

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



Kindness, respect, collaboration, resilience, aspiration, courage and
friendship

This policy was adopted: March 2026

The policy is to be reviewed: March 2028

St James and St John Church of England Primary School's Vision is: "We unite together to enable all to prosper in every aspect of their life".

This is underpinned by our theological quote from Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Pupils wear the school motto 'Unite and Prosper' on their uniform and this informs all that we do.

Introduction

At St James and St John Church of England Primary School, Religious Education plays an important role in expressing our Christian vision and our Christian values of; kindness, respect, collaboration, resilience, aspiration, courage and friendship.

Religious Education reflects the ethos and values that are held and promotes understanding of people of all faiths and none. Religious Education has the same high status as any other subject and contributes to the overall development of our pupils from all backgrounds and traditions. Religious Education as a subject is one that can help our children to 'unite together' as we learn about different religions, beliefs and worldviews. It is well placed to enable pupils to enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed, and responded to in diverse ways. Through a range of creative and stimulating lessons, visits and trips our pupils can gain a first-hand experience of some of the religions and worldviews represented in our society.

The Legal Position

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for Religious Education for all registered pupils at the school, except for those withdrawn by their parents (see paragraph below). As a voluntary controlled school, Religious Education is therefore taught in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus [Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education | SchoolsWeb \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](#) while also reflecting the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education published by the Education Office of the Church of England in February 2019. The statutory section 48 (SIAMS) inspection will evaluate the way that Religious Education contributes to the Christian character of the school and the teaching of Religious Education will reflect this requirement.

Purpose and Aims of Religious Education

The purpose of Religious Education is to teach children about the religious and non-religious world-views that they will encounter in modern Britain and enable them to

engage in meaningful and considered dialogue with those of all faiths and none. This is religious literacy.

Therefore, the aims of Religious Education at St James and St John Church of England Primary School are:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways - living, believing and thinking.
- To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews, locally, nationally, and globally.
- To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value.
- To formulate reasoned opinion and argument.
- To enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed, and responded to in diverse ways.

Curriculum and Time Allocation

The Religious Education curriculum at St James and St John Church of England Primary School, follows the Buckinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus using Discovery RE and Oak National Academy as a resource. Christianity is taught in every year group, with key concepts revisited on a spiral curriculum. At least 50% of the time is devoted to Christianity. Other religions are covered according to the syllabus; e.g. Judaism in KS1, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Worldviews in KS2.

The total time for Religious Education is approximately 5% and it is taught in dedicated lessons. The time dedicated to Religious Education is separate from the time given to Collective Worship.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Religious Education is taught using an enquiry* based approach, that is challenging and robust. Learning is organised to encourage the development of attitudes such as self-awareness, respect for all, open-mindedness, appreciation and wonder, as well as providing opportunities to engage appropriately with Fundamental British Values. All faiths are treated respectfully, and opportunities will be made to engage in age-appropriate, meaningful discussion. Where possible pupils will encounter believers of a range of faiths and visit places of worship.

A variety of resources, styles, and techniques will be used as appropriate to enable all children to make progress in Religious Education regardless of their starting points, ability or background.

- We believe pupils with special needs have the same right of access to the full curriculum as other pupils. All pupils with special educational needs: will be given access to a broad, balanced and relevant education as for all pupils in our school. (SEND Policy)
- At St James and St John Church of England Primary School we believe in the development of the "whole child" as an individual and endeavour to encourage them to become responsible global citizens in an ever changing multi-cultural, multi-faith world. We promote inclusivity and equality and tackle discrimination. We have high expectations for all our pupils irrespective of race, creed, gender or disability. (Equality Policy)
- As a school we value 'all God's children'. Through our Christian values of friendship, hope, perseverance, respect, honesty and forgiveness we aim for our children to be successful and fully rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of faith, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, political or financial status, or similar. (Equality Policy)
- To increase the understanding and appreciation for diversity through the curriculum, collective worship, visitors and celebration days. (Equality Policy)
- Church of England schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each pupil to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Our aim is that all may flourish and have an abundant life. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child's fulfilment. We want all pupils to willingly engage in learning in a safe and welcoming environment. (ODBE 'Valuing All God's Children' document)

Assessment procedures will follow those of the Agreed Syllabus and be in accordance with other assessment and feedback procedures in the school. Students

will engage in a variety of activities which will also enable teachers to assess what they have learnt. Records kept will include information about pupils' experiences and judgements about their attainment and progress, as well as being used to inform planning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Religious Education subject leader and Senior Leadership Team will monitor teaching and learning in Religious Education in accordance with school policy. The Religious Education subject leader will observe teaching, conduct book looks, planning reviews and pupil interviews when appropriate to assess the quality of teaching and learning. The Headteacher and governors will ensure that adequate monitoring takes place and that the impact of such activity is assessed.

Resources

The Religious Education subject leader will ensure that Religious Education resources are kept up-to-date and that staff are informed when new resources are purchased or made available electronically. Resources will include source materials (e.g. Bibles, visitors, artefacts) where appropriate and be treated with respect by all staff.

The Right of Withdrawal

Pupils may be withdrawn from Religious Education or part of Religious Education by a parent or guardian in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject. However, we hope that all parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the type of religious education being taught at this school. Parents who wish to withdraw their children must provide written notification to this effect and provide suitable activities for their children. The school will keep pupils safe but will not provide any work or reading material for pupils who have been withdrawn.

*An enquiry-based approach is based around Big Questions and an investigative approach, as recommended by the Diocesan Scheme of Work, Understanding Christianity, Oak National Academy and the Discovery Religious Education Scheme of Work.

Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed regularly in line with schools' procedures. An annual review is recommended if possible, but review must be done within a 3-year period in line with the school's procedure.

