering to the following learning motto:

IGNITE – EXCITE – ENGAGE

We aim to:

Ignite a passion for learning and the curiosity to explore the world.

Excite pupils with a curriculum that is fun, and which contains a wealth of rich experiences

Engage all learners and members of the community.

1.) Introduction

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'.

Religious Education is taught in our school because it makes:

"...a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world". (RE: realising the potential, Ofsted 2013).

This fits with our school ethos of treating others with courtesy, consideration and respect at all times.

2.) Aims

St Michael's is a Community Academy (i.e. we are not formally linked to the Church of England). We deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. We use a mixture of the **Discovery RE** and **Understanding Christianity** programme as our scheme of work.

This RE policy is informed by current national guidance:

- RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
- RE : realising the potential Ofsted 2013 (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential)
- A Curriculum Framework for RE in England, REC 2013 (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>)
- *C of E church schools may wish to add "Valuing all God's Children"* (https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Valuing%20All%20God%27s%20Children%27s%20Report_0.pdf), "Making a Difference" (which includes the Church of England Statement of Entitlement) (https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/2014_making_a_difference-a_review_of_religious_education_in_church_of_england_schools_web_final.pdf) and the 2018 SIAMS inspection framework (<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/siams-school-inspections>)

Discovery RE meets the requirements of our curriculum and is aligned to the non-statutory guidance described above.

By following Discovery RE at St. Michael's, we intend that Religious Education will:-

- **Adopt an enquiry- based approach** as recommended by Ofsted, beginning with the children’s own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **Provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, and issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. 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** (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.
- **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, wonder and mystery.**
- **Nurture children’s own spiritual development**

3.) Implementation

Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity content

Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity cover all areas of RE for the primary phase, Christianity plus one other religion is taught in each year group. The grid below shows specific enquiries for each year group. [UC-Christianity-units-and-Discovery-RE.pdf](#) ('DR' indicates a unit taken from Discovery RE. 'UC' indicates a unit taken from Understanding Christianity).

Foundation Stage 1/2:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied: |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| What makes people special? (DR) | Christianity, Judaism |
| Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas? (UC) | Christianity |
| How do people celebrate? (DR) | Islam/Judaism |
| Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? (UC) | Christianity |
| What can we learn from stories? (DR) | Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism |
| What makes people special? (DR) | Christianity, Islam, Judaism. |

Year 1:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied: |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Who made the world? (UC) | Christianity |
| Why does Christmas matter to Christians? (UC) | Christianity |

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Was it always easy for Jesus to show friendship? (DR) | Christianity |
| Why was Jesus welcomed like a king or celebrity on Palm Sunday? (UC) | Christianity |
| Why does Easter matter to Christians? (DR) | Judaism |
| Are Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur important to Jewish children? (DR) | Judaism |

Year 2:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time? (DR) | Christianity |
| What is the good news that Jesus brings? (UC) | Christianity |
| How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? (DR) OR Does praying at regular intervals every day help a Muslim in his/her everyday life? | Judaism Islam |
| Key Question: What do Christians believe God is like? (UC) | Christianity |
| How special is the relationship Jews have with God? (DR) OR Does going to a Mosque gives Muslims a sense of belonging? | Judaism Islam |
| What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? (DR) OR Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim? | Judaism Islam |

Year 3:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions Studied |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Would celebrating Divali at home and in the community bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child? (DR) OR Does joining the Khalsa make a person a better Sikh? | Hinduism Sikhism |
| What is Trinity? (UC) | Christianity |
| What do Christians learn from the creation story? (UC) | Christianity |
| Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (UC) | Christianity |
| How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? (DR) OR Do Sikhs this it is important to share? | Hinduism Sikhism |
| Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu? (DR) OR What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God? | Hinduism Sikhism |

Year 4:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| | |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| How special relationship is the relationship Jews have with God? (DR) OR Is it possible for everyone to be happy? | Judaism Buddhism |
| What is it like (for Christians) to follow God? (UC) | Christianity |
| How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do? (DR) OR Can the Buddha's teachings make the world a better place? | Judaism Buddhism |
| Is forgiveness always possible for Christians? (UC) | Christianity |
| What is the best way for a Jew to show commitment to God? (DR) OR What is the best way for a Buddhist to lead a good life? | Judaism Buddhism |
| When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? (UC) | Christianity |

Year 5:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion? (DR) OR What is the best way for a Hindu to show commitment to God? | Sikhism Hinduism |
| Was Jesus the Messiah? (UC) | Christianity |
| Are Sikh stories important today? (DR) OR How can Brahman be everywhere and in everything? | Sikhism Hinduism |
| What do Christians believe (What did) Jesus do to save Human Beings? (UC) | Christianity |
| What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God? (DR) OR Do beliefs in Karma, Samsara and Moksha help Hindus lead better lives? | Sikhism Hinduism |
| does it mean (for Christians) if God is holy and loving? (UC) | Christianity |

Year 6:

| Discovery Enquiry | Religions studied |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God? (DR) | Islam |
| What would Jesus do? (UC) | Christianity |
| Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? (UC) | Christianity |
| What difference does the resurrection make for Christians? (UC) | Christianity |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Does belief in Akhirah (life after death) help Muslims lead good lives? (Double unit) | Islam |
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4.) How is RE organised in this school?

Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity combined bring together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Each enquiry starts from the children's own life experiences using these as a bridge into the investigation of the religion being studied.

Learning is assessed and children have opportunity to express their own thoughts and beliefs and empathise with believers of that religion or belief position.

RE is taught weekly for 1 hour. Teachers and other staff having a clear understanding for the implementation and outcomes of the **Discovery RE** and **Understanding Christianity** schemes of work.

Mr Adam Penney is the current RE subject Leader.

5.) Differentiation/SEN

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. To further help teachers differentiate for children in KS1 and 2, each enquiry has exemplars for those children working towards the learning objective, at the expected level for this age group and those working beyond the expected level of achievement.

6.) Assessment

Teachers are eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their RE. Therefore, each enquiry has built-in assessment. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment of the children's knowledge of that religion, depth of critical thinking, and ability to answer the enquiry question. This stand-alone evidence is used in conjunction with other evidence such as records of discussions and annotations from other lessons within the enquiry to assist the teacher in assessing whether a child is working at the expected level or towards or beyond it. Children are assessed over three aspects of learning:

- a personal resonance with or reflection on the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- knowledge and understanding of the material/religion being studied to answer the enquiry question.
- evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question

These are tracked throughout the planning stage so that teachers can utilise the appropriate evidence accordingly. In line with non-statutory guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 (cited on page 1) descriptors of these aspects utilise age-related expectations of working towards, working at the expected attainment and working beyond.

7.) Recording and tracking progress

To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, there is an overview sheet for each enquiry on which to record the progress of the whole class. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation.

8.) Reporting to Parents/Carers

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers when or if required. Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity enquiries give teachers meaningful evidence to cite in reports.

9.) The Attainment Descriptors

The attainment descriptors contained within Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity are:

Working towards

Working at

Working beyond

10.) Monitoring and evaluation

The RE leader monitors delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision as per the monitoring and evaluation cycle at St Michael's.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

11.) External contributors

RE 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 British Values agenda is intrinsic to Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity and a map of coverage is available on request.

External contributors from the community, e.g. local clergy, local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to the RE programme as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of the RE programme.

12.) The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that respect for each others' views and beliefs and those of the believers of that religion is encouraged at all times and that any artefacts are handled with respect and care.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues –

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience and discussing personal beliefs.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to different opinions. Teachers should never feel obliged to discuss their own beliefs unless they feel comfortable doing so and can ensure that this will not influence or restrict the children's own expression.

13.) Involving parents and carers

St Michael's believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the RE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss RE through:

- * Response to RE comments on reports
- * Curriculum newsletters
- * Displays
- * (Where RE is integrated- topic based homework as appropriate).

14.) Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Religious Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. 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 will be made aware of the 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 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. 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*. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.

15.) Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- *Collective Worship where appropriate*
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- *SMSC Policy*
- *British Values*
- *Prevent Strategy*

16.) Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from training in order to enhance their RE delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding RE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

17.) Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually.