

Religious Education Policy



This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Committee responsible:	Full Governing Body
Member of staff responsible:	Lenia Greenaway
Date approved:	Summer 2025
Review period:	Annual
Next review date:	Summer 2026

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

RESPECT – RESOLVE – ASPIRATION - WELLBEING

Religious Education in our Church Schools

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 educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.

‘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 for the religious freedom of each person’.

Religious Education in Church of England Schools A Statement of Entitlement,
The Church of England Education Office 2019.

Vision:

Learning for Life.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ Jeremiah 29:11

Rationale:

As a church school our ethos is rooted in our Christian faith and we seek to encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith in the lives of our children. We believe that our children have unlimited potential and we strive to play our part in the promises of God for their future:

St Peter’s Infant School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School. This means that the teaching of RE is given significant importance and is seen at the heart of Christian distinctiveness of Church of England Schools and central to school effectiveness. RE should contribute to the outworking of the Church school’s Christian vision. As such, RE must be given the priority that it deserves as a core subject in the curriculum and must aim to be an excellent specialism of the school.

The Governors have adopted the new Southwark Diocesan Board of Education’s syllabus (2024) which is taught in each year group which will be implemented over the coming year.

In order to allow the children to have the opportunity to explore deeper questions about life and learn about Christianity alongside a wide range of other faiths and cultures it is placed in the core part of our Teaching, Learning and Assessment model.

Further to this we allocate 10% of curriculum time (a full morning) to the subject.

The RE lead (who is also the Headteacher) and class teachers have read and pay regard to The Church Of England Education Office – Religious Education in Church of England Schools – A Statement of Entitlement. This document is used when evaluating, timetabling the amount of time spent teaching RE and planning RE in school.

Aims

- To provide teaching about the Christian Faith and the other principle Faiths for children so that they can develop religious knowledge and understanding that are relevant for their whole life, and which build upon the distinctive Christian ethos of the school.
- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, and social development of children so that through the development of their own sense of identity, worth, personal values and beliefs, they can be responsible members of the wider community and have a positive effect on the ethos of the school.
- To help children to learn about, understand, respect and value other people's beliefs and cultures.
- To develop the ability to reflect on and communicate issues of truth, belief and faith.

Objectives

- To introduce children to core religious concepts and in the case of Christianity, aspects of the stories of the Bible, especially the story of Jesus and his continuing influence in the world.
- To provide opportunities for children to hear about significant people who have influenced Christian practice and worship and those of other faiths.
- To introduce children to a variety of literature from all key faiths, and especially Christian, and to encourage aesthetic and creative experiences which will help their understanding of religious ideas.
- To encourage a reflective attitude to life and to enable children to experience feelings of awe and wonder, joy and mystery.
- To explore the religious life of the local community, especially St Peter's Church and to understand the meaning and impact of Christian living in a local sense.
- To understand the importance of different religious festivals.
- To lay foundations of knowledge and understanding about other faiths.

Teaching Approaches

RE is to be taught by all teachers throughout the school and its provision will be specifically provided for by each teacher in their planning. The curriculum will comprise of 2/3 Christianity and 1/3 principal world faiths. In KS1 children will be taught about Judaism and the Islamic faith. In EYFS the curriculum will be more thematic. Units from the Diocese of Southwark's syllabus will be used to deliver the curriculum for RE (see Curriculum map).

We will use a variety of teaching styles, for example, whole class, groupings, or individual approaches, appropriate to the task. Activities will involve a range of different tasks including drama, dance, art, D.T., R.S.E./P.S.H.E., computing, music, etc. We also include a whole school approach during Collective Worship times. Whatever the style planned we shall be flexible in our approach to allow for changes thus ensuring that the children's learning takes place in an atmosphere of enthusiasm, engagement and motivation to learn.

In addition to planned R.E. activities we are also aware of the need to take opportunities as they present themselves, of personal, local, national and world events and will respond appropriately, e.g. by reflecting or talking through things that have happened by providing discussion time.

Religious Education (RE) will be taught through:

- The agreed Year Group's curriculum map for RE which is based on the Southwark Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education; ensuring that the allocated core time is dedicated weekly on the timetable.
- Visits from clergy and other caring agencies.
- Visits to different faith centres.
- All aspects of school life including cross curricular learning and relationships between staff and children.
- Supported by Collective Worship and Church services and visits.

Religious Education and its mapping in the Curriculum

Progression and Differentiation

We aim to provide for progression in both content and skills so all pupils build upon prior learning – linking their learning by knowing more and remembering more. The progression in the content is reflected in our curriculum mapping of areas to be covered over the time the children are in school.

Many of the skills necessary for RE are technical skills similar to those used in many areas of the curriculum e.g. drawing, reading, which we aim to develop and build on continuously. In addition we hope to develop children's skills in thought, reflection and discussion e.g. taking account of others' viewpoints. This is often best done through the teacher's own professional judgement at the particular time using his/her understanding of the situation and the children.

The work may be differentiated by task or by outcome according to the teacher's judgement at the time. It may also be by different types of questions after a story or during discussion aimed at drawing out a child in a particular way, so that all children feel they can participate.

Subject specific planning

Each year group will have a programme of study consisting of areas of RE which are best taught through specific subject teaching.

Other areas of the curriculum

Some aspects of RE can also be taught and embedded through other subject areas. RE is an integral part of the school curriculum and school life, so children will see it as relevant to the rest of life and learning, allowing them to flourish as they develop skills of enquiry, critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection.

Examples include:

English

- Writing/retelling a Christian story, or reflecting on the moral implications of a religious story.
- Writing a prayer that a Christian might write and presenting it in best handwriting for a class prayer book or reading in Church.
- Performing a Bible reading in Church, promoting speaking skills.

History

- Thinking about why we have Remembrance Day and reflecting upon the mistakes people may have made through history.
- Looking at how significant people were influenced by God and the teachings of Jesus.
- Examining how practises have been changed due to the determination of specific religious figures.

Geography

- Support for disadvantaged people and communities for example, Comic Relief, our sponsorship of a child in Kibera and Southwark Diocesan Projects in Africa. (For example, the annual Lent Call.)
- Looking at the geographical areas for some communities and examining how this disadvantages the people living in these areas and thereby looking at how we can support them in different ways to have fulfilling lives.

P.S.H.E./R.S.E.

- Respecting similarities and differences and the uniqueness of individuals.
- Comparing our feelings with those of others; developing empathy; understanding the importance of respecting other people's views and what others feel is important to them.

Computing

- Using the internet for research, for example, a visual tour of a mosque or synagogue; or researching a specific saint.

Music

- To understand religious ideas that are expressed through music, hymns and compositions.

Continuing Professional Development

All teachers are supported with CPD and Inset training for Religious Education by Southwark Diocese, with other Church schools or from the RE subject Leader. The RE lead will also cascade back updates and further training information as appropriate.

The Programme of Study

The teaching and learning approach in the new RE syllabus has three disciplinary lenses or 'ways of knowing' (believing, thinking, living) which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, underpinning the aims of RE.

Believing

Identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions; recognising how and why sources of authority (such as texts) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, and developing skills of interpretation.



Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the beliefs and practices studied; allowing pupils to challenge ideas studied, and the ideas studied to challenge pupils' thinking; discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.



Examining how and why people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, within their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.

Some specific areas will be selected from the syllabus content to form the basis of topics for the whole school's RE programme. For example, 'What's in our school name?', will be explored during a whole school 'Pause Day', where a day is dedicated to reflect on the life and work of our school's patron saint.

The programme is checked for balance across the three lenses above and mapped for continuity and progression within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, so children know 'more and remember more'.

Resources

Resources are reviewed regularly. The subject leader will ensure that there are appropriate resources to execute the scheme of work effectively. New resources will be purchased as necessary and to update and give new ideas, as funds permit.

Planning

Teachers will draw up detailed medium term plans with clear learning objectives and success criteria linked to the lenses of believing, thinking, living.

Assessment

In describing progress in RE, the Agreed Syllabus illustrates how pupils will develop increasing understanding through believing (**theological**), living (**sociological**) and thinking (**philosophical**) approaches to learning, reflected in end of key-stage expectations and within units of work.

Assessment in RE, as in other subjects is both formative and summative; assessing substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge. Classroom activities will enable pupils to build knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways. Through the units, teachers will be aware of how far pupils have achieved the outcomes so as to guide their next steps in teaching.

We recognise that not all aspects of Religious Education can be assessed, for example, pupils may express personal views and ideas that, although integral to teaching and learning would not be appropriate for formal assessment.

Monitoring

RE is monitored by the RE Subject Leader, and the RE governor also makes regular monitoring visits, which are fed back to the full governing body. The FGB takes overall responsibility for Religious Education. Children's progress, book scrutinies, the teaching of RE, the impact of Collective Worship and the effectiveness of St Peter's as a Distinctive Church School are all areas which are monitored.

The school also moderates RE pupil work with other local church schools to ensure good practice and consistency of standards across the schools.

Feedback from the school's Faith group (as well as other pupil voice opportunities) is also useful to assess the engagement and effectiveness of learning. The group meet regularly to discuss how to develop and/or improve RE and Collective Worship, and can make practical suggestions about how faith can be demonstrated in the school.

Equal Opportunities (See Equality Policy)

It is our policy to offer equal opportunities to every child. As teachers we need to help all children develop their religious knowledge and skills irrespective of gender, race, class, religion etc. We also recognise that parents have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education.

Inclusion

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship as identified in the Education Act 1944 and in subsequent legislation. St Peter's is a Church of England Infant School where Christian Values and principles underpin the whole curriculum. In order to preserve the distinctiveness of this church school community, we encourage everyone to be involved in Religious Education and Collective Worship. RE is taught as a core academic subject and is therefore taught in such a way that it is inclusive for everyone of all faiths or no faith. Parents who have concerns about this should discuss them with the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher before their children are admitted to the school. If withdrawal from RE is requested at any other stage, a meeting will be arranged with the Headteacher to discuss this. If after the meeting a parent/carer still wants to withdraw their child, this may be granted for 1 year and then reviewed.

Additional needs

As teachers we should try to be aware of any specific differences which may limit a child's development in their Religious Education and to provide support where necessary. This may range from supporting those who may need help with recording or sequencing, to providing extension activities to extend more able children. We recognise that from time to time children may have additional needs arising from particular personal circumstances, when they may need additional support.

Children working at higher levels

Teachers also recognise that some children show particular insight during RE lessons and when contributing to acts of worship. These children are identified through our assessment procedures and through observation. Work and questioning will be differentiated to meet their needs, a comment will be included in their yearly report and assessment sheets, identifying these children and will be transferred to their next teacher so appropriate work can be planned, moving forward.

Links with the Church and Community

As a church school we enjoy very strong links with the local church, St Peter's, which is one of four local churches in The Oxted Team Ministry (Tandridge, Crowhurst, Hurst Green and Oxted). We enjoy regular contact and visits from the Vicar, Reverend Ashton and a number of the children at the school attend churches in the parish.

We are proud and privileged to have these links with the Church and wider community which we believe strengthen and put our Religious Education teaching into context. We are constantly striving to deepen these links, and the Faith Group meet regularly to explore the development of stronger liaison.

The following are examples of specific links which may relate to RE which we have with St Peter's Church and the community:

- We make use of the Church and local community to enhance our cross-curricular approach to the children's work; for example, the children will study the Church and its building. On occasion, members of the community will support the children with their studies.
- The school involves itself in charity appeals, e.g. The Royal British Legion, Macmillan, which involves a variety of fund raising activities.
- As a school we support parents who raise funds and resources for children and communities in Cape Verde. We believe this greatly benefits our children giving them a real-life focus to caring and responsibility in the global community – linked to Courageous Advocacy.

The promotion of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development in RE:



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT	MORAL DEVELOPMENT	SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
<p>Through our teaching of Religious education, we give our pupils opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of others and allow them to develop a respect for these. Through these experiences, children are filled with a sense of awe and wonder in their learning, about themselves and others around them. We help children to enhance their own spiritual development through reflection of values, beliefs and experiences and encourage them to develop their own beliefs and to express their feelings and emotions in their learning.</p>	<p>Moral development in Religious Education allows children the ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong. Children are given the opportunity to explore different ethical issues and moral values, including those in Bible stories and stories of other faiths, and to apply their own understanding to these. Children will learn to empathise and to understand the consequences of their own and others' actions.</p>	<p>The experiences we give to our children through the teaching of Religious Education will develop their sense of identity and belonging. This will prepare children for life in an increasingly diverse society. Children will be given opportunities to explore different communities and to understand the rights and responsibilities of different members with for example, visits to a Mosque and Synagogue.</p>	<p>Religious Education allows pupils to have an awareness and understanding of a range of beliefs and practices in the community and the wider world. At St Peter's School, we encourage children to have an understanding and appreciation of a range of cultures that have helped shape their own culture, heritage, and development. Children will develop a respect for cultural diversity and be encouraged to both understand and celebrate diversity.</p>



Curriculum Map for the Southwark Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education 2025-2026

St Peter's C of E Infant School, Tandridge

	Autumn Term 1	Autumn Term 2		Spring Term 1	Spring Term 2		Summer Term 1	Summer Term 2
Foundation.	Who am I and where do I belong? Creation (God)	Why is Christmas special for Christians? Incarnation		What can we learn from the stories of Jesus? Salvation	What is in an Easter Garden? Salvation		What makes something special? Incarnation	What makes our world wonderful and how should we care for it? Creation (God)
Year 1	Harvest (2-3 weeks) Why did Jesus tell stories? Gospel	What's in our school name?	Who's who in the Nativity? Carnation	What does it mean to be a Muslim? Islam	Who are our Christian neighbours? God	Is Easter the most important festival for Christians? Salvation	Why do Jewish people celebrate the gift of Shabbat? Judaism	What teaches people to look after the world? Creation
Year 2	Harvest (2 weeks) Why do Christians make and keep promises before God? Gospel	What is the story of Noah really about? Creation	What does 'The light of the World' mean for Christians? Incarnation	What helps Muslims live a faithful life? Islam	Why are women so important in the Bible? Gospel	Do Easter symbols help us to understand Easter? Salvation	How does belonging to a Synagogue help a Jewish person in their faith? Judaism	How is prayer important? God
Trips	St Peter's Church Strawson's field		St Peter's Church	Woking Mosque		St Peter's Church		St Peter's Church