ST. NICHOLAS PRIORY C.E. V.A. PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

'I did not come to be served but to serve.' Matthew 20.28

Policy for Religious Education

Introduction

Religious Education is an entitlement for all pupils and its place in the school curriculum is an acknowledgement of the important role that beliefs and values play in peoples' lives, regardless of particular religious commitments. It is also an acknowledgement that religious beliefs and practices play a key part in the lives of many people worldwide today as they have done throughout history. As a curriculum area Religious Education offers pupils an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, the people around them and the world in which they live.

St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School and Religious Education is provided in line with the requirements of the relevant Education Acts and follows the Statement of Entitlement;

- Christianity should be the majority study in Religious Education and it should draw upon the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms.
- The encounter must be an open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations and in which real dialogue and education takes place
- Religious Education must be provided according to the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus - 2019

We recognise that our pupils come from a variety of religious and secular backgrounds and welcome this diversity. The Religious Education programme seeks to be sensitive to the home background of each child; it is not the function of Religious Education to promote or disparage particular religious views.

The Aims of Religious Education at St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School

At St. Nicholas Priory, Religious Education is rooted at our core and throughout the school we promote our Christian values and encourage all children to become good citizens of the world. This is no more evident than in our RE teaching. We follow the 2019 Norfolk agreed syllabus and believe in the following as the core for all of our RE teaching;

RE is about developing religious literacy, therefore this syllabus promotes an understanding of religion and worldviews which best fulfils this purpose. This is one rooted in a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject. This provides a balanced diet ensuring that pupils are seeing religion and worldviews through different lenses, and places RE within a strong, and well-established academic tradition. (Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2019)

Within the framework of the Education Acts and Norfolk Agreed Syllabus, our aims in Religious Education are:

- To know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews by learning to see these through theological, philosophical and human/social science lenses.
- To express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews through a multi-disciplinary approach.
- To gain and deploy skills rooted in theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences engaging critically with religious and non-religious worldviews.
- The curriculum should enable all children and young people to become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve well
- The curriculum should enable all children and young people to become confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- The curriculum should enable all children and young people to become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society

Time Allocation

Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4. (Statement of Entitlement, 2019)

At St. Nicholas Priory we allow for a minimum of 5 hours for RE each half term in KS1 and 6 Hours in KS2. This is taught during RE week and can be taught as a day (+1 hour KS2) or in blocks across the week year group dependent and in discussion with the RE lead. We invite in visitors and go on trips throughout the year which allows for further provision for the children to learn RE.

Each half term an allocated whole school RE week occurs. This week provides teachers opportunities to teach the designated time and the half termly big question in the style of a project. This enables children to delve into the big question, as per the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. Most units use Christianity as a way of comparison to other religions, if not as a whole unit focus itself.

EYFS focus on RE through the 'Understanding the world' learning and development area. Although there is no weighting specifically for EYFS we believe children need an introduction to RE during their early years.

Religious Education **curriculum time does not include collective worship**, even where an assembly complements or provides a starting point for curricular work.

The Requirements of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus

At St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School, our Religious Education is based on the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus and draws upon the Understanding Christianity resources.
The Agreed Syllabus sets out RE as a multidisciplinary subject and exposes children to three areas of learning and exploration; Theology, Philosophy and Human/Social sciences.

Programme of study for Key Stages 1 and 2

The new Norfolk agreed syllabus focuses on teaching RE as a multi-disciplinary subject. The three areas are to serve the following purpose;
Knowing (Theology); It is about asking questions that believers would ask. It requires pupils to think like theologians, or to look at concepts through a theological lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers that arise from inside religions and worldviews.
Believing (Philosophy); It is about asking questions that thinkers would ask. It requires pupils to think like philosophers, or to look at concepts through a philosophical lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers raised through considering the nature of knowledge, existence and morality.
Living (Human and social sciences); It is about asking questions that people who study lived reality or phenomena would ask. It requires pupils to think like human and social scientists, or to look at concepts through a human/social science lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers raised in relation to the impact of religions and worldviews on people and their lives.

Scheme of Work

The RE curriculum map is designed to explore multiple religions in a multi-disciplinary way over the course of KS1 to KS2. Our RE curriculum map closely follows the guidance of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus 2019 ensuring all children have the appropriate time to spend on each religion as outlined, have an even split of the three disciplines and focus on a question each half term to allow an investigative style of working.

Each year group is also provided with an outline of the question for each half term with guidance of objectives, core knowledge, coverage, activities, outcome and keywords. The questions chosen are key stage appropriate, allow progression and engaging for the children.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Ofsted reports suggest the range of teaching and learning strategies in Religious Education is often too narrow, with overuse of stories and a limited range of drawing and written tasks.

At St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School we are using increasingly varied and active ways of working which include art and drama, debating, visits, posters, photos, videos, interactive displays, research and visits. Work in Year 2 and KS2 is recorded in books and through floor books . In Year 1 evidence is provided through Evidence Me portal and floor books.

Visits and Visitors

Visits and visitors can provide powerful learning experiences for both teacher and pupils. This is encouraged and supported by the subject lead.

All visitors will be subject to the safeguarding protocols outlined in the safeguarding and visitor policies.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

RE teaching and marking follows the whole school marking guidance of soft marking and in the moment marking. Children are assessed using the skills document provided by the Diocese of Norwich. Year 1 have the Norfolk Agreed Norwich of Diocese age related skills linked to Evidence me for accurate assessment. From September 2025, year 2-6 have an assessment grid for KS1, Lower KS2 and upper KS2 that ensure assessment can easily take place to track progress and ensure rigour. These grids will be in the back of RE books in line with our Writing and Maths assessment formats.

Contribution to SMSC development

These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute. At St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School, Religious Education should play a part in:

- developing an awareness of a 'spiritual' dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way. Further guidance of spirituality within St Nicholas Priory can be found on the spirituality document (SPIRITUAL)
- providing a forum for pupils to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by. (MORAL)
- encouraging interest in and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and a sense of 'community'. (SOCIAL)
- evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, art, music, drama and literature and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers. (CULTURAL)

Provision for Withdrawal from Religious Education

St Nicholas Priory is an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.
Immediate withdrawal will be granted but following a withdrawal, we will offer parents an optional discussion with the headteacher to explore if any appropriate accommodations might be made. 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. Discussion may include the practical implications of withdrawal and the circumstances in which it may be reasonable to accommodate their wishes. Practical examples of how a school may reassure a parent who has withdrawn their

child may include inviting the parent to observe a RE lesson, discussing curriculum documents and discussing the aims of RE in your school with them.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher of the school to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.
Each school will record any requests of withdrawal from RE and the reasons for this as they are required to report this as part of the Section 48 inspection process.

Managing the right of withdrawal

• When dealing with a withdrawal, the school should describe to the parents what alternative arrangements will be made for their child. It is important that good records are kept of the parent/carer(s)' request and the associated actions.
• The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires schools to 'eliminate discrimination… advance equality… foster good relations.'5 RE which is 'objective, critical and pluralistic' is well-placed to support the development of meaningful dialogue and respect within the school community – across faiths, worldviews, cultures and beliefs – and enables pupils to understand how to advocate for one another in creating a culture which eliminates discrimination and advances equality. Where possible, all pupils should have access to opportunities to learn about this, even if withdrawn from RE and must not be stigmatised by the act of withdrawal.
• Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
• The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear
whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given..
• Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the academy will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
• If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools and academies have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on academy premises.
• Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive.
• Withdrawal from RE takes place during the school day and so pupils do not need to be at home to be withdrawn. Therefore, any absence related to avoidance of RE (i.e. parents/carers keeping their children at home to avoid an RE lesson or visit to a place of worship) should be recorded as an unauthorised absence, since it is unnecessary for the pupil to be kept at home during these times.
• If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from academy for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
• Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the
pupil's attendance at academy resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of an academy session.

Leading of RE
We have a dedicated RE and Christian Ethos leader who oversees RE Collective Worship, SIAMs and Christian Ethos across the school. The RE lead has strong links with the Diocese of Norwich and regularly attends training and moderation. The link with the Diocese is extended with yearly RE audits by a member of the Diocese.

Religious Education and its relationship to Collective Worship

In law, Religious Education and Collective Worship are distinct. Religious Education is part of the school curriculum; it has to be delivered appropriately for pupils of different ages and abilities. It cannot be delivered during Collective Worship. However, during Collective Worship at St Nicholas Priory CE VA Primary School, stories from the Bible, Christian and other traditions are told and enjoyed, festival days and celebrations are often mentioned, and we enjoy assemblies led by members of religious communities. These complement and bring depth to our Religious Education programme. A separate policy is available for Collective Worship.

RE and SEN provisions

In RE as in all areas across the school we use the 'Seven Strategies for SEND' where appropriate;

- **Chunking**
- **I do – We do – You do**
- **Listening and Attention (Talkboost)**
- **Dual Coding**
- **Movement breaks**
- **Talking partners**
- **Visual/concrete prompts**

Teachers plan according to the groups needs and area encouraged to teach using an array of activities to allow for all children to experience RE, learn knowledge and create quality work. This includes making work more visual or simplified for children with a greater need to be able to access the higher level thinking tasks. The use of resources and different ways of presenting information children to is encouraged for all but especially those with SEN provisions. Activities throughout RE days should always encompass a variety of styles of learning including discussions, group work, art, drama to name a few. This allows all children to participate.

RE and Greater Depth Pupils

All year groups from year 1- year 6 have access to 'What a greater depth child looks like in year..' document that outlines what the skills are in RE that show GDS achievement. This can be used to assist planning in each year group to ensure greater depth opportunities and also allows for clear assessment after the work has been completed. Greater depth questions should be seen throughout lessons to ensure GDS children have an opportunity to verbally reason their thinking at a higher level.

RE - Reading, Writing and thinking skills

Like all areas of the curriculum RE relies on reading, writing and thinking skills to enable the children to understand the new concepts and express their ideas. Thinking skills are the fundamentals of the 'RE skills document' created by The Diocese of Norwich and used to assess children within RE. Throughout the RE units from year 1 to year 6 children are expected to read from a plethora of resources and present information in a variety of ways as suggested in the medium term plans.
This policy was reviewed and updated in July 2026, by the RE Coordinator.

Next review: July 2029