

St Martin's CE (Aided) Primary School
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Religious Education Policy

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Signed:

Position:

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St Martin's CE (Aided) Primary School

Our School Vision

An inclusive, caring, Christian community, which inspires happy, confident and independent children who embrace lifelong learning, with the ambition and determination to achieve their potential. Learners develop the skills, knowledge and self-belief necessary to thrive, today and tomorrow, as global citizens, who strive to make God's world a better place.

Our School Values

Respect – valuing each other and celebrating our differences.

Friendship – showing kindness and compassion to everyone.

Courage – being brave enough to try our best and do what we know is right.

Creativity – using our individual talents to make our world a better place.

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Rationale

At St Martin's CE (Aided) Primary School, we believe that RE is a key part of realising our vision and helping our children develop our school values. RE gives the opportunity to learn, to reflect, to understand ourselves and others, to be challenged with the big questions of life, to become tolerant, to think critically, and to evaluate, as well as to learn about Christianity and other faiths.

We follow guidance from the Hampshire County advisor for religious education and the Diocese education team, as well as the guidance provided by the locally agreed syllabus, Living Difference IV.

Further, the planning and delivery of Christianity within RE lessons is complemented with resources from the Church Of England's Understanding Christianity publication, allowing for children to understand the big story of the Christian Bible and to explore life's big questions, considering the difference children can make to our world.

The legal requirements of RE

We are a Church of England school. In line with the school's trust deeds, the terms of Union (Appendix 1) with the National Society state, with regard to religious education, that *'The Headteacher and the governing body will ensure that religious education is given at least five per cent of curriculum time and that such religious education is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church'*.

We follow, under the advice provided by Winchester Diocese, the syllabus "Living Difference Revised" which reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions in Great Britain (quoting from the syllabus and Education Act). With regard to the law, Religious Education must not be designed to convert children, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on children, whether that of a secular agenda or of a particular religion.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) (now DfE) guidance, Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010, states that:

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school, except for those withdrawn by their parents in accordance with Schedule 19 to the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998. The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the LA concerned. ... Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses.

Aims

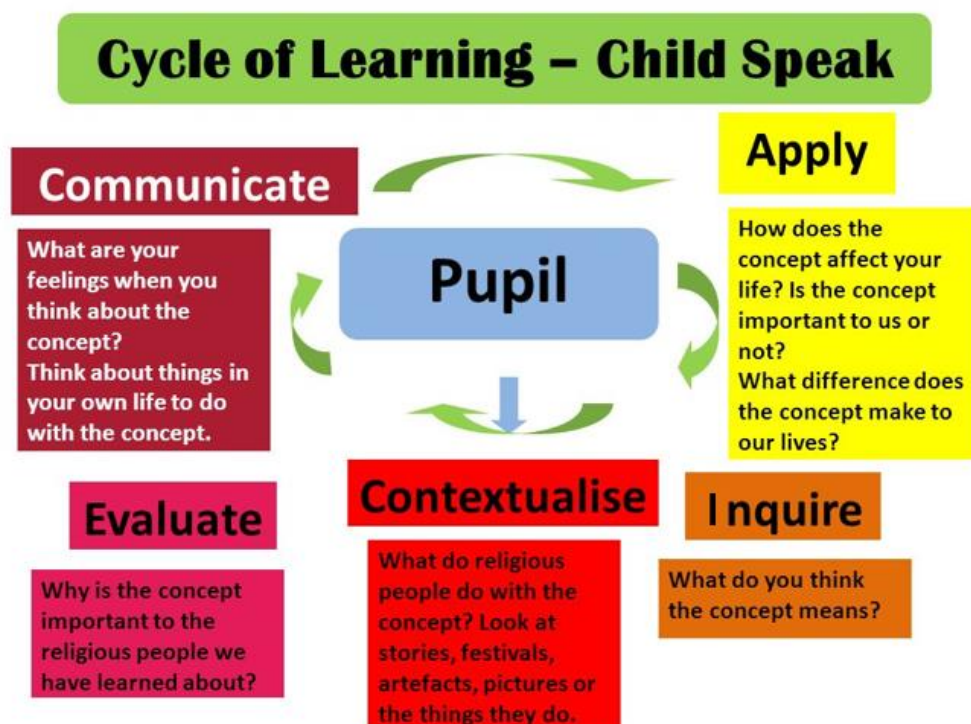
Through our RE curriculum, we aim to:

- support children in developing their own values, principles and opinions;
- provide children with a safe environment in which to explore and develop their thinking and beliefs;
- develop children's understanding of different religions, beliefs and cultures;
- promote our school value of respect (valuing each other and celebrating our differences) and friendship (showing kindness and compassion to everyone);
- support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- provide opportunities for children to interpret and respond to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions and to their own and others' cultural and life experiences;
- develop children's capacity to interpret, evaluate and respond to differing values and beliefs;
- extend children's thinking and analytical skills and their creative, imaginative and emotional development;
- foster mutual understanding between children of differing religious and cultural backgrounds - this promotes tolerance, a key British value.

Our RE curriculum

It is recommended that a minimum of 36 hours in Reception/KS1 and 45 hours in KS2 per school year should be devoted to religious education, and the programmes of study in *Living Difference Revised* have been designed with these time recommendations in mind. In practical terms, this is 6 hours for Reception/KS1 and 7.5 hours for KS2 per half-term. RE can be taught weekly, or in blocked units, either across a week or a day, according to the arrangements of each class timetable.

RE is a philosophical enquiry based upon the learners' own perceptions and understandings of each concept, which should remain fluid, and develop as the learners' progress through the cycle of learning (see diagram below for the learning cycle). The *Living Difference IV* syllabus is used to guide concept-driven learning, encouraging children to begin from their own personal points of view and having opportunities to then hear about other people's points of view and how other religions would view these ideas. Throughout the cycle, learners will be interrogating the concept to develop their understanding of what it means, which should grow and develop as the cycle is followed round.



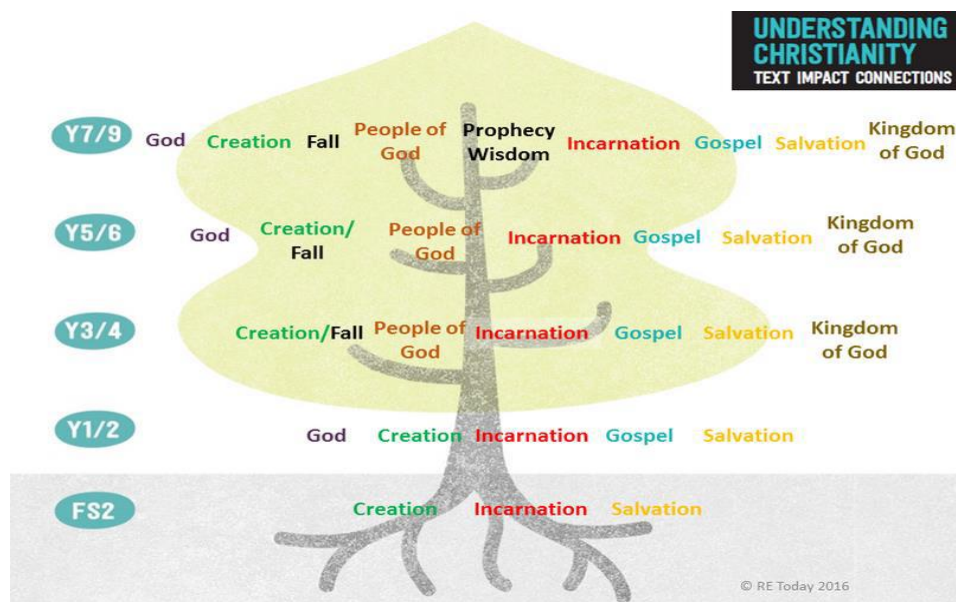
Questions are a key part of learning. Within each cycle of learning, the following questions may be asked or thought about:

Step of the enquiry cycle	Examples of questions teachers may ask	Children and young people, in increasingly complex ways, are able to
Communicate (Where the teacher brings the child/young person's attention to their experience of the concept/word.)	What do we notice? What do you see here? What has been your experience of this? Have you encountered this before? Can you/we draw/paint/make what you/we see here?	First notice and respond to, and later put their experience into words or put what they notice into colour or line or installation. Do this in different ways alone and with others.
Apply (Where the teacher enables the child/young person to consider how the concept/word is applied more widely.)	Has anyone else had an experience of ...? Do we see things the same way? Do you think everyone thinks/feels/sees this? Is this always a good thing? What would it be like if no one experienced this? Can you think of a situation when this may be difficult? Can you give a reason and an example to support your ideas? Do we need to find out more?	Identify issues raised in applying their responses to specific situations. Recognise there are ways of life which may be different to their own. Express how their responses may apply in other situations. Recognise and dialogue with others about some of the shared concerns involved in living a human life. Give reasons for their points of view regarding their own and others' experience and responses and be able to make judgements discerning good from bad reasons. Be open minded and interested to find out more.
Inquire (Where the teacher introduces new material for children and young people to encounter and study – often within a tradition.)	What's the main idea here? What could we say counts as ...? What do we mean by ...? Do we have any questions about this? What can we infer from this? Why might other people see this matter in this way?	Recognise concepts/words in the matters being studied. Create a working definition of the concept/word and frame questions. Form explanations and suggest possible inferences. Link concepts/words, and matters studied, together in new ways. Recognise that, and identify how, the concept/word may be used by, or become meaningful for, people living with a religious or other orientation on life.

<p>Contextualise</p> <p>(The teacher brings some real-life examples or case studies to the children at this step.)</p>	<p>Are there any questions about this?</p> <p>How does this lived example help us to understand or think more about the concept/word?</p> <p>How might a (religious) person such as ... (give particular example) make sense of this in their lives (context appropriate to primary or secondary students)?</p> <p>In what ways might this example of how a life is lived have influenced things?</p> <p>Do you think this would always be the case?</p> <p>Does everyone agree?</p>	<p>Frame their own questions recognising there is more than one answer.</p> <p>Explore a range of interpretations of concepts/words in real life contexts.</p> <p>Recognise that differing religious and social contexts influence interpretations, sometimes raising controversial issues that demand further engagement.</p> <p>Express and communicate their understanding of why context influences interpretation of a concept/word.</p> <p>Build capacity to compare different interpretations of concepts/words by finding out about and giving more examples.</p>
<p>Evaluate</p> <p>(Where the teacher brings children and young people to discern value for those in the community studied as well as to discern value for themselves.)</p>	<p>What do you think about all we have explored in this enquiry?</p> <p>How might the people we have studied (particular example) make sense of this in their lives (primary/secondary)?</p> <p>Why might ... be important for ... ?</p> <p>Do you think all ... would think/feel the same way?</p> <p>Can you give reasons for your position on this? What difference does that make?</p> <p>How might that help us think more carefully about these things?</p> <p>Could there be any value in this for someone who was not a ...?</p> <p>What do you think about this?</p> <p>Are there any alternative views?</p> <p>Could there be any value in this for you/me/us?</p> <p>Is there anything else here you/we would like to consider and explore further?</p>	<p>Discern value for themselves and others regarding the matters explored in the enquiry.</p> <p>Be interested to enquire with others, sometimes theologically or philosophically, into other long-standing positions on, or accounts of, or explanations of the concept/word.</p> <p>Show sensitivity to interpretations of the concept/word in the context.</p> <p>Form a judgement about the significance of the concept/word from within the given context and also without.</p> <p>Clarify reasons behind different judgements recognising the characteristics which make a difference.</p> <p>Discern for themselves the possible significance of the concept/word, as well as for someone who is or who is not living in that way of life.</p> <p>Recognise and express the value that the concept/word studied has beyond the context studied, in their own and their community's life.</p>

Understanding Christianity

We use Understanding Christianity to support our teaching of Christianity in RE. The key purpose of Understanding Christianity is to help all teachers support children in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. As a church school, we aim to see children leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice. The resource fully supports and works alongside with Living Difference IV. An outline of Understanding Christianity programme of study is shown below.



We use the RE curriculum to develop children's understanding of global injustice, to equip them to tackle this and become courageous advocates for change. We are currently working towards our silver level Global Neighbours accreditation.

Assessment, recording and reporting arrangements for RE

Class teachers assess every child at the end of each half term against one of the areas of the Living Difference cycle. Teachers use these assessments to identify and then address any areas of underachievement. At the end of the year these are used to inform an end of year assessment of working towards ARE, working at ARE or working at greater depth within ARE. These assessments are reported to parents and used to track the child's progress throughout their time at St Martin's school.

There is a clear skills progression in place, which identifies what children are expected to be able to do in each area of the Living Difference Cycle at the end of every year. The teachers use this to support their assessments, and assessments are moderated across the staff team at least once a year.

Working with parents and carers

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers in all aspects of school life, including RE. We share the content of our lessons with parents and carers, at the start of each half term, through our curriculum booklets.

Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 grants parents and carers the right to withdraw their child from certain sessions in school, which are as follows:

Subject	Right to Withdraw
Relationships Education	No
Sex Education	Yes
RE	Yes
Science	No
Collective Worship	Yes

If a parent or carer wishes to withdraw their child from any session in school, an appointment must be made to discuss the matter with the Headteacher. Following this discussion, if the parent or carer still wishes to withdraw his/her child, a withdrawal statement must be signed.

Any child withdrawn from all or part of a session will be provided with an alternative activity, whilst the session(s) take place. It is the class teacher's responsibility to make these alternative arrangements and to ensure that the child does not feel discriminated against.

Answering questions

As with all questions from children, we will endeavour to answer questions about RE factually and without bias. Individual members of staff will make a professional judgement as to whether it is relevant to address the question posed immediately or at a later stage, and whether to address the answer to an individual, a group or the whole class. If a member of staff is in doubt, he/she will discuss the matter with the Headteacher and if felt relevant, a child's parents or carers.

Evaluation and monitoring

- The governing body are responsible for developing, reviewing and ratifying this policy every three years.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the RE programme is delivered according to this policy.
- The RE manager is responsible for monitoring provision and outcomes of RE in line with the long-term curriculum map.
- The class teachers are responsible for teaching the content identified on the medium term plans in line with this policy.

St Martin's Church of England Primary School Founded 3 January 1857



Terms of Union with the National Society

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

The governing body will ensure that the school is led by a headteacher who is committed, with the help of staff, to preserve and develop the Christian character of the school in its day to day activities and in the curriculum.

The governing body will endeavour to ensure that the staff of the school include teachers who are practising members of the Church or of Christian religious denominations with which the Church enjoys good relations and ecumenical co-operation.

The governing body will offer a school life that incorporates the values of the Christian faith.

The governing body will ensure that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church.

The headteacher and the governing body will ensure that religious education is given at least five per cent of curriculum time and that such religious education is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church.

The school should observe the major Christian festivals and, where those of other faiths are present in the school, ensure that they are able and encouraged to mark their major festivals with integrity.

The school should maintain and develop an active and affirming relationship with the parish church of the parish in which the school is situated or a parish church of one of the parishes which the school serves.

The school should proclaim that it is a Church school on its external signboard and on its stationery and make appropriate use of Christian symbols inside and outside the school.

**Produced by the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education
to mark the 200th anniversary of the National Society in 2011.**

References in these Terms of Union to 'the Church' are to the Church of England in respect of schools situated in the Province of Canterbury or York.

The governing body and the trustees of the school must declare that the school is designated by the Secretary of State under section 58 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (or any successor legislation) as having a religious character that is Church of England.

The instrument of government of the school should describe its ethos in the manner set out above or in words to the same effect.