



St Mary's Cockerton CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy

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1. Introduction

St Mary's Cockerton is a Church of England Academy, part of the Melrose Learning Trust. The school follows the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement, which outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides our approach to RE.

*Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish
and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10)
It will help to educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.*

We uphold and follow the Church of England's Vision for Education.

Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.

RE should help pupils to:

- become religiously literate
- have a clear understanding of Christianity as a living world faith
- understand other major world religions and world views
- reflect upon their own beliefs and values.

2. Religious Education Intent and the School's Christian Vision

Our vision is of our school as a place of each person working together in the building of a community which lives within, and shares the love of God. Historically, we are embedded in our community as a place for the Christian education of local children. Our vision is to offer an education which allows children, staff and pupils to be inspired to raise our eyes, open our minds and explore the world God created, to participate in God's mission of love to both our local community but also the wider world, to live fully as global neighbours.

With this vision in mind, RE offers our whole school community the opportunity to develop religious literacy as a key part of understanding and exploring the world. Through our participation in God's mission, we understand Christianity as a living world faith. We open our minds in RE to explore and understand other major world religions and world views.

Our core Christian values drive us tirelessly to nurture, support and challenge each other. Through RE we reflect upon our own beliefs and values to deepen our understanding of the world in order to flourish.

We will provide

- A challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework (Durham and Newcastle Syllabus).
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of Big Questions about religious and non-religious world views.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to the Vision and Ethos of the school

3. Organisation and Time Allocation

RE is delivered as a core subject, during morning curriculum time. We follow the Durham and Newcastle Agreed Syllabus for RE, with units on Christianity taught through Understanding Christianity.

The approach developed for Understanding Christianity is based on the use of core concepts of Christian belief, as expressed in the Bible and lived out in the lives of Christians today. The core concepts reflect a view that the Bible tells a 'big story' of the journey of God's people. This begins with understanding and concepts of God, through the beauty of the created world then to the people of God as they journey through the Old Testament. We then continue the Big Story into the New Testament beginning with the birth of Emmanuel, the Incarnation (rooted in the prophecies and promise given to

the people of God). Jesus' teaching then forms the basis of learning about the Gospels and how this continues to impact daily life today. We then move on to an understanding of the crux of the Christian faith, as Jesus our Saviour goes to the cross and is raised to life – the Salvation of Christian people. Finally, we move forward and recognise our place living in the Kingdom of God. The approach in RE is to revisit the core concepts throughout the different key stages, deepening pupils' understanding and making the links to this overall Big Story.

The teaching and learning approach enables pupils to engage with a variety of Bible texts in order to explore how Christians understand the core concepts. It explores ways in which Christians might live in the light of these texts, within the Christian community and in their individual lives. It allows pupils to reflect on some of the questions and puzzles that arise from the Bible, and to consider any implications or connections with their own lives and ways of understanding the world.

Other faiths, and ways of thinking (including atheism and agnosticism) are explored through further units exploring a range of themes, big questions and also looking at the lives of people following other faiths. The same approach is used, where we make sense, make connections and understand impact in order to make a considered response.

50% of RE Curriculum time is focussed on Christianity. The remaining 50% is focussed on other world views, both religious and non-religious. The major world religions of Islam and Judaism are taught in both KS1 and KS2. With Hinduism and Sikhism also taught in KS2.

In EYFS and KS1, pupils will spend a minimum of 1hr per week on RE. In KS2, pupils will spend a minimum of 1hr and 15 mins on RE.

4. Assessment

Assessment in RE is based on pupil's progress towards gaining a deep understanding of Big Questions. Each unit of work is carefully planned so that each lesson focusses on a question which will lead to an overall deep level of understanding of the Big Question. Assessment is based on depth of understanding against the 'Outcomes' for each unit, in the context of these questions.

The Local Governing Body receive a termly update on progress and attainment in RE, in addition to an open invitation to come into school and participate in RE lessons, where monitoring can take place.

5. Responsibilities for RE in School

The subject leader has the following role

- Responsibility for overseeing the teaching and learning of religious education in the school.
- Ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD for RE and share good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring the staff are familiar with Durham and Newcastle Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity
- Supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular learning walks, book scrutiny, pupil voice and lesson observations
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation

The Head Teacher and Local Governing Body have the following role:

- RE has a high profile within the curriculum
- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes 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 effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils make good progress

6. The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

It is hoped that in a Church of England School it will not be necessary for any pupils to be withdrawn from RE. We wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of RE at our school.