



R.E. Policy

*This policy provides the framework through which we will teach Religious Education.
It relates to the aims and values of the school which are embedded
in the strong Christian ethos of St. Stephen's.*

1. Introduction

Our school community contains representatives from many different nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a Church of England school we aim to offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including new arrivals and non-native English speakers in our community.

We believe that Religious Education provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school.

2. Aim

Our aim is that through R.E. we help pupils to develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of many religions and beliefs.

3. What is R.E.?

Religious Education is the study of religions, their beliefs, traditions, practices and the nurturing of spirituality and self-awareness. At St Stephen's two thirds of R.E. teaching is of a Christian nature. The other third covers the remaining 5 major world faiths (Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism). At St Stephen's it is taught in accordance with the Southwark Diocesan Board Agreed Syllabus.

4. Why we teach R.E

- To provide a foundation for Christian Learning
- To explore with children the nature of Christian beliefs, practices and values.
- To encourage children to explore the spiritual dimension of life.
- To learn about other world faiths developing tolerance and understanding.
- To develop an understanding of the contribution of religion to morality and to personal and social relationships and responsibilities.
- To equip children to explore a full range of human experiences.

Through the teaching of R.E. we aim to improve the quality of education received by all pupils and provide opportunities to develop morally, spiritually, emotionally, socially and culturally.

In accordance with the 1988 Education Act the school provides religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The teaching of R.E. comprises five percent of the curriculum

timetable as required by the Agreed Southwark Diocesan Board Syllabus.

5. Right of Withdrawal

We expect all children to participate in religious education lessons. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious education and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act as was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

6. The Scheme of Work

The scheme of work for Religious Education at St Stephen's has been developed using the Southwark Diocesan Board Agreed Syllabus. It ensures progression of skills and concepts, a full coverage of Christianity and study of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism through their traditions, practices, festivals and places of worship. (See R.E. Curriculum Map.).

7. The Foundation Stage

We teach R.E. to all children in the school including those in the Reception class.

In Reception, RE is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The Reception class is subject to the EYFS and we relate the R.E. aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for this age group in line with the Southwark Diocesan Board Agreed Syllabus.

8. Teaching and Learning

Planning for R.E. is based on the two Attainment Targets in the Agreed Syllabus:

- AT1-Learning about Religions
- AT2-Learning from Religions

Learning about religion includes enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion, its key beliefs and teachings, and the varying ways in which these are expressed. It also includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own experiences and their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

Inclusion and differentiation for children with a variety of needs are taken into account in our planning and teaching as they are in all areas of the curriculum. Within the teaching of R.E. we make the most of opportunities to help children develop their sensitivity to relevant issues such as black history, refugees and religious fasting, and to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

In order to make R.E. an exciting, lively and active subject to all pupils we implement different learning styles and employ cross-curricular teaching methods including: art, music, I.C.T, drama and role play, singing, visitors and visits, the use of artefacts, pictures, videos and stories, talk and discussion, philosophy and questioning, the development of thinking skills,

and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

When being taught the children may work individually, in pairs, groups of ability or mixed ability, or as a whole class depending upon what is appropriate.

R.E. is organised into themes which sometimes cross over into other curriculum areas. (See R.E. Curriculum Map). We recognise that there is a distinct relationship between R.E. and Art, Music, Drama and circle times, especially with regard to AT2, and therefore much R.E. work is carried out through these.

The curriculum program highlights the need to use first hand experience. Wherever possible classes will experience the outdoors, visit local Religious Buildings and handle religious artefacts. There are also secondary sources to aid teaching such as posters, videos, I.C.T. programmes, books and photographs.

9. Moral, Spiritual, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children at St Stephen's to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In R.E. lessons, as well as PSHE and our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to problems within society and their own experience. R.E. also strongly supports the schools citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities within wider communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues, and cultural influences on religious practice.

10. Assessment

In KS1 and KS2 children have R.E. books where work is recorded. Marking and formative assessment is in line with the school's Feedback Policy and makes reference to the two Attainment Targets.

Pupils are expected to complete a self-assessment sheet at the end of R.E lessons where appropriate and relevant. This is to enable children to reflect on what they have learnt.

Parents are informed of their children's progress and attainment within R.E. in their child's end of year report.

11. Management

The R.E. curriculum leader, in close collaboration with Senior Management and Faith Team, manages the teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education. The curriculum leader will attend regular training and professional development, and organise INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary. R.E. planning is collected for monitoring every half term. The scheme of work is evaluated annually. Teaching is monitored along with work scrutiny once a term.

Resources are bought with the annually allocated R.E. budget and stored in the humanities room for use by all staff. The storing of the school's R.E. resources is organised by the R.E. curriculum leader.

Supporting Documents

Other documents that support this Policy are:

- Statement of Entitlement
- Collective Worship Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- R.E. Curriculum Map
- Valuing all God's Children

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years in the light of current legislation, identified good practice and SDBE guidance.