

# St. Lawrence Church of England Primary School



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

Learning together, rooted in God, pupils at St Lawrence Church of England Primary School are easy to distinguish by the personal qualities they present. They are **happy, confident, articulate** children with a love of learning and sense of **service**, who recognise and celebrate their own **individuality** and that of other members of our community. They are **generous, kind** and welcoming; they are **forgiving** and understand **justice**. With God by their side, they face the world with **resilience, integrity** and **joy**.

### CHRISTIAN MISSION STATEMENT

Learning TOGETHER, Rooted in GOD.

*(Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain rooted in me, and I in you, you will bear much fruit." John 15:5)*

This policy outlines the expectations in relation to the teaching and learning of Religious Education and focuses on the progression of key areas of development and subject specific skills. The policy seeks to support the children in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes through an exploration of Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School Religious Education Policy shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in our contemporary society.

This policy reflects the views of all the teaching and support staff and was drawn up as a result of staff discussion. It has the full agreement of the governing body who approved it at their meeting in the Autumn Term 2019 and has now been shared with the wider school community on the school website. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and will be monitored by the headteacher and subject leader on a regular basis.

**RE in our Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.**

The management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher. RE has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England and Methodist Church. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in its school.

Although RE and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another they are managed separately.

**In our Church School, RE lies at the very heart of the curriculum. We ensure:**

- that Governors adopt the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE
- that at least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE
- that Christianity plays a central role in RE, taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time available
- that appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is included

**Religious Education in our Church School lies at the very heart of our curriculum.**

We actively endeavour to match the statement of entitlement as outlined by the Church of England Education Office, 2016:

*"In Church of England schools the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Church schools should provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied. Church schools should use some form of enquiry approach that engages with, for example biblical text, and helps develop religious and theological literacy. Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners." RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016*

**We express this distinctively through learning about:**

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

**We learn from:**

- We should have an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it
- Responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ
- Developing a vision for life that transcends a dull materialism and recognises the reality of the spiritual realm
- Understanding ourselves and others, celebrating our shared humanity and the breadth of human achievement
- Examples of Christian living which give priority to the claims of justice, mercy, holiness and love.

**RE in our School should help pupils to:**

- think theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today
- Understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values
- respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.
- understand how Christian values underpin all that we do
- become more rounded individuals and encourage children to consider others thoughts and feelings being at all times respectful to one another
- provoke thought, meaning and lay down questful challenges to all pupils
- to understand God's Big Plan

**Religious Education in Church Schools should enable:**

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

### **Teaching and Learning of Religious Education Content and Approaches Within classes:**

- pupils are taught individually, in a group and as a class.
- a variety of teaching and learning methods are used to present the curriculum to the pupils.
- teacher led sessions where information is provided
- talk Partners, where pairs of children discuss an issue before sharing their thoughts with the class.
- mixed ability group or paired work, where children discuss issues in small groups.
- class discussion where the children are invited to join in and express their personal opinions and share experiences.
- use of differentiated tasks where children of different abilities are able to work at their own level
- use of role-play
- use of religious artefacts
- use of audio-visual aids to present material to the children
- educational Visits to gain first hand experiences.
- use of integrated I.C.T within R.E lessons
- invited guest speakers with relevant experiences
- creative tasks that may include: singing, dancing, drawing, filming, acting, miming,

RE should equip pupils to recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in RE within a Church School. This respect must be based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

### **Therefore RE in Church Schools should also help pupils to:**

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition
- recognise the common human quest for justice, peace and love and the common goal of the survival of life on this planet.

### **These are some examples of the distinctive features of the RE Curriculum in a Church School:**

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year
- study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs
- visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church and the Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community
- welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life
- liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur
- support for the pupils; confident use of religious language

- a well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts
- the facility to listen to Christian ‘psalms and hymns and spiritual songs’ from a wide variety of traditions
- access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence
- a sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer (written and verbal) and silent reflection
- encouragement of mutual respect based on Christian values, which are promoted both in practice and visually around school. Here, pupils and teachers are able to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith
- pupils with no religious background to face the challenge of the Christian faith
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the place of doubt and certainty in a maturing faith.

### **British Values and Christian Values**

At Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, we take pride in promoting a range of British Values in line with the 2011 Prevent Strategy of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Within Religious Education British values are explored by teaching the children about other World Faiths.

### **Christian Values**

Here at Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, we feel it is vital that learning opportunities are provided which support and nurture the whole child. The children across the school experience activities which help them to socially interact with others and develop emotional intelligence. Our school delivers a ‘Values Curriculum’, centred on Gospel values. They are delivered over a two year programme, linking strongly with our RE curriculum. Both Religious Education and the Values curriculum permeate all aspects of school life and run deeper than a one off lesson. The school vision and aims are underpinned by the Christian Values as well as the behaviour strategies and pastoral support.

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

Spiritual development within RE in a Church School enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery and quest of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ - along with embedded Christian values, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

### **RE teaching also provides quality first teaching in terms of:**

1. resources
2. Assessment and record keeping.
3. Staff receiving regular training from the Diocese
4. SEN provision (see SEN policy)

#### **1. Resources**

Resources are regularly reviewed and updated. The school has a bank of resources including artefacts, pictures and on line resources. We take regular advice from Blackburn Diocese to enable us to keep up with good practice.

#### **2. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Assessments made by teachers against the key learning indicators of performance in specific year groups allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress in relation to age related expectations. This helps ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. We follow the Blackburn Diocesan assessment systems and each child is assessed at least once every half term through opportunities within teaching. Evidence to inform assessment may be gathered from books, a class RE scrap book or through incidental activities.

#### **3. Staff Training**

The RE Coordinator attends termly RE Cluster meetings. The outcome from these meetings is disseminated to staff. In addition, we link up with another local school to ensure best practice; here, we liaise with staff and pupils to learn, compare and contrast RE and worship within our own environments and another environment. The RE Coordinator also attends yearly Coordinator days to keep up to date with knowledge and skills and disseminates all training back within the school setting.

#### **4. SEN Provision**

We teach Religious Education to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. This matches with the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of Religious Education, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make

good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Equal Opportunities, Education Quality Act, SEND; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL). When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively.

#### **The Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School.**

Parents may request the governing body to provide Religious Education for their children according to the Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the Agreed Syllabus. The governing body **should** make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing body be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

Parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education as they may in any school and this opportunity will be described in the school brochure at the earliest opportunity.

‘The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England or Methodist Church Foundation. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England or Methodist Church ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.’ (The Church of England Board of Education and the Methodist Church suggestion)

If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

**Written: September 2019**

**Approved and Adopted: December 2019**

**Reviewed: September 2022**

**Next Review: September 2024**

**Subject Leader: Kate Rogerson**

**Headteacher: Julie Goodwin**