



Religious Education Policy

St Nicholas CE Primary School's RE Policy reflects and reinforces the school's aims and ethos. Our vision and values are at the core of all we do. They underpin our teaching, learning and daily relationships and provide a firm foundation for all aspects of our children's development. Our aim is to provide a happy and caring learning community where every child is known and feels special. We are rightly proud of our pupils, their care for each other and their achievements.

At St Nicholas CE Primary School, we believe that Religious Education (RE) is vital in helping children understand the rich diversity of faiths and beliefs in our multicultural world. Our RE curriculum is guided by the Church of England's *Statement of Entitlement* alongside *The Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus* and is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills to engage with challenging questions about life, faith and the world around them.

Our Vision



As a church school we are inspired by the life and work of Jesus. Our inspiration comes from I COR 16:14. Paul is writing a letter to the church in Corinth. He encourages them to be strong in their faith, to stand firm, and to live in a way that shows Jesus' love. Love should be at the centre of everything we do.

Key Message for Children

- Everything we do—whether it’s sharing, helping, playing, or speaking—should be done with love.
- Love means being kind, patient, and caring, even when it’s hard.
- God wants our actions and words to show love, not just sometimes, but always.

Our Values

At St Nicholas, we use this vision to help us understand and live out our values.

Our Values: Friendship, Peace, Perseverance, Forgiveness, Community and Thankfulness.
Our School Values, based on Christian principles are embedded and reflected in all that we do. These Values have been chosen by the school community as a set of moral standards we should understand and try to ‘live’. They align with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Friendship

‘I am friendly and caring in my words and actions.’

We start each new year with this Christian Value and renewing old friendships and supporting the forging of new ones. Through friendship children understand love outside of the family home and they have a wider support network and community to care for them.

*“I have called you friends as I have told you everything I have heard from my father”
John 15:15*

Peace

‘I develop my Spirituality through connection to myself, others and the wider world.’

We create a peaceful and calm learning environment for children to thrive. Children have regular opportunities through worship and prayerful spaces to reflect and find stillness discovering Spirituality.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you.... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

Perseverance

‘I don’t give up and I bounce back from my mistakes.’

We link our Christian Value to our Big Idea of Resourcefulness to ensure that children understand the power they have to make progress and flourish when they don’t give up and keep trying to be the best that they can be.

Philippians 4:13 “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”

Forgiveness

'I can say sorry when I hurt someone else and I know how to forgive someone who has hurt me.'

Using the Lord's prayer we remember that Jesus taught us all the importance of forgiveness and that we too can be forgiven when we say sorry, feel sorry and show sorry.

Matthew 6:9-13

Community

"I can work together with others and take responsibility for my actions to help build a strong and caring community."

Children are encouraged to see the role they can play in various communities that they are part of to make it a better place.

Luke 10:27: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself."

Thankfulness

'I appreciate the beautiful world around me, my power to make change and those who help me to be the best that I can be.'

At St Nicholas singing is very important to us and is special time for us to come together joyfully to celebrate important times of the year and to praise God. We are thankful for God's creation and those who help us in our community.

"Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!" (Psalm 95:2).

Love

'I have love for myself, for others and for the world around me.'

Our 'moral garden' designed by the school and the inspiration for our school logo is a reflection of everything that underpins what we do as a school. The biblical foundation is at the heart of this graphic to demonstrate that it is at the heart of all we do.



Statutory requirements for the provision of Religious Education

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that: 'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. All state schools ... must teach religious education ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online'. (National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)
- Religious education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in the sixth form, except to those withdrawn by their parents.

Academies and free schools must teach RE within the requirements of a locally agreed syllabus, set out in section 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

The Agreed Syllabus states the assumptions from DfES circular 1/94 that the following minimum hours should be devoted to R.E: The equivalent of 36 hours per year (1 hour per week) at KS1 and 45 hours per year (1¼ hours per week) at KS2.

According to the 2019 Statement of Entitlement to RE in C of E schools, the aims of Religious Education in church schools 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.

Intent

Our intent for RE is to engage, inspire, challenge and encourage all pupils. We aim to:

- Equip children with a secure and meaningful understanding of Christianity, as well as other major world religions.
- Support pupils in reflecting on their own beliefs and developing a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- Promote respect, understanding and tolerance towards different faiths, beliefs, cultures and traditions.
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to explore, question and challenge ideas.

Through a balanced curriculum that draws on theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences, pupils learn about a wide range of religious and non-religious world views. Our RE curriculum nurtures a culture of curiosity, deep thinking and reflection on the 'big questions of life', where every child's viewpoint is valued.

Throughout their time at St Nicholas, children learn about the religious traditions of Christians, Muslims, Jewish people, Hindus and Buddhists. It is essential that every child has the opportunity to develop an accurate understanding of world religions and world views. This helps them appreciate and respect the beliefs of others while deepening their own

thinking. Alongside learning about religious beliefs, pupils also explore, discuss and compare non-religious world views including Humanism.

The curriculum is intentionally challenging, enabling pupils to develop key skills such as enquiry, interpretation, analysis, expression, reflection and empathy. These skills help them form reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues in the world around them.

Our RE curriculum is rooted in our school vision: *“Let everything you do be done with love.”* At St Nicholas, we strive to provide a curriculum that is challenging, creative, inclusive and diverse. We want children to experience religion as it is lived today — free from stereotypes and reflective of the diverse world around us. At St Nicholas we celebrate diversity, being a change maker and giving a voice to the voiceless. We want every child to have a voice and to see themselves represented within our learning.

Implementation

We follow the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, using *Understanding Christianity* and *The Emmanuel Project* as resources to support this.

- **Understanding Christianity** focuses on eight key theological concepts and is based upon the ‘Big Picture’ of the Bible. It encourages children to engage with important questions, such as “What do Christians believe God is like?” and “Was Jesus the Messiah?”
- **The Emmanuel Project** supports the study of other religions, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.
Lessons are structured to build a coherent understanding of religious ideas and their practical application in people’s lives.

Our RE curriculum is an enquiry-based, spiral curriculum taught over a rolling two-year cycle, with some units revisited the following year to allow pupils to ‘dig deeper’ into the enquiry question. As part of our Global Explorer Curriculum, we celebrate Spiritual Day in Term 2, a dedicated day focused entirely on developing the children’s spirituality and exploring our key question: *“What makes your soul sing?”* Throughout the day, pupils take part in activities centred around themselves, others, the wider community and the world around us. Festivals are celebrated, acknowledging the different faiths and cultural diversity of children in our school and within Great Britain.

The RE long-term plan (see separate document) is created by the RE Lead and sets out, over a rolling two-year cycle, the religions studied (with 50% Christianity), the enquiry questions and the resources used to support planning. Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are also taught, and in Years 5 and 6 pupils explore the non-religious worldview of Humanism. The RE progression document (see separate document) shows how our spiral curriculum revisits religions and themes over time, allowing learning to be built upon and securely embedded. It also outlines the importance of teaching both the substantive and disciplinary knowledge throughout the curriculum.

RE is taught weekly by the class teacher. The RE Lead attends both Diocesan and DSAT training and keeps staff informed through regular staff meetings and training days.

Where appropriate, we enable our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of faith communities to our school. Strong links with St Nicholas Church enable off site visits and visits to school on a regular basis to support the teaching of Christianity.

RE lessons at St Nicholas are designed to promote deep understanding, critical thinking, and personal reflection. We collaborate with a local Christian charity, *The Bridge Youth Project*, to support our provision. Our Chaplain delivers RE encounter experiences for the children at different times of the year.

Special Educational Needs

RE at St Nicholas is fully inclusive. Lessons are designed so that every child can access the learning and engage from their own unique starting point. Adaptive teaching responds to pupils' diverse needs, with carefully chosen tasks that ensure all children are both supported and appropriately challenged.

Impact

Children develop a secure understanding of a range of religions, beliefs and religious and non-religious worldviews. They can explain how and why people pray and worship, identify the special places where this happens, and describe the impact faith has on people's lives.

They are encouraged to explore and question their own spirituality, showing tolerance and respect for the beliefs of others, in line with our school vision and values.

Pupils are able to grapple with 'big questions' and respond thoughtfully and with respect whilst also listening to the thoughts and beliefs of others. Children can reflect deeply on the lived experiences of people from different religious and non-religious backgrounds and raise meaningful questions about what they learn.

They develop a strong sense of belonging and understand their rights and responsibilities within their community. Pupils are also able to reflect on their own learning and spiritual journey, identifying their next steps with increasing independence.

Our aim is for children to leave St Nicholas as well-rounded individuals who show understanding, respect and tolerance towards everyone they meet.

Evaluation and Assessment

We regularly assess pupils' understanding through classroom discussions, written work and RE reflections. Teachers adapt their teaching to ensure every child deepens their knowledge of key religious concepts and develops respect for a range of belief systems. At the start of

each lesson, children complete an RE Review, which revisits prior learning and helps secure 'sticky knowledge'.

At the beginning of each unit, teachers gather pupils' existing understanding and assess progress against the essential knowledge and skills outlined in the RE progression document. At the end of every term or unit, each child completes an end-of-unit assessment task linked directly to the learning covered. The outcomes are used to determine whether pupils are working at expected, above, just below or below expectations, and this information is recorded on a tracking document monitored by the RE Lead. These assessment outcomes also help shape the questions used in future RE Reviews.

Monitoring

The subject leader monitors the teaching and learning of RE in the school by observing lessons, talking to pupils, sampling work and analysing data. Findings are shared with staff, the senior leadership team and governors. This helps to inform the subject action plan.

Right of withdrawal from R.E.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education, and the school will respect and follow any such request. We ask that any parent considering withdrawal meets with the headteacher to discuss their decision and to look through the RE curriculum beforehand.

If, after this discussion, parents still choose to withdraw their child from RE lessons, the school will ensure appropriate supervision in line with health and safety requirements.

To review- Sep 2026