



## Religious Education Policy 2023-2024

### St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

#### Context

St. Michael in the Hamlet recognises and values the religious backgrounds and non-religious backgrounds of each of our pupils. We intend to be sensitive to the home background of all and therefore work to ensure that RE is accessible to all pupils and teachers of any religious persuasion or none. We believe that Religious Education provides opportunities to celebrate our diversity; it is a subject for all pupils, whatever their family background and personal beliefs and practices. Through Religious Education lessons, children gain knowledge, understanding and empathy towards various cultures across the globe and most importantly, within our own school community.

#### Legal Requirements

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all pupils as part of the school curriculum. As RE is not nationally determined, the Local Authority must provide an Agreed Syllabus for us to follow. The local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) has created a Locally Agreed Syllabus and model scheme of work which we implement.

#### Place in the Curriculum

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

All state schools ... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage ...  
All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

(DfE, The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, July 2013, p.4)

#### Intent

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

(Liverpool Agreed Syllabus, 2020-2025, p.8)

At St. Michael in the Hamlet our 'pupil friendly,' version of this aim is that:

*RE will support our children in exploring big questions about life, in order to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live so that they themselves can make sense of religion and worldviews and reflect on their own ideas and ways of living.*

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims and vision of our school.

### [The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children](#)

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that 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.' Here at St. Michael in the Hamlet, we have a strong understanding of how RE can play a leading role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### [The Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education](#)

The locally Agreed Syllabus requires that all pupils learn from Christianity in each key stage. In addition, pupils will learn from the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. These are Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all of our classrooms. These worldviews, including for example Humanism, will also be the focus for study. Religious traditions to be studied at our school in depth are as follows:

4-5's Reception	Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.
5-7's Key Stage 1	Christians and Muslims or Jewish people.
7-11's Key Stage 2	Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jewish people.

### [The Approach to Religious Education](#)

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School the teaching of Religious Education in line with the Agreed Syllabus for Liverpool is approached with the following principles in mind.

There are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of children or staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity, and we value the links, which are and can be made between home, school and a faith community. We acknowledge that each unit of work studied can develop

religious literacy and conceptual understanding of what it means to be a person with religious or non-religious beliefs and ways of living.

### Time Allocation

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is **a minimum allocation of 5 per cent of curriculum time for RE**. The time allocated to Religious Education follows the recommendations in the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus. This is set out in the table below and follows the most recent guidance:

4-5's	36 hours of RE, e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision.
5-7's	36 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)
7-11's	45 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours a week of RE)

### Learning and Teaching in RE

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education outlines in detail how the subject is planned and what is taught in each Key Stage and in each Year Group. It clearly indicates the recommended year groups for each religious tradition. Details of the content of each unit can be found on the school's web page for RE. The syllabus is structured around 3 key strands: believing, expressing and living. These strands are used to give structure to each enquiry and ensure a balance across the curriculum. Children apply these strands to the major world religions, building upon their knowledge lesson by lesson and year by year in order to embed it in their long-term memory.

The Agreed Syllabus for RE is taught with an emphasis on open enquiry. Each unit of investigation starts off with a 'big question', that over the course of the unit children set out to answer by meeting the unit's outcomes. All aims of RE are planned for throughout the units of work.

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings are used to ensure effective RE sessions. Some of the strategies used involve: direct teaching to the class or small groups, providing direct hands-on experience with RE resources such as photographs or artefacts, by teacher-prepared materials such as worksheets, through stories, poetry, drama, art, hearing religious music or tasting food from a religious tradition.

St. Michael in the Hamlet recognises that 'enquiry' can be instrumental to good learning in RE as referenced in recent Ofsted RE subject reports, and we aim to help pupils develop skills to enquire independently. Pupils are given time to generate pertinent questions where appropriate and teachers aim to ensure that the atmosphere in an RE session is conducive to question raising and reflective thought whenever appropriate.

## Visits and visitors

At St. Michael in the Hamlet, we understand the importance of visits and visitors to a pupil's experience of RE. We aim to arrange one visit to a place of worship for each KS1 and KS2 class. During their time at our school pupils will have the opportunity to visit:

Year 1 St. Michael in the Hamlet Church (Christianity)

Year 2 Princes Road Synagogue (Judaism)

Year 3 Mandir (Hinduism)

Year 4 Liverpool Cathedral (Christianity)

Year 5 Al-Rahma Mosque (Islam)

Year 6 Greek Orthodox Church of St. Nicolas or Buddhist Centre

In addition, we invite various members of faith groups in to school throughout the year at fitting points in the planned units of work. Teachers and all staff at St. Michael in the Hamlet demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faith/non-faith groups, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils. These visits are arranged by year group leader's/class teachers with the support of the RE Subject Leader.

Inter-faith week is celebrated in our school in November

## Resources

Teachers make good use of resources in order to ensure that RE lessons are inspiring for pupils and effectively promote progress. Teachers model how to handle religious artefacts respectfully and sensitively and encourage pupils to follow their example.

## Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for overseeing teaching and learning in RE at St. Michael in the Hamlet. This role includes:

- ensuring staff are familiar with our approach to RE and the requirements for planning
- formulation of action plans
- supporting staff with planning and delivery of RE
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- monitoring the teaching and learning of RE
- providing and sourcing in-service training (INSET) for staff where necessary

## Withdrawal from Religious Education

It is recognised that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education – in its entirety or in part. If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from Religious Education, then arrangements are made for that child to be withdrawn during Religious Education lessons by the class teacher. Our approach to RE,

however, has been constructed in the hope that parents will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

## Assessment

At the beginning of each topic of enquiry, children will be assessed by their class teachers using the RE progression document for guidance. Prior knowledge across key stages will be tested by question and answer sessions, e.g. retelling a religious story, recognising symbols or naming different beliefs or practices.

Teachers may also ascertain this prior knowledge in the form of challenging retrieval activities which can be verbal or recorded in books. Similarly, the vocabulary progression document may also be used by teachers.

### Formative assessment

Teachers will use ongoing assessment strategies throughout the teaching of the enquiry topic. Ongoing formative assessment may take the form of e.g. - entrance and exit questions (oral or written) - listening to children's contributions and feedback - low-stakes quizzes - picture prompts to recall information - mini-plenaries to check understanding.

### Summative assessment

Although RE as a subject is not formally tested, children may be assessed at the end of an enquiry topic by e.g. use of multiple-choice quizzes, written responses.

Pupils' attainment in RE throughout the school will be tracked by the Subject Leader in order to ensure that RE provision in St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary school is successful. As required by law, we report pupils' attainment in RE in written form to parents once a year.

## Monitoring of RE

We plan for pupils to make progress across all aims of RE and monitor the progress of pupils by:

- Book scrutiny
- Monitoring of teachers' planning as seen in medium term plans
- Teacher feedback
- Pupil voice

**Policy Reviewed:** Autumn 2023 **Next Review:** Autumn 2024

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