Bickleigh on Exe C.E. Primary School
"Challenge Explore Flourish Together"

ventrus
Multi Academy Trust

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

## March 2023

Contextualised for Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School

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| **Date approved by Local Governing Body** | 14/3/2023 |
| **Review Period** | **Biennial** |
| **Signed by Chair of Local Governing Body** | C Mpall |

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## 1. Policy Statement

Religious Education (RE) has a very high profile within the Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School curriculum and makes a significant contribution to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all learners. Pupils will be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection, to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion and beliefs on the world. Christianity is taught as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teachings of Jesus and the Church, alongside a range of other religious and non-religious worldviews. Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while creating a safe space for them to explore their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

## 2. Legal Requirements

As a Voluntary Controlled (VC) School, at Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School, we are required to follow the Devon and Torbay/Plymouth agreed syllabus drawn up by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education [SACRE].

Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. This is the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

## 3. Aims of RE

- To provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
- To encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- To enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- To teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- To prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion
- To develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery
- To 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 life well together.' RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office (Feb 2019)

## 4. The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

## 5. Teaching and Learning

In line with the Church of England RE Statement of Entitlement [2019] at Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School, we aim to provide:

- A curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religious and non-religious worldviews as lived by believers
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place
- Engaging and varied learning activities that provide for the needs of all learners, supported by high quality resources
- The opportunity for pupils to develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development and also to pupils' understanding of British values
- An assessment process which has rigour and demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts

## 6. Implementation

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Experiencing variety of teaching and learning approaches
- Engaging with teacher presentations, role play, drama and story telling
- Making their own presentations
- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions

- Reading and critically analysing texts
- Interpreting information from different sources
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils
- Engaging in pair and group work
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama
- Experiencing visits and visitors to connect with diverse faith and belief communities
- Taking part in outdoor learning
- Taking time for listening, reflection and dialogue
- Curriculum balance and time

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religions and world views in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

Reflecting Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School's trust deed, Christianity should be the majority religion studied and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, should be given to RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but no less than 5% in key stages 1 and 2.

## 7. Resources

- Understanding Christianity Resource: http://www.understandingchristianity.org.uk/
- Primary Schemes of Work Units: http://retoday.org.uk/coursedownload

## 8. Assessment

Assessment in religious education will:

- Involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work
- Be directly related to the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy
- Include pupil self-assessment
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development
- Enable effective reporting to parents

## 9. Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Governors have responsibility for monitoring how the RE in the school reflects its Christian vision
- The headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation
- The RE subject leader will assist the headteacher by monitoring long term and medium-term plans

- The RE subject leader will assist the headteacher by monitoring RE through focused work scrutiny
- The subject leader will keep a file of examples of work to demonstrate continuity and progression
- The subject leader will manage resources
- The subject leader will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in religious education and disseminate this as appropriate
- The subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice
- The subject leader will be responsible for drawing up an action plan for religious education
- Generally, this will be an annual plan and should be informed by this policy
- The subject leader will liaise with the Diocesan adviser with responsibility for Religious Education

## 10. Staff training and development

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan or other support. The RE subject leader attends Leadership Forum meetings provided by the Diocese of Exeter.

## 11. Managing the right to withdraw from RE

At Bickleigh-on-Exe Primary School, RE is taught as an engaging, inclusive and enquiry-led subject, open to all and at the centre of the curriculum, and we would hope that all parents would understand the value of this for all children. However, parents do have a right by law to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons. In this event, we will undertake responsibility for their supervision with regard to health and safety. The school follows the guidance offered by the Diocese of Exeter and we always encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have about the RE curriculum with the headteacher before making a final decision. Requests for full or partial withdrawal need to be made to the headteacher in writing. If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost.

## APPENDIX 1: POLICY HISTORY

| Version | Summary of Change | Review Date | Lead Author/s |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | Previous policy no longer used. New policy produced. | March 2023 | SB |
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