

Religious Education Policy



ST. MARTIN'S
CE Primary School

www.stmartinsprimary.com

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Religious Education Policy for St Martin's Church of England Primary School

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Introduction

Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and live life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

At St Martin's Church of England Primary School, we believe that Religious Education (RE) plays a fundamental role in the holistic development of our children. Our high quality, sequential RE curriculum is designed in line with the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) framework alongside the RE syllabus produced by the London Diocesan Board of Education (LDBS). Our curriculum provides an opportunity for children to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christianity including the way in which it is unique and diverse. There is also the opportunity for children to develop an understanding of other major world religions. The curriculum enables our children to foster deep personal reflection, cultivate a respectful attitude towards diversity and allows them to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue. Our RE program is designed to nurture the spiritual growth of every student, guiding them to become "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).

Our aim is to create an environment where all children can explore and develop their spirituality; understand world views and wider ethical issues, and appreciate the impact of religion on individuals, communities, and society at large. We align our RE curriculum with the best practices outlined by NATRE and the LDBS to make sure it fully supports our Christian ethos, reflecting our vision of all children and adults being beacons of light in our community and beyond.

1: Vision and Values:

Inspired by Martin of Tours, our Christian school warmly embraces all. We see our children as courageous advocates, shaping communities now and for the future. Guided by compassion, trust, prayer and a spirit of generosity, our children flourish and shine as beacons of light, making a positive impact on society.

Mission Statement:

Our RE curriculum aligns with the ethos of the Church and is designed to support the spiritual, moral, and academic growth of all our children. Our curriculum encourages children to explore their own beliefs while developing an understanding and respect for other world religions. Through our scheme of working, there will be further contributions to British values and cultural development. This is in line with the aims set out by the Church of England statement of entitlement 2019.

Our curriculum supports the following core values:

Respect for All: We foster an environment of inclusivity, ensuring that all beliefs and backgrounds are respected. We give pupils the opportunity to explore the nature of religious language and symbolism within both Christianity and those of other religions and worldviews.

Spiritual Growth: Children are nurtured and encouraged to explore their personal spirituality and their relationship with God within a clear ethos of respect for those children of differing faiths.

Ethical Understanding: We aim to equip children with the moral and ethical understanding needed to navigate the world around them.

Critical Reflection: Our RE curriculum encourages critical thinking, where children can reflect on their beliefs and the role of religion in the modern world.

2. Aims and Objectives

The key aims of the RE curriculum at St Martin's Church of England Primary School are:

To explore and understand the teachings, practices, and ethical values of Christianity as a diverse global living faith through exploration of core beliefs and engaging with biblical texts.

To experience Christian faith and places of worship

Engage and challenge the children in a way that will develop critical thinking skills regarding religious and moral issues.

To nurture spiritual growth and personal reflection, guiding children to understand the relevance of religion in their lives and the world.

To promote respect and understanding of diverse faiths and cultures within our community, recognising their continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage.

3. Curriculum Content

The yearly themes to be taught will follow NATRE syllabus and the units covered within each term will follow the curriculum overview given by the subject leader supported with further guidance from an LDBS advisor. All teachers should clearly follow the hours stated for each unit to enable the unit to be covered properly. Each unit will specify whether content is solely Christian. A suggested amount of hours per week would be 1 hour 20 minutes for each class. This may be an hour lesson and 20 minutes of class worship.

In line with the both the LDBS and NATRE guidelines, our curriculum includes:

Christianity: Core teachings from the Bible, key events in the life of Jesus Christ, the sacraments, prayer, and worship practices.

Other World Religions: Children will also learn about other faiths, including Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, ensuring they understand their key beliefs, rituals, and practices.

Ethical and Moral Issues: We cover various moral dilemmas through the lens of religious teachings, such as topics on justice, human rights, environmental ethics, and peace-building.

Key Themes in Religious Studies: These will include the nature of God, the problem of evil and suffering, the meaning of life, and the role of religion in public life.

The curriculum is structured to encourage:

A chronological approach to studying Christian history and world religions, allowing children to see the evolution of ideas and practices.

Exploration of religious and philosophical questions that relate to everyday life, helping our children to reflect on their values and beliefs.

4. Teaching and Learning Strategies

Our teaching strategies are rooted in the best practices, ensuring that lessons are engaging, inclusive, and thought-provoking:

Active Learning: Interactive lessons, including group discussions, debates, case studies, and role-play activities that allow children to explore different religious perspectives. There is also an opportunity for the children to access learning through Godly play.

Creative Approaches: Use of art, drama, music, poetry and digital tools to help children engage with religious themes in diverse and imaginative ways.

Reflection and Prayer: Regular opportunities for children to reflect personally on religious themes through prayer, journaling or art.

Adaptations: Tailored approaches are used to meet the needs of all students regardless of ability, ensuring that each can access the content at an appropriate level. This includes the children in ‘the Lighthouse’

5. Assessment and Evaluation

Teachers will assess RE to evaluate the children’s understanding and personal development using the following strategies:

Formative Assessment: Ongoing assessment through discussions, projects, and reflections. Teachers provide regular feedback to help children deepen their understanding.

Summative Assessment: End-of-unit assessments, including essays, presentations, and tests, to assess knowledge of key religious concepts and their ability to reflect on these critically.

Books will also be monitored termly by the Senior Leadership team and the RE coordinator. Parents will be informed of their children’s progress in the annual end of year report.

6. Inclusion and Diversity

We ensure that our RE curriculum is inclusive and respects the diversity of all our children:

Respect for Different Faiths: Whilst our curriculum meets the expectations of the Church of England ‘Statement of Entitlement’, we make sure we teach about the diversity of religious beliefs and practices in a respectful and unbiased way.

Non-coercive Teaching: Although our school has a strong Christian foundation rooted in theology, we encourage children to explore and learn about other religions, allowing them to form their own beliefs.

Cultural Sensitivity: We celebrate various religious festivals and observances, ensuring that children from all faith backgrounds feel represented.

7. Teacher Training and Professional Development

Pupils in Church schools are entitled to be taught by teachers who have a secure subject knowledge and are confident to navigate and challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice and extremism.

At St Martin’s CE Primary School, our teaching staff receive ongoing professional development to stay up to date with the latest resources and methodologies in Religious Education. We ensure that all RE teachers:

- Have access to planning and resources from the LDBS.
- Have access to NATRE's resources and training programs.
- Have opportunities to liaise and work with the local vicar from St Martin’s Church.
- The RE coordinator can seek advice from the LDBS school advisor who has an appropriate religious background.
- Participate in training led by the RE coordinator to strengthen their subject knowledge and teaching skills.
- Collaborate with other leaders across the trust to share best practices and discuss pedagogical strategies for teaching RE.

8. Parental and Community Involvement

We encourage engagement with both parents and the local church community within the RE curriculum:

Parental Involvement: We regularly communicate with parents about the RE curriculum and encourage them to engage in their child's spiritual and moral development.

Church and Community Links: We collaborate with the local care home as well as having weekly visits to school from the Reverend at St Martin’s Church who leads church worship at school, the children have the opportunity to visit the

<https://ldbs.co.uk/ldbs-re-syllabus#gsc.tab=0>

<https://www.natre.org.uk/>

church to have RE lessons conducted by the Reverend as well as using the church for cross curricular links to Art, History and Geography.

9. Withdrawal Policy

RE is provided for all pupils, and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents do have the right to withdraw pupils from RE: if you wish to do this, make an appointment with the Head teacher / RE subject leader. The school does not support selective withdrawal from RE.

10. Safeguarding and Well-being

We recognise that discussions around faith and ethics can be sensitive and sometimes provoke personal reflection.

Our RE policy ensures:

Safe Environment: A supportive environment for children to express their thoughts and feelings about faith, spirituality, and morality.

Safeguarding: All teaching staff adhere to safeguarding policies to ensure that any emotional or spiritual concerns raised by children are addressed appropriately.

11. Policy Review

This RE policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of our students. We will seek feedback from children, parents, teachers, and the local church community to inform any updates to the policy.

Conclusion

Religious Education at St. Martin's CE Primary School is more than a subject; it is a cornerstone of our mission to prepare children for life enabling them to shape communities now and for the future. Guided by compassion, trust, prayer and a spirit of generosity, our children will flourish and shine as beacons of light, making a positive impact on society.