**Bomere and the XI Towns Federation**

**‘With God all things are possible’**

Matthew 19:26

Our school nurtures all pupils and those in our school community to flourish as individuals; educationally, spiritually and morally, promoting Christian values through the experience we offer to all. Our core Christian values are Hope, Love and Respect.



**A STATEMENT OF POLICY**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

The following policy is a result of staff, parent, governor and pupil discussion, workshops, training, development and review of practice, and is based on LA guidance.

Date; January 2024

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Both St John the Baptist CE Primary School & Bomere Heath CE Primary Schools are welcoming and friendly church schools that aim to provide children the opportunity to achieve their best academically, emotionally and socially. As church schools, we hold our Christian values at the heart of everything that we do. Our core values are love, hope and respect.

It is important to us that the children are happy and experience the best education possible. We value strong links and a close partnership between home, the church and school and recognise the importance of trust and shared responsibility in education.

We recognise the effect that an inclusive teaching style can have on pupils’ progress, both inside and outside of the school environment. At our school, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum which encompasses spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, in accordance with the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education throughout the Bomere and the XI Towns Federation.

The Federation has created this policy in order to ensure that:

* All pupils are provided with a balanced and broad curriculum which encompasses the traditions of Great Britain as well as a variety of other mainstream religions and beliefs.
* All staff members are aware of planning, assessment, teaching and learning requirements for the RE curriculum.
* All pupils know how to plan, practice and evaluate their work.
* All pupils understand all elements of RE, as per the locally-agreed curriculum.
* All pupils receive a high level of teaching which is maintained at all times.
* Community cohesion and high standards of achievement are promoted.

Progression of academic achievement occurs consistently throughout the key stages

**Legal Requirements**

St John the Baptist CE Primary School & Bomere Heath CE Primary Schools are both Church of England Controlled Schools.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* The Education Act 1996
* The Education Act 2002

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998

This policy has been created with regard to the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

* DfE (2023) ‘Religious education in English schools: Non‑statutory guidance 2010’
* DfE (2024) ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’

This policy has been created in conjunction with the following school policies:

* British Values Policy
* Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Religious Education curriculum forms and important part of our school’s spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Shropshire LA’s Agreed Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

**Aims**

The broad aim of Religious Education throughout Bomere and the XI Towns Federation is to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and intellectual development of children. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. This is achieved by encouraging children to explore and respond to these aspects of religion and draw upon their own experiences. We help the children learn ***about*** religions as well as ***from*** religions.

We believe that good religious education should:

* Accept that the beliefs of all faith traditions should be respected.
* Develop an understanding of religious traditions, respect and tolerance which enables them to have an appreciation of the cultural differences in Britain today.
* Be seen as an entitlement of all pupils.
* Be taught in a way that is interesting, challenging and relevant to pupils.
* Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on and explore their own beliefs, and investigation and reflect upon some of the most fundamental questions of life.
* Provide opportunities for involvement or experience of some of the creative and practical aspects of religious belief.
* Help develop empathy and sensitivity to others.
* Appreciate that symbols and artefacts from different religions can express human feeling and ideas.
* Provide opportunities for developing a sense of awe, wonder, joy and thankfulness.

We aim through our teaching:

* To provide a course of Religious Education within the framework of the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus document appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our schools, at their different stages of development.
* To contribute to the spiritual, social and moral development of the schools as a caring community and the pupils as individuals.
* To assist and encourage experience of Christian life and worship.
* Through study of major world religions to encourage and understand and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice in society today.

**Roles and responsibilities**

The subject leader is responsible for:

* Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
* Reviewing changes to the locally-agreed curriculum and advising teachers on their implementation.
* Monitoring the learning and teaching of RE, providing support for staff where necessary.
* Ensuring continuity and progression from year group to year group.
* Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils.
* Helping to develop subject colleagues’ expertise in RE.
* Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out a regular audit of all related resources.
* Managing and maintaining writing resources.
* Liaising with the SBM to purchase further resources.
* Liaising with teachers across the federation.
* Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff and the SLT as appropriate.
* Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
* Organising, providing and monitoring staff CPD opportunities regarding RE.
* Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
* Advising on the contribution of RE to other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities, e.g. PSHE lessons.
* Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for the development of RE in subsequent years.
* Reviewing and updating long-term and medium-term lesson plans on an annual basis, and communicating these to teachers prior to the start of a new term.
* The subject leader will review the teaching of RE in the school, ensuring that taught content adheres to the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.
* The subject leader and a nominated member of the governing board will attend the Agreed Syllabus Conference to review the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.
* Any changes to the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA will be communicated to the headteacher.
* Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff.

Classroom teachers are responsible for:

* Acting in accordance with this policy.
* Ensuring progression of pupils’ RE, with due regard to the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.
* Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.
* Liaising with the subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
* Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
* Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader or a member of the SLT.
* Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach RE.
* Reviewing and updating short-term lesson plans, building on the medium-term lesson plans, taking into account pupils’ needs and identifying the methods in which topics could be taught.

The SENCO is responsible for:

* Liaising with the subject leader in order to implement and develop specialist writing-based learning throughout the school.
* Organising and providing training for staff regarding the RE curriculum for pupils with SEND.
* Advising staff on how best to support pupils’ needs.
* Advising staff on the inclusion of learning objectives in pupils’ individual education plans.
* Advising staff on the use of teaching assistants in order to meet pupils’ needs.

**EYFS**

All children in the EYFS will be taught RE as an integral part of their learning, in line with the following Early Learning Goals:

* Personal, social and emotional development
* Understanding the world

All children will encounter religions and world-views through multiple methods of teaching, e.g. books, educational visits and storytelling.

All children will reflect on their feelings and experiences.

Teachers will encourage imaginative play and curiosity in children.

All RE teaching and learning will have regard to the most up-to-date version of the DfE’s [EYFS framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2).

**Entitlement**

* The children’s entitlement is set out in the Federation Scheme of Work which has two attainment targets laid out in the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus. Religious Education learning should account for at least 5% of curriculum time, and as laid out in the Church of England’s Statement of Entitlement, at least 66% of this learning should be based in Christianity.
* The aforementioned two attainment targets are, by their nature, interconnected and reliant on each other.
* **A.T.1 Learning about Religion**
* Children should be able to describe and explain a variety of religious and non-religious world views preparing them for adult life as citizens in a plural society.
* **A.T.2 Learning from Religion**
* Children should draw from AT1 the understanding to articulate their own world view whilst appreciating that of others. From this process they should be able to come to a reasoned and reflective personal viewpoint.

**The Place of Christianity**

* The curriculum content is in full accordance with the legal and diocesan guidelines.

Christianity should be portrayed as a world religion. This is included in geographical and historical studies of other countries, as well as inclusion of global concerns, topical events, charity work and finding out about people e.g. Mother Teresa

**Curriculum**

Bomere and the XI Towns Federatiom adheres to the locally-agreed syllabus of the LA.

RE provision will include a distinct body of knowledge and will enable all pupils to make effective progress in achieving RE learning outcomes.

The school will make provisions to account for parents’ right to withdraw their child from RE lessons.

All pupils will have a high quality, coherent and progressive experience of RE.

The school will decide the attitudes and skills it wishes to emphasise across a school year or key stage, which meets the needs of the pupils.

The school will ensure that RE provisions contribute to the cross-curricular dimensions of the wider curriculum.

Pupils will be introduced to issues of right and wrong, good and evil, conflict and justice.

Good practice for the curriculum includes:

* Exploring controversial issues in the modern world.
* Working with local communities who promote the beliefs taught in lessons.
* Learning outside the classroom by participating in educational visits.
* Introducing themed days and assemblies which celebrate different beliefs.
* Encouraging pupils to deploy their skills and reflect on questions regarding truth and morality.
* Promoting debate and dialogue of pupils within their local community.

**PSHE & Citizenship**

* Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

**Teaching and learning**

The RE curriculum is delivered at least once a week for KS1 and KS2, with a notional time allocation of one hour per week for KS2 and 45 minutes per week for KS1. Time may be blocked.

* Religious Education will be taught throughout the Federation. Mainly by the class teacher and may be supported from time to time by clergy from local churches and visiting speakers.
* Religious Education may be taught in a ‘whole class’ setting but with flexibility to allow for individual research, collaborative group work, discussion, questioning, reflection and direct experience when appropriate (e.g. making pancakes, pilgrimage, church visit, visits to places of worship, role play). There is an established rolling programme of experience mornings in church termly, for years five and six. We also undertake a residential visit with the pupils in year four which includes visits to a number of places of worship.
* A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
  + Teacher presentations, role play and storytelling.
  + Questions and answer sessions, discussions and debates.
  + Individual and group research.
  + Photographs, pictures and maps.
  + ICT, television, video, film, tapes, CD, radio and PCs to research and communicate ideas.
  + Creative arts; art, music, poetry
* Religious Education may be integrated with other subjects as appropriate for example, ICT, History and PSHE.
* We encourage our pupils to be courageous advocates for change, on behalf of those whose voice is not heard.
* Classroom support will be welcomed under the guidance of the teacher, e.g. skilled individuals and parents etc.

Classroom teachers use high-quality texts and resources which model the religious and non-religious beliefs of Great Britain, in accordance with the school’s British Values Policy. The RE curriculum is delivered mainly through the thematic approach. RE will be integrated into the general planning wherever possible and practical, according to the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus, and with reference to the Key Questions.

Classroom teachers encourage pupils to discuss topics covered in RE with their peers and as a whole class.

During RE lessons, sufficient time is given for pupils to discuss, plan, edit and revise their work.

To improve understanding of the topic, several methods of teaching are deployed, including but not limited to:

* Storytelling
* Teacher-led activities
* Pupil initiated activities
* Debating
* Dramatic performance

To improve communication and language in the classroom, teachers will encourage pupils’:

* Organisation, clarification and sequencing of thoughts, feelings and ideas.
* Development of their own narratives in relation to the stories they hear in lessons.
* Exploration of their feelings and emotions towards set narratives.

**Planning**

All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with pupils.

Planning for RE will comprise long-term, medium-term and short-term planning which will be undertaken by the relevant member of staff, e.g. the classroom teacher.

Long-term plans will be created by the subject leader and will include the topics studied during each term in the key stage.

Medium-term plans will be established by the subject leader and the details of work studied each term will be outlined for the teacher to build upon.

Short-term plans will include the details of work studied during each lesson. The subject aims and lesson objectives will be outlined by the teacher and referred to the subject leader for verification.

Short-term plans will reflect the lesson objectives and proceeding aims of future lessons.

Medium-term plans will identify the main learning objectives of RE, learning activities and differentiation. This information will be shared with the subject leader to ensure there is a visible progression between years.

Our rolling programme and planning is available on the schools’ websites.

**Assessment and reporting**

Pupils will be assessed using methods of formative and summative assessment throughout the year. In order to show progress towards the end of Key Stage outcomes, the staff appreciate that assessment of progress in RE should be undertaken with sensitivity, based upon the teacher’s observations of the child in class or group discussions, activities or recorded work.

Planning is based and delivered on a 2 year rolling programme due to mixed age classes within the school.

We assess children’s work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons and through marking. Assessment is based upon the child’s ability in understanding various ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour, as well as the ability of a child to reflect on their own experiences and the experiences of others and respond to them in a thoughtful and constructive way

Formative assessment will be carried out routinely throughout the year; assessment will be carried out at the conclusion of each topic to measure pupils’ development throughout each half-term.

The results from formative assessments will be used to inform teachers’ lesson plans.

Assessments will be carried out at the end of a unit of work. Teachers will use the results to assess pupils’ overall achievement for each half term. This information will be passed on at the end of the school year to each pupil’s future teachers, in order to measure how well a pupil has progressed at any given time in their religious education.

Verbal reports will be provided at parent-teacher interviews during the Autumn and Spring terms.

Parents will be provided with a written report about their child’s progress during the Summer term every year. These will include information on pupils’ attitudes and understanding of key concepts.

The progress of pupils with SEND will be monitored by the SENCO. The SENCO will also communicate with the classroom teacher to ensure any changes to assessment and attainment are implemented effectively.

Children’s standards and achievements in RE are assessed in line with the School’s Assessment Policy.

Children’s standards and achievements in RE in the EYFS are assessed in line with the School’s EYFS Policy. Assessment in the EYFS includes both on-going assessment of children’s work as noted above but at an age appropriate level.

**Equal opportunities**

Religious Education as an essential part of the curriculum should be relevant, worthwhile and accessible to all. It should express that all pupils are loved and valued by God as part of creation. We aim to help the children in our school to respect themselves and to be sensitive to the needs of others.

All pupils will have equal access to the RE curriculum.

Learning ability, physical ability, linguistic ability, gender, ethnicity and/or cultural circumstances will not impede pupils from accessing RE lessons.

The teachers’ planning tries to ensure that work set is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all children.

Teachers challenge stereotypical comments or images about faith, traditions and comments such as “all Jews” or “all Muslims”.

It is planned that at Key Stage 1 pupils will find out about Sikhism as well as Christianity. At Key Stage 2 they will also consider Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. This is not at the exclusion of other faith traditions where relevant. The focus is to minimise confusion whilst ensuring that the coverage of religions included in the scheme of work is as broad and balanced as practical.

All beliefs and views are given equal respect.

The school’s Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be adhered to at all times.

When a pupil’s participation in RE lessons is restricted due to the factors outlined above, the lessons will be adapted to meet the pupil’s needs.

Cultural and gender differences are positively reflected in RE lessons and the teaching materials used.

See Equal Opportunity statement.

**Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and More Able Pupils**

Children with special educational needs will work alongside the other children in their group, as in other curriculum areas, but differentiation in approach, language and expected outcome will be appropriate to the varying needs in the class. We aim to meet the full entitlement of every child in our school. To optimize inclusion the children’s differing needs for learning (including children with special educational needs) will be addressed through differentiated and/or adapted activities.

Although a child may have limitations in other areas of the curriculum, it should not be assumed that he/she lacks the capacity to respond to the spiritual or religious dimension of life.

**Resources**

Religious Education resources will reviewed and updated regularly considering budgetary constraints.

SACRE

Understanding Christianity

Online resources

Teacher’s resources are available in the staffroom/PPA room. Artefacts are boxed in the admin store.

A collection of Bibles, Gospels & non-fiction texts are available in the school library. The internet and computer software is available to support the children’s individual research.

Artefacts are available through the RE advisor and the Schools Library Service.

Guidance for children should be given by teachers on the safe of handling artefacts to ensure respect and sensitivity to the customs and beliefs of the faith.

Relevant visits are planned and included in the schemes of work.

Visitors should be given guidance prior to their input. This should clarify their role and the parameters in which they should work.

**Links with the Local Church**

Pupils’ visit the church as part of the RE lesson as relevant to planned work. Such visits may be to find out about christenings, the church building, and the communion service. The vicar will usually take part in the lesson.

School led services take place regularly to celebrate festivals such as St John the Baptist Day (St John the Baptist CE School), Christmas/Christingle and Harvest Festival. These are well supported by parents and carers who often fill the church to celebrate with us.

Regular and special services are publicised through the school communication channels.

The vicar is invited to help lead acts of worship on a regular basis, supporting and supplementing the planned programmes.

The diocesan foundation governors make regular visits to the school and share in the act of worship. All governors are invited to be a part of the worshipping life of the school.

The pupils also take part out in the community, participating in events organised by the local church such as Stepping Out Café, Christmas Tree Festival and contributing to the Parish Magazine.

Our church members also participate in the wider life of the school by running after school clubs and leading some of our worship.

**Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the subject leader.

The scheduled review date for this policy is January 2024.