

# Religious Education Policy

Author: Sarah Hawker (Headteacher)  
Approved by: FGB (28/09/2023)  
Version: 1.0  
Date: 01/09/2023

## 1. Introduction

Park Street Church of England Primary School is a school with a Christian character and seeks to ensure that all who learn and work within the school are enabled to experience *'life in all its fullness'* [Jn 10.10] - to be people *'fully alive'* [St Irenaeus].

To this end, all of our work, policies and procedures seek to ensure that we honour God, love our neighbour as ourselves, do to others as we would have them do to us, don't judge others, and seek to be good stewards of God's creation. These basic tenets of our Christian faith inform our values of "Honesty and Respect, Friendship and Kindness, Learning and Fun."

Religious Education plays an important role in our school, as part of a wider commitment to our values as a Church of England school. We believe strongly in the unique value of each member of our school community and seek to reflect this in how we explore theological and philosophical questions in our RE lessons.

As part of an international city in a diverse society, we recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. We welcome this diversity and intend to be sensitive to the home background of each child. Furthermore, we are committed to helping children develop the knowledge and spiritual understanding necessary to know themselves, and to build a sympathetic awareness of the needs and beliefs of others. We are glad to have the active support of members of local faith communities while we seek to achieve this vision.

As such, we view the context of our school through the metaphor of the Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13):

*"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. <sup>32</sup> Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."*

We highlight to our pupils that as they go out into the world, they will have opportunities to significantly affect it by living out our values, remembering that small acts of kindness and respect can greatly influence others.

We believe it is important for children to learn about and from religious belief and practice. We want to develop children's knowledge and understanding of different concepts and religions while simultaneously building skills of reflection and self-expression that will help them navigate an increasingly diverse and complex world.

## 2. Context

Park Street C of E Primary School is situated in the centre of Cambridge, nestled amongst the most historic and prestigious colleges and theological institutions of Cambridge University.

Its geographical location means that we have the benefit of welcoming many children of visiting families from diverse nations and backgrounds, sometimes for just a short period of time.

These children become part of our 'family'; our aspiration for them is the same as for our long-term residents, to send them out into the world as curious, creative, flourishing learners, whose experience of our school and its curriculum will have shaped them in understanding, virtues and habits, so that they can make the most life 'in all its fullness' (John 10.10).

Our curriculum has been designed in sympathy with the Church of England Vision for Education (2016), ‘Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good’. We work together to ensure that all Park Street children:

*“...discover an education that embraces excellence and academic rigour within the wider framework of spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development which enables their children to flourish...*

*Our school is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences...in order to serve the flourishing of a healthy plural society and democracy”*

### **3. Statement of Intent and Curriculum Aims, Implementation and Impact, and Statement of Principles.**

#### **3.1. We aim to make Religious Education teaching stimulating, interesting and challenging.**

We have developed our RE curriculum under the guidance of the Cambridge Agreed Syllabus and from a combination of resources including:

- **Understanding Christianity:** a scheme based around a selection of core Christian concepts and structured across the age range to support pupils in deepening their understanding. It is endorsed by the Church of England Education Office and widely used in our local Diocese.
- **The Emmanuel project:** a range of units developed by the Diocese of Ely that complement the Understanding Christianity approach through teaching about a range of different religions, and also by exploring Christian practices and traditions around the world.

The RE curriculum is delivered through a rolling two-year Long Term Plan that meets the learning needs of our children. As a C of E Primary School, the teaching of Christianity is given priority, with opportunities for the children to learn about and explore other faiths and traditions including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Humanism.

We believe it is important that we draw on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of its worldwide forms. We ensure that teaching is open, which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations which allows for real dialogue and learning to take place.

We also think it is important to make full use of cross-curricular and topic-based opportunities to build religious understanding. Some of the RE units have been specially timed to sit alongside the term’s topic to complement them effectively. For example, learning about Ancient Egyptian society at the same time as studying Creation and Science in RE gives opportunity for comparison of different societies’ creation myths. Wherever possible, teachers should look out for opportunities to make cross-curricular links that help children build a more inter-connected understanding of the world, its histories and peoples.

#### **3.2. Whole School Aims and Objectives**

Park Street C of E Primary School’s teaching of Religious Education is planned:

- To enable children to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today

- To enable children to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of children's own spiritual and philosophical convictions, and to further explore and enrich their own faith and beliefs
- In line with our wider curriculum policy, to enable children to make connections with the faiths, beliefs and practices important in their own lives and families and in the lives and families of others

Our intention is for children to leave Park Street in Year 6 as confident, thoughtful and compassionate children, able to reflect on and articulate their own views, as well as listen to and learn from the views of others, finding links and common ground between them, as well as contrasts. We want a successful introduction to the key beliefs, practices and impact of faith to lead to understanding, sensitivity and concern for fellow humankind.

We recognise the inter-relationship between pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the leading role which the RE curriculum plays in some of these areas. It is important that we provide a caring environment where children feel secure and able to express their views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others.

Pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the school and of the wider community. We feel that it is important that the children are introduced to different faiths of those within their school community and also to those faiths represented in the wider community. Links are made with a variety of faith groups to help develop this aim. We welcome visitors from other cultures and beliefs to talk to the pupils and we plan opportunities for pupils to experience visits to diverse places of worship themselves. Pupils also have the opportunity to experience the celebration of different cultures and festivals other than their own, within RE, other areas of the curriculum and Collective Worship.

### 3.3. Statement of Principles

This policy is rooted in our school values of

- Honesty and Respect
- Friendship and Kindness
- Learning and Fun

We demonstrate

- **honesty** through developing children's understanding of truth, comparing factual information with opinions and points of view, in all curriculum areas. We encourage honesty in making mistakes which we recognise as the basis for new learning.
- **respect**, one of our three basic rules, through exploring diversity and equality and how these values have developed together geographically across the world, through history and religion and through science and culture.
- **friendship** in the way that we work with others in all areas, embracing opportunities to build relationships with new children who enter our school.

- **kindness** through our learning about how people have not always been kind to each other, and are not always kind, and the difficulties this can cause. We develop ways to increase kindness in our school and in the wider community through sharing our learning.
- **learning** in the creation and implementation of a curriculum which challenges, inspires and promotes success for every child by encouraging them to be active partners in their learning. It is demonstrated through our 'Learning Journeys', at the heart of our curriculum planning shared with children and parents.
- **fun** through recognising that committing learning to long-term memory happens most successfully when children are excited and engaged by their learning and understand how to protect and improve their wellbeing.

### 3.4. Implementation

Teaching and assessing of RE

Long term plan

See Appendix

Time allocation

RE is part of the Basic Curriculum and all schools are required to teach RE to all pupils on the school roll, except where parents exercise their right of withdrawal. Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of RE curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicit RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in Key Stages 1-2. RE curriculum time does not include assembly or Collective Worship, even where the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work.

(Church of England Education Office, Statement of Entitlement 2019):

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/RE%20Statement%20of%20Entitlement%20for%20Church%20Schools.pdf>

### 3.5. EYFS

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into prime and specific areas:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

These are crucial for developing children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

There are 4 Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

RE is taught as a discreet subject, linked to the 'Understanding of the World' area. Links are made with the half-termly themes and topic learning.

### **3.6. Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils in RE. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to the achievement of each student.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our Equality & Inclusion Policy, and in our SEN Policy and Information Report.

### **3.7. Assessment and reporting**

It is important that we have confidence in our ability to judge the impact of our RE teaching and can reflect effectively on the extent to which our intentions are realised for each child as they progress through the school.

Each unit is reviewed by the class teacher and we use a variety of assessment methods to gauge pupil progress: for example, sometimes a unit will result in a piece of cross-curricular writing; at other times the teacher may assess a creative response, solo-taxonomy hexagons, a mind map or a shared assembly. Teachers make a judgement about which children have met some, most, or all objectives. These objectives are focused on two categories: what a child has learned about religion and belief, and what they have learned from religion and belief. These judgements feed into the termly reporting (internal) and the end of year reports for parents and carers (external).

Our assessment system, Learning Ladders, is used to make judgements at the end of each academic year, against the year group expectations outlined in the Agreed Syllabus.

### **3.8. Visits to Places of Worship**

We are able to visit local churches such as Great St Mary's, St Clements, St Giles and Michaelhouse. We can also arrange visits to: Ely Cathedral, The Synagogue, the Buddhist Centre, the Hindu Temple (in Mill Road), Gudwara (Arbury Road) and the Cambridge Mosque (at the end of Mill Road). Faith leaders and other members of the community are invited to meet with children and be involved in RE.

### **3.9. Spirituality**

Spiritual development is also promoted through Collective Worship where half-termly themes such as 'Forgiveness', 'Courage', and 'Justice' are explored through a largely Christian context while drawing out contributions from children of other faiths and none. Moments of spiritual reflection are included and encouraged.

## **4. Legislation and guidance**

RE will be provided in line with the legal requirements. These are that:

- the basic curriculum will include provision for Religious Education for all pupils on the school roll;
- the content of RE shall reflect 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;
- the RE which is provided shall be in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus for Cambridgeshire (SACRE 2011-2016).

### **4.1. Right of Withdrawal**

In keeping with the law, parents may withdraw their children from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. The school will ensure that suitable supervision is provided. Please refer to the Headteacher for questions about withdrawals.

## **5. Monitoring arrangements**

The Foundation Committee of the Governing Body monitor the statutory requirements of the RE curriculum through:

- Monitoring Visits
- Meetings with the subject leader
- Challenging the Headteacher during meetings

The Headteacher and Subject Leader monitor the way RE is taught throughout the school by:

- Evidenced discussions with teachers in staff meetings
- Scrutiny of books and planning
- Scrutiny of 'coverage documents' and Learning Journeys alongside exercise books
- Pupil conferencing
- Access to data on 'Learning Ladders' for end of year attainment and progress
- Learning Walks
- Consideration of the classroom environment and displays

Monitoring priorities are in line with aims outlined in the School Development Plan and Performance Management objectives for all staff.

Teachers also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which RE resources are stored and managed.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **6.1. The Governing Body**

The Governing Board Foundation Committee will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting Religious Education priorities and aspirational targets
- Appropriate resources are provided for pupils to cover the Agreed Syllabus and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the RE curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

### **6.2. Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the RE curriculum have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the RE curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Governing Body
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the RE teaching
- They manage requests to withdraw children from RE where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The Foundation Committee of the Governing Body is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the RE curriculum
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

### **6.3. Other staff**

The RE Subject Leader will take responsibility, under the direction of the Headteacher, for understanding the RE curriculum and how that manifests in learning throughout the school. They will also produce an annual action plan for RE, support the writing of medium-term plans with class teachers, analyse the standards within the subject and provide, or signpost, staff towards training and resources.



Time is allocated in staff meetings for development of RE and for teachers to share how they are implementing the subject in their class. All staff will ensure that the RE curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

## **7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of RE Policy**

We intend that this policy should operate for at least the next three years and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors after this, or prior to this where there are legislative or other important changes.

To ensure that the policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to return a copy of the medium-term plan for RE, or plan of the theme with RE highlighted, to the coordinator each term. The coordinator's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a self-evaluation of our RE work in readiness for inspection.

### **7.1 Self-evaluation, RE and Inspection**

The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, in line with OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review.

The Foundation Committee of the Governing Body will review the effect

**Appendix 1 – Park Street Long-Term Plan for RE alongside the main curriculum topics (see below)**

	Cycle	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
<b>Owl Class Topic Year A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Ready Steady Go! (3 weeks) Trip to a Museum (Toys)</b>	<b>Trip to a Museum (Toys)</b>	<b>Up, up and Away (Space)</b>	<b>Potty about Plants</b>	<b>We are world explorers</b>	<b>Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside</b>
<b>RE</b>	A	EP: What makes every single person unique and precious? Further planning EP: Hindu's celebrating at Raksha Bandhan	UC: Incarnation – Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas? (UC F2) Further planning EP: A Muslim story Muhammad and the ants	EP Judaism (Year 1): Why is learning to do good deeds so important to Jewish people?	UC: Salvation (Easter) Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? (UC F3) Further planning EP: A Buddhist story The Monkey King	Celebrations How and why do people celebrate birthdays, weddings and baptism? (different religions)	Old Testament Stories: New Testament Stories: 1 story from other religions
<b>Owl Class Topic Year B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Marvellous Me</b>	<b>Celebration and Festivals</b>	<b>Off around the UK</b>	<b>Fairy-tales</b>	<b>Class interest choice</b>	<b>Deep in the Woods</b>
<b>RE</b>	B	UC: Creation – Why is the word God so important to Christians? (UC F1) Further planning EP: A Muslim whispering in a baby's ear	Festivals of light: Diwali Hanukah Christingle	Old Testament Stories: New Testament Stories: 1 story from other religions	Special books: Why is the Bible important? What other Holy books are important?	EP: Special books: What stories do other religions teach us?	EP: How can we care for our wonderful world?

<b>Robin Class Topic Year A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Ready Steady Go! (2 weeks) Trip to a Museum (Homes)</b>	<b>Trip to a Museum (Homes)</b>	<b>Up, up and Away (Flight)</b>	<b>Potty about Plants  Dragons and Giants (Wales and NI)</b>	<b>Penguins, Possums and Polar Bears (Hot and cold countries of the world)</b>	<b>Oceans, Seas and Pirates</b>
<b>RE</b>	A	UC: Creation - Who made the world?  (UC 1.2)	UC: Incarnation – Why does Christmas matter to Christians?  (UC 1.3)	EP: Judaism Why is the Torah such a joy for the Jewish community?	UC: Salvation (Easter) Why does Easter matter to Christians?  (UC 1.5)	EP: Christianity disciple/faith  Why do Christians trust Jesus and follow him?	What is a synagogue? How do Jewish people worship there? What is a Jewish festival?
<b>Robin Class Topic Year B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>We're on Fire!</b>	<b>Weather Experts</b>	<b>Brilliant Britain through Brilliant Books</b>	<b>Kings, Queens and Castles</b>	<b>Historic Cambridge - Our Victorian School</b>	<b>Deep in the Woods</b>
<b>RE</b>	B	EP: Judaism – Why do Jewish families talk about repentance at New Year?	UC: God What do Christians believe God is like? (UC 1.1)	UC: Gospel What is the good news that Jesus brings?  (UC 1.4)	EP: Christianity Why was Jesus given the name Saviour?	What makes a church a special place for Christian people?	EP: Judaism Why do Jewish families say so many prayers and blessings?

<b>Woodpecker Class Topic Year A</b>	A	<b>Ancient Greeks</b>		<b>Rainforests</b>	<b>Our Local Area - Historic Cambridge – Kings College</b>	<b>British Clothing since 1066</b>	<b>River and Coasts States of Matter</b>
<b>RE</b>		Understanding Christianity  Gospel 2A.4 What kind of world did Jesus want?	Advent/Christmas/Jesse Tree <i>What is the Jesse Tree?</i>	Understanding Christianity  Incarnation/Holy Trinity/God 2A.3C <i>What is the Trinity?</i>	EP: How does a Muslim show their submission and obedience to Allah?	Understanding Christianity Kingdom of God 2A.6 <i>When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? Who are the saints of God and why are they important?</i>	EP: Why do Muslims call Muhammad the 'Seal of the Prophets'?
<b>Woodpecker Class Topic Year B Woodpecker Class Topic Year B</b>	B	<b>A Street through Time Stone Age to Iron Age Britain</b>	<b>It's Magic!</b>	<b>Romans, Italy and Volcanoes</b>		<b>Off to Europe (Spain and Germany)</b>	<b>What's in the news?  Production</b>
<b>RE</b>		Understanding Christianity Creation 2A.1  Creation 2A.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation Story? What do people believe about the creation of the world?	Why are good stewardship and generous giving important for every Christian?	EP: Sikhism - How do the Sikhs put their beliefs about equality into practice?	Understanding Christianity Salvation 2A.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died Good Friday?	Understanding Christianity  People of God 2A.2 What is it like to follow God?	EP: How does the teaching of the Gurus move Sikhs from the dark to light?

Eagle Class Topics Year A	A	Ancient Egyptians	Ancient Egyptians and Slavery	Earth in Space	Anglo Saxons and Vikings	Anglo Saxons and Vikings	Fossils and Dinosaurs
RE	A	Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? UC 2B.2	Incarnation: what kind of king is Jesus? UC 2B.8 Including exploring religious-based campaigning organisations (anti-slavery)	Why do Humanists say happiness is the goal of life? EP	Salvation: what difference does the resurrection make to Christians? UC 2B.7	How did Buddha teach his followers to find Enlightenment? Including celebration of Vesak (May) EP	Gospel: what key beliefs influence people's faith and how do people of faith live out their lives? UC 2B.5
Eagle Class Topics Year B	B	Fighting for Freedom		Inventors and Inventions	The Maya	Our World Peru	What's in the news?  Production
RE	B	How do 'heroes of the faith' encourage Christians today? EP  <b>OR</b> Creation: focus on psalms and psalm writing (CSOC)	Incarnation: Was Jesus the Messiah? UC 2B.4	Hinduism: what can stories and images of deities tell us about Hindu beliefs? CC  <b>OR</b> How do questions about Brahmam and atman influence the way a Hindu lives? EP	Salvation: what did Jesus do to save humans? UC 2B.6	God: What does it mean if God is holy and loving? UC 2B.3	Hinduism: what spiritual pathways to Moksha are written about in Hindu scriptures? Including celebration of Janmashtami (summer, varies) EP

Year A = Sept in even number year. Year B = Sept in an odd number year