



St Michael's

C.E. Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Date	September 2024
Review Date	September 2025

Our Theologically Rooted Christian Vision

Courage to Flourish in the Love of God

‘I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full’ (John 10:10)



[Therefore],

‘Be strong and courageous... the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.’ (Joshua 1:9)

These biblical texts underpin our vision summary, ‘Courage to flourish in the love of God’. Jesus’ words from the New Testament describe his desire for everyone to be a full and flourishing version of their created selves, experiencing life in all its vibrant fullness, individually and in community. Our ambition is for everyone to encounter this fullness through the life and work of the school, whatever their background, beliefs or circumstances. God’s words to Joshua from the Old Testament illustrate how life, and learning, can be challenging, bringing setbacks and discouragement. These words inspire us to keep on going in those circumstances, confident that God watches over us and walks beside us.

The joining of these biblical texts is meaningful for the particular circumstances of our school community. It gives coherence to our aspirational vision that will grow courage and resilience as enablers of ‘life in all its fullness’ for everyone. To support our vision, we have seven overarching Christian values.

Our Core Christian Values

<u>Value</u>	<u>Biblical texts that underpin our values</u>
	Philippians 4:13 ‘I can do all things through him who strengthens me.’
	John 1:5 ‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.’

	<p>1 Corinthians 13:4-8</p> <p>‘Love is patient and kind... it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.’</p> <p>1 John 1:9</p> <p>‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us’</p>
	<p>Proverbs 3:5-6</p> <p>‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.’</p>
	<p>Hebrews 10:24</p> <p>‘Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good.’</p>
	<p>1 Thessalonians 5:18</p> <p>‘Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you’</p>

Our Aim

Our curriculum intent at St Michael’s is to provide a broad, exciting and challenging curriculum of the highest quality for the children in our care, encouraging, motivating and ensuring all children develop a love of learning, in order to achieve their full potential.

Our curriculum will be implemented through knowledge and skills-led experiences, enabling the children to increase their knowledge, learn and master new skills and therefore, deepen their understanding in a wide range of subjects.

The impact of this broad, exciting and challenging curriculum is to inspire and motivate the young people in our care to become lifelong learners. All pupils are encouraged to be proud of their own culture, religion and language and show respect to those of others.

Our Purpose and Rationale Document outlines, in more detail, how our RE curriculum is designed in conjunction with our vision and values.

Aims of the National Curriculum Non-Statutory Guidance:

A RE curriculum:

- Develops the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children

- Encourages children to become lifelong learners and responsible and respectful citizens
- Aids community cohesion
- Provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.
- Provokes challenging questions
- Encourages children to explore their own beliefs and the beliefs of others
- Promotes pupils to consider their responsibilities

Our pupils can put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when navigating school, life and mixing within their own and different communities.

Our Rationale

Religious Education at St Michael's C.E. Primary School aims to foster an understanding of and respect for diverse religious beliefs, practices, and values. Our RE curriculum is designed to support students in exploring their own beliefs and values, while also gaining a deep and respectful understanding of those held by others. By following the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus and the Understanding Christianity program, we ensure that students receive a comprehensive education that is inclusive, reflective, and spiritually enriching.

Our Curriculum

At St. Michael's, our curriculum is guided by *Understanding Christianity* and the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus. This approach allows us to provide a deep understanding of Christianity in line with our Christian vision, while also ensuring that our students gain knowledge of the six major world religions. This inclusive approach reflects and respects the diverse beliefs within our community.

The Understanding Christianity programme is a structured and systematic approach to teaching about Christianity, focusing on the following core concepts:

- 1. God:**
 - Understanding the nature of God as depicted in Christian teachings.
 - Exploration of the Trinity and the concept of God as Creator.
- 2. Creation:**
 - Study of the biblical creation narratives.
 - Reflection on the relationship between humanity and the environment.
- 3. The Fall:**
 - Examination of the concept of sin and its implications.
 - Understanding the narrative of the Fall and its significance in Christian theology.
- 4. People of God:**

- Study of key figures in the Bible and their roles in God's plan.
- Exploration of the covenant relationship between God and His people.

5. Incarnation:

- Understanding the significance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
- Study of the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

6. Salvation:

- Exploration of the concept of salvation and its importance in Christian belief.
- Understanding the role of Jesus' sacrifice in achieving salvation for humanity.

7. Kingdom of God:

- Examination of the teachings of Jesus about the Kingdom of God.
- Reflection on the implications of living according to the values of the Kingdom.

The pedagogical approach for teaching Understanding Christianity units is divided into three components: comprehending the text, recognising its impact, and making meaningful connections.

Making sense of the text

This involves developing skills of reading and interpretation; understanding how Christians interpret, handle and use biblical texts; making sense of the meanings of texts for Christians.

Understanding the impact

This involves examining ways in which Christians respond to biblical texts and teachings, and how they put their beliefs into action in diverse ways within the Christian community and in the world

Making connections

This involves evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the texts and concepts studied, and discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

(Understanding Christianity, 2019).

Sandwell Agreed Syllabus

The Sandwell Agreed Syllabus provides a comprehensive framework for teaching RE, ensuring coverage of the following key areas:

1. Beliefs and Practices:

- Understanding the core beliefs, practices, and teachings of major world religions including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Judaism.
- Exploration of non-religious worldviews such as Humanism.

2. Authority and Influence:

- Study of sacred texts and their interpretations.

- Examination of religious leaders and their influence on communities and societies.
- 3. Expressions of Belief:**
 - Exploration of religious rituals, ceremonies, and festivals.
 - Understanding the significance of symbols, art, and architecture in religious expression.
- 4. Ethics and Values:**
 - Discussion of moral and ethical issues from religious perspectives.
 - Understanding the role of religion in shaping ethical behaviour and social responsibility.

The Sandwell Agreed Syllabus adopts the same pedagogical approach as Understanding Christianity. Our choice to implement both was informed by research and best practices from other BDMAT schools. Given our diverse school community, these syllabi were selected for their comprehensive coverage of various religions while also offering an extensive exploration of Christian topics.

Planning and Delivery of Programme

- RE lessons will be planned, resourced and taught by class teachers
- Teachers have continuing access to CPD delivered by the RE Subject Lead and RE specialists to ensure high-quality teaching is achieved
- Access to support is available to individual teachers, where appropriate, throughout the year
- RE is resourced by the RE Subject Lead so that all resources, high-quality texts and artefacts are provided to children to supplement their lessons

Time Allocation for RE

In line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement, our school ensures that Religious Education receives a minimum of 5% of curriculum time. This is implemented as follows:

Early Years Foundation Stage: RE is taught in through a weekly carpet session and revisited and applied through continuous provision and focus activities.

Key Stage 1: RE is taught for at least 36 hours per year, typically delivered as a weekly session of at least 1 hour.

Key Stage 2: RE is taught for at least 45 hours per year, typically delivered as a weekly session of at least 1 hour, with additional time allocated through cross-curricular links, interfaith visits, follow up work from visits and enrichment activities.

This time is protected and not used for other curriculum areas or events, ensuring that RE maintains its status as a core subject within our school.

Assessment

Evidence of pupils' work will be kept in their RE book/experience journal. Children are assessed at the end of each lesson based on what they have learnt, whether it is knowledge, understanding a religious text or concept, mastering key definitions, or making connections to their own lives. Each subsequent lesson revisits two key questions and introduces two new ones, helping reinforce the recall of important information. At the end of the unit, children are assessed on ten key questions. Teachers then use these assessments to adapt their lessons, addressing any gaps in the children's learning, before the end of the unit.

Monitoring

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board will approve the RE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RE.

RE Subject Lead

The Subject Champion is responsible for monitoring the teaching of RE across the school and staff/ pupil voice. The subject lead is also responsible for ensuring teachers have the correct resources they need to teach each unit and access to a long-term planning and RE progression document to ensure high-quality teaching where children make progress. The subject lead is also responsible for quality-assuring all assessments created by teachers.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RE
- Monitoring progress via assessment
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from components of RE
- Ensuring the work in RE books is the same standard as the work in core lessons as per our Teaching and Learning Policy

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RE and treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils are expected to produce work to the best of their ability. Pupils are expected to follow the same standards in their RE books and lessons as the core subjects.

Educational Visits and Inter-faith Week

During Inter-Faith Week, our students undertake visits to various places of worship, enriching their understanding and appreciation of different religious traditions and practices. By understanding the diverse beliefs and practices within various communities, students learn to foster inclusivity, empathy, and mutual respect. This alignment with our School Value of Community underscores the importance of building a cohesive and supportive environment where every individual is valued and understood.

Inter-Faith Week takes place every Spring term.

Each year group will visit the following places of worship:

- EYFS – Church
- Year 1 – Gurdwara
- Year 2 - Mosque
- Year 3 - Synagogue
- Year 4 – Gurdwara
- Year 5 – Buddhist Temple
- Year 6 – Hindu Temple

Parents' Right to Withdraw

The parent of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school has the right to request that the pupil be excused from all or part of the RE provided. They do not have to provide a reason, and our school must comply with their request.

Schools should 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. They 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. 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, for example. (RE in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance, 2010).