St Barnabas C of E First and Middle School

We are an inclusive Church School with a commitment to providing quality education that meets the needs of all. We aim to create successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens through our Christian approach of love and cooperation. 'Let all that you do be done in love' encourages us to have a lifelong love of learning so we flourish as human beings.

'Let all that you do be done in love' 1 Corinthians ch16 v14

RE Policy

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date
BG	LAB			

St Barnabas C of E First and Middle School

Religious Education Policy

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Introduction

This model policy has been written in the light of the Church of England's Vision for Education (Autumn 2016), Flourishing for All (September 2024) and through reflection on the 2023 SIAMS Evaluation Framework for schools.

Name of School: St. Barnabas C of E First and Middle School

Legal Position of Religious Education in School

Religious Education (RE) is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core nor foundation subject. The 1988 Education Act states 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils.

St Barnabas C of E First and Middle School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and therefore follows the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025 - 2030

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Church of England's (September 2026) outlines the aims and expectations for RE in Church of England schools and guides this school's approach to RE.
It begins by stating: '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'. Quoting from the Church of England's *Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, it continues: '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'.

Religious Education, the School Vision and Intent

The School's Vision:
We are an inclusive Church School with a commitment to providing quality education that meets the needs of all. We aim to create successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens through our Christian approach of love and cooperation. 'Let all that you do be done in love' encourages us to have a lifelong love of learning so we flourish as human beings.

'Let all that you do be done in love' - Corinthians 16:14
At St Barnabas our Christian vision 'Let all that you do be in love' Corinthians 16:14 can be felt from the moment you walk through our school gates. Adults and children at St. Barnabas flourish, even through times of adversity with our strong focus on mental health and wellbeing for all. Our school's associated values are lived out day-to-day and have a strong impact on our school life and we hope that the values they have through the school will live with them when they have left. RE lessons engage pupils in systematic inquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews are addressed. Pupils have the opportunity to think about those big questions through 'I wonder…' statements and are encouraged to reflect on their own views and to respect the views of others. Our strong link with our local church is extremely important to us as a school and pupils speak lovingly of the members of the church who share worship with them.

Implementation of Religious Education within school

In-line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views. Religious Education in our school is provided under the terms of the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus and Understanding Christianity.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE. Therefore, this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important

that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the *Statement of Entitlement*, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- Engage meaningfully and critically with learning which helps them to make sense of the multi-religious and multi-secular world in which they live.
- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of beliefs and practices, using approaches which engage with biblical text and key sources of authority.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating the complexity, diversity, continuity and change that exists within those worldviews being studied.
- Grapple with questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- Understand the concept of religion and recognise its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals, communities and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge which equips pupils to be religiously literate.
- Explore their personal worldviews; their own religious or non-religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development.

For the above to be implemented, R.E. needs to:

- Develop pupils' skills including reasoning and critical thinking skills
- Enable pupils to ask and answer questions in a safe learning environment
- Discover information to approach new material with empathy and respect
- Allow pupils to acquire and retain knowledge and use their world, build community and develop their personal beliefs and faith
- Reflect on learning and be given time to ask 'I wonder…'

The long-term plan incorporates units from the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus (2025 – 2030). This is reviewed, adapted and is flexible with the needs of the children. As part of the planning process, teachers plan the following:

- A cycle of lessons for each subject, which carefully plans for progression of skills and depth of understanding which include substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Children use the key questions as a starting point for their own inquiry and opportunities are built in for children to reflect on their learning and to ask 'I wonder…'
- An R.E. board and copy of The Big Frieze is displayed in every classroom. The R.E. board displays the school values, school prayer, The Big Question, Key Vocabulary and 'I wonder…' questions which are added to by children's responses throughout the unit.
- Children will make visits to places of worship throughout their time at St Barnabas CE First and Middle school:

  Reception – Church visit
  Year 1 – Singers Hill synagogue, Birmingham (Unit 3 or 4))
  Year 2 - Worcester Mosque and Worcester Cathedral (Unit 3 or 4))
  Year 4 – Shri Venkateswara Balaji Temple, Oldbury (Unit 6)
  Year 7 – Bright Earth Buddhist Temple, Malvern (Unit 4)

Organisation & Time Allocation

The Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education specifies that Christianity is to be the main religious worldview studied in and through RE in each year group/phase equating to at least 50% of curriculum time. In also states that, in a Church school there should be sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages (KS) 1-4.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement and the structure of Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus / Dudley Agreed Syllabus we have agreed that, as a minimum:

- in the Foundation Stage pupils will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it. They will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism or Islam - RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year
- at Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and also consider non-religious worldviews - RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.
- at Key Stage 3 pupils study Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and also consider non-religious worldviews - RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year.

Assessment / Recording & Reporting

The Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025-2030 sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of Key Stage learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus.

As a school we track progress in RE by:

- Posing questions throughout the unit which allow for pupils to thinking more deeply through the disciplinary lenses of Theology, Human Science and Philosophy
- Finishing each lesson by posing an 'I wonder…' question, giving children opportunities to reflect on their learning a pose their own questions (which may or may not be able to be answered)
- At end of unit, children complete a 'Showcase It' task to measure against end points taken from Agreed Syllabus
- A teacher assessment for their class after each unit of work using the assessment proforma used as a school for all subjects.

A 2- part school report is sent home in both the Spring and Summer terms. Space is given in both reports to comment on a child spiritual and emotional growth. In addition, a formal assessment whether the child is Working Towards (WTS) Expected (EXS) or Greater Depth (GDS) is given.

Responsibilities for RE in School

The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the legal framework for RE is carried out and that the teaching of RE fits within the school's distinctively Christian vision. At St Barnabas CE First and Middle School some of the responsibilities for RE may be delegated to other members of staff.

The **Subject Leader** is responsible for: ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for RE and share good practice

- attending RE clusters / hub meetings
- providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- all teaching staff and those responsible for governance understand the distinctive role and purpose of RE within a Church school
- ensure that Christianity is the main religion taught in and through RE in each year group/phase equating to at least 50% of curriculum time
- ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- ensure that the teaching of RE enquires into religious and non-religious worldviews through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences
- supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment being clear about the subject's intent, implementation and impact

- engage with their diocese when developing the school's RE curriculum and adapting schemes and frameworks, such as a locally agreed syllabus, to the school's context
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and being able to discuss impact and standards, all in conjunction with the Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team
- contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, including, but not limited to Inspection Question 6 and 7.

The **Headteacher and Governors** must ensure:

- RE's high priority within the curriculum and status as an academic subject are clearly articulated.
- that the legal framework for RE is upheld within the school
- that the Statement of Entitlement for RE is adhered to within school
- that 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
- all teaching staff and those responsible for governance understand the distinctive role and purpose of RE within a Church school
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have effective and regular opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- that 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
- engage with the diocese when developing the school's RE curriculum and adapting schemes and frameworks, such as a locally agreed syllabus, to the school's context
- appropriate support is in place to ensure the effective provision of RE
- monitor RE effectively in accordance with the Statement of Entitlement.

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

In the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from part of RE and can do so without giving any explanation. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. However, this does not apply to teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE. If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the head of the school and its chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the school must still make provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE.

At St Barnabas CE First and Middle School we believe that Religious Education helps all children, irrespective of their own religious beliefs, understand the world around them and the communities in our world. We wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds of conscience. 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.

Any request from a parent for the withdrawal from RE must be made to the Headteacher. All requests will be granted, and parents are under no obligation to provide a reason for their decision. Once a request has been received and granted by the headteacher, parents may be offered an opportunity to discuss the nature of RE within school, to support the school's understanding of the parents' decision. We would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about Religious Education in the school; however, parents are under no obligation to take up this offer and it is not

conditional on a request for withdrawal being granted. Should parents take up the offer of a discussion, the school may seek to establish the religious issues about which the parent objects to their child being taught.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the governing body every …… years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- Change in Agreed Syllabus
- Change in Church of England Statement of Entitlement
- Change in legal position framework for RE

Approval / review by Governing Body:

Headteacher signed: **Date:**
Chair of Governors signed: **Date:**
Date of next review: **Date:**