



# Religious Education Policy

**St Matthew's C of E Primary School with Brunel Nursery School  
Religious Education Policy**

***School Mission Statement***

***We aim to provide a positive learning experience in a safe and respectful environment. We strive to teach an inspiring and inclusive curriculum that promotes a love of learning. As a Christian school, we endeavour to develop the spiritual and moral values of all members of the St. Matthew's family, and a meaningful, loving relationship with God. We want our children to be cheerful and independent individuals who reach their potential and are proud of their achievements. We hope to develop confident, caring citizens who are well prepared to enjoy happy and rewarding lives.***

***Our motto: Live, Love, Learn***

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to the core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

St Matthew's is a Church of England Aided School therefore the provision of R.E. must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors, in consultation with the Headteacher have decided, following advice from the Diocese, to adopt the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus and supplement this material from the diocese and elsewhere.

## **AIMS**

In Religious Education at St Matthew's School we aim that pupil's might-

- Think theologically and explore the great questions of life, and death, meaning and purpose.
- Reflect critically on the truth of the claims of Christian belief.
- See how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post modern society.
- Develop the skills to handle the Bible text.
- Recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world.
- Respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living.
- Develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious.
- Experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community.
- Engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions.
- Become active citizens, serving their neighbour.
- Find a reason for hope in troubled world.
- Understand how a religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

**St Matthew's also provides a distinct content of RE which includes:**

- Opportunities to explore the Church's year.
- Visits to places of worship, the local church and the Cathedral.
- Liaison with the local church to enable these links and visits to occur.
- A set of Bibles in a language that is understood by the learners.
- The facility to listen to Christian psalms and songs from a wide variety of traditions.
- Access to Christian artefacts that are used with respect, care and confidence.
- Each classroom has a space known as the 'Prayer Corner' that may be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection.
- Pupils from other faiths backgrounds are encouraged in their faith.
- Pupils with no religious background having the opportunity to face the challenges of the Christian faith.
- Provision is always made for children with SEN through differentiation.

- Provides displays, and a calm Reflective Area, that encourage thinking about God and His world.

**At St Matthew's, RE lies at the very heart of the curriculum therefore:**

- The Governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocese Board of Education *Questful RE Syllabus for Church Schools* which reflects the national Framework for RE.
- at least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to R.E; 36 hours per year in KS1 classes and 45 hours per year in KS2 classes.
- Christianity plays the central role in R.E. and takes up between two thirds and three quarters of this time.
- The appropriate teachings of other faiths and world views are also included.

## **WORLD FAITHS**

RE should equip pupils to recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. Therefore, at St Matthew's we have respect for great world faiths. This respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of world faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

In accordance with the syllabus, St Matthew's will teach as follows.

Foundation Stage pupils explore Christianity and the Sikh & Hindu festival of Diwali.

Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity and the Holy books, places of worship, and special times for the five major world faiths.

Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Islam and Judaism and key aspects of the Sikh, Hindu and or Buddhist faiths.

## **TEACHING**

RE is taught in a variety of ways. This may be a combination of differentiated whole class or group work. People of different faiths are encouraged to visit and talk about their faith. R.E. is taught through music, art, drama and story.

Varied resources are available to assist with the teaching of R.E. Books, videos, DVD, CD ROMs, Godly Play figures, as well as a wide range of artefacts. (*see RE co coordinator*).

Some resources are also available on loan from Blackburn Cathedrals church house.

## **LINKS TO OTHER SUBJECTS**

RE is usually delivered as a discrete subject but may also be linked to other curriculum areas such as History, Geography, SEAL and PSHCE and ICT

### **PSHCE and SEAL**

St Matthew's School promotes PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship), and SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning), through Religious Education. These help to:

- Develop pupil knowledge and understanding about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.
- Enables pupils to think about topical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, including the importance of resolving conflict fairly (*see Mustard Seed and SEAL files*).
- Explores the rights and responsibilities and duties of citizens locally, nationally and globally.
- Enables pupils to justify and defend orally, and in writing, personal opinions about issues, problems and events.
- Develops confidence and responsibility by learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong and are encourages to share their opinions.
- Develop a safer and healthier lifestyle by learning about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships, learning about the purpose and value of religious beliefs and sensitivities in relation to sex education and enabling pupils to consider and express their own views.
- Develop good relationships and respecting the differences between people by learning about the diversity of different ethnic and religious groups and the destructive power of prejudice, challenging racism, discrimination, offending behaviour and bullying, being able to talk about relationships and feelings, considering the issues of marriage and family life and meeting and encountering people whose beliefs, views and lifestyles are different from their own.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

(*see scheme of work for each year group*).

There are two levels of attainment in R.E.

- AT1- learning *about* religion.
- AT2- learning *from* religion.

Both attainments targets are closely related and are not taught in isolation. The 8 level scale is used to determine which level each pupil is working towards.

Key Stage 1 is expected to work within the range of levels 1-3.

Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to work within levels 2-5.

These level descriptors are taken from the QCA National Framework.

The R.E. coordinator will create a portfolio of evidence of R.E. that is taking place throughout the school.

The purpose of this portfolio will be to monitor standards and achievements and ensure all pupils are experiencing creative and challenging R.E. The portfolio will be a celebration of success and the distinctive quality of R.E. at St Matthew's.

### **R.E. CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCHOOL EVALUATION FORM (SEF)**

The religious character of the school underpins its life and work. References are made throughout the SEF document which provide evidence to substantiate the status and Christian ethos of St Matthew's e.g.

- The school has Church of England Aided status and its distinctive Christian ethos serves to welcome children from diverse cultures (section 1b)
- Children take an active part in Collective Worship and Achievement Assemblies, choosing hymns and songs, writing prayers, participating in dramas and sharing good work.
- The Muslim children, in particular, show a great interest in R.E lessons and willingly share knowledge of their own faith with others. They have a strong sense of being part of God's family and engage easily in discussion about their beliefs. Their knowledge of Christianity is also impressive. (Sect 4c)
- There is termly involvement in Christ Church Sunday services, whereby St Matthew's children and staff take part in leading some aspect of worship. (Sect 4e)

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR R.E. WITHIN ST. MATTHEW'S**

Teaching & Learning of RE	Head teacher and Teachers
Monitoring & Assessment of RE	Head teacher and RE coordinator
Collective Worship	Headteacher

## **R.E AND THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNORS AT ST. MATTHEW'S**

The governors of St Matthew's work with the Headteacher and his staff in creating, inspiring and embodying the Christian ethos, securing its Mission Statement with all members of the school community and ensuring an environment for teaching and learning that empowers both staff and children to achieve their highest potential.

The search for excellence in a church school is pursued through teaching and learning taking place in the context of the individual needs and aspirations of the pupils as God's children.

The governors ensure each teacher responsibly assists the Headteacher in the leadership of a faith community, for whom Jesus Christ is the model. In the management of staff, their unique contribution as individuals, valued and loved by God, should be recognised.

The relationship between the school's Mission Statement and the deployment of all staff, finance, resources, time and energy should reflect the Christian aims of the school community and the needs of all pupils.

## **RIGHTS OF PARENTAL WITHDRAWAL OF R.E. AT ST. MATTHEW'S**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education in any school. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Head teacher will explore the reasons for the request. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to. However, as stated in the School Brochure, *'if you choose to send your child to St Matthew's School, it is on the understanding that you are happy for your child to take part in the religious life of the school.'*

**Revised and accepted by the Governors April 2008**

**Reviewed and amended October 2013 By Mrs W. Rowe  
(Religious Education Subject Leader)**