

# **The Federation of St. John's and St Paul's Whitechapel CE Primary Schools**

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

### **Rationale**

As Church of England primary schools in diverse communities, we recognise that religious education (RE) provides a vehicle for engagement in an open dialogue about faith and beliefs. Belonging to a safe and nurturing community, founded on strong Christian Values, our children develop an array of skills that will equip them to experience 'Life in all its fullness,' meeting the challenges of our ever-changing world and to make their own positive contributions to our global society.

We believe that the teaching and delivery of RE is of paramount importance, as it is concerned with the personal and spiritual development and an understanding and appreciation of faith amongst our pupils. Within this area of the curriculum, acknowledging our multi-faith context, our pupils enquire, ponder and learn about a variety of religious beliefs and world views, and are subsequently empowered to express their learning and understanding about faith and their personal values in a range of ways.

### **Aims and objectives**

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

The specific intent of using the LDBS syllabus is to:

- Enable all children to become religiously literate.
- Offer a systematic enquiry-based approach to the teaching of RE.
- Develop skills such as the ability to be critical thinkers and to ask deep and meaningful questions.
- Ensure that children can make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief, based on a deep knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews.

### **Planning and Delivery**

We use the LDBS Syllabus for Religious Education as our scheme of work. The curriculum is balanced and well-structured, enquiring into religions and worldviews through the disciplines of theology, philosophy, and the human and social sciences.

RE is considered an academic subject, therefore it should be delivered by the class teacher or an experienced practitioner.

The LDBS syllabus utilises a four-step learning process within every unit:

1. Enquire: Engaging with a big question and subsidiary questions rooted in a discipline of RE.
2. Investigate/Explore: Learning about religious content and context, where children primarily learn *about* religion and belief. Strategies for deepening learning include interpreting sacred texts and engaging with authentic religious believers.
3. Evaluate/Communicate: Analysing and evaluating the impact of the belief or practice on the religious or belief community being studied.
4. Reflect on/Express: Considering the enquiry question from the perspective of the faith and belief traditions encountered, leading to a personal response based on knowledge and understanding.

#### **Implementation strategies include:**

- Recording should always be of a high standard with the same expectations as for English and mathematics.
- Teachers should consider when RE sessions are timetabled, ensuring there is time to stop, pause, and reflect, thus providing an opportunity for children to learn knowledge and skills and develop an understanding about their own spirituality.
- We encourage the development of creative links between RE and the wider curriculum.
- Curricular visits to places of worship and religious visitors are encouraged to enhance the learning experience.
- Lessons should display a variety of teaching approaches such, as including drama, art, whole class, group, and individual activities.
- Throughout each unit, class teachers should make good use of their classroom RE working walls clearly displaying the enquiry question and the development of the children's ideas over the half-term.

#### **Management, Monitoring and Assessment of R.E.**

The LDBS syllabus aims for children to be able to hold a balanced and well-informed conversation about religion and worldviews and make good or better academic progress.

- Our assessment strategies focus on regular, ongoing formative assessments in class sessions using focused questions. Armed with the substantive knowledge that children should know by the end of each RE unit, class teachers plan for regular questions to assess their children's understanding of key vocabulary; knowledge and understanding of substantive knowledge and their overall confidence in relationship to the three areas of disciplinary knowledge and skills.
- At the start of each RE lesson, teacher wills use initial recap questions and quizzes, and they will plan for key questions which will be answered by the whole class on post-its for the RE Learning Journey or working wall. Questioning takes place in various forms: through independent activities in pupil workbooks; focused questions in class discussion and exploration; to posing a key specific question for a group activity.
- All work entries are marked in RE, and teachers challenge children through setting next step questions to help deepen their thinking; make connections and re-visit misconceptions in their learning.
- At the end of each unit, class teachers use summative forms of assessments through an end-of-unit assessment activity to elicit the children's understanding of key vocabulary and their perspective or response towards the 'Big Question' of the unit.
- At the end of the year, teachers make a final judgement on each child in their class, using information in their workbooks; the end of unit pieces, and contributions to the RE Learning Journey. Using the LDBS Assessment Framework, these all help to form a level of whether children are working above, at or below the national expected levels.

- Throughout the year, class teachers are encouraged to log or identify key children who have made significant contributions to discussions or the Learning Journey in order to make a final formal judgment of each child in RE at the end of the academic year.

The RE Coordinator/SLT will monitor the teaching and learning of RE in the following ways:

- A termly book scrutiny.
- A bi-annual lesson observation in all classes.
- An annual pupil questionnaire in the Summer Term.

The RE Coordinator/SLT will lead on the dissemination of good practice in RE through leading INSET, modelling sessions, and co-teaching sessions.

### **Resources**

St John's School: Teaching resource books are located in the school P.P.A. room and library, and are monitored and updated annually. RE artefacts can be found in the Resources Room.

St Paul's School: RE artefacts are stored in the cupboards opposite the Studio/ Year 6. Additional books and resources can also be obtained from the PDC library.

File name	Fed - Religious Education RE Policy 2024
Date of latest revision	Autumn 2024
Date Ratified by Governors	Autumn 2024
Date of Review	Autumn 2026