



*‘Growing up together in Newtown’*

# St. George’s C of E Academy Newtown Religious Education Policy

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We are a Church of England School with a strong Christian ethos. We do not discriminate between children and treat them all as individuals. We offer a wide range of exciting and educational opportunities to enhance skills, talents and creativity. The school community appreciates and accepts others, and celebrates the achievements of all.

## **AIMS OF THE SCHOOL**

At St. George’s C of E Academy Newtown, we want ALL of our children to:

- Have an enthusiasm and thirst for learning
- Have confidence to be themselves and consistently aim high to challenge their potential;
- Have an awareness for the world beyond their own – have respect and understanding of others with circumstances different to their own;
- Explore all opportunities provided to discover their talents and abilities;
- To be kind and respectful members of their community;
- Have embedded morals;
- Have fun, good memories of their school life; • Be inspirational role models.

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Our Christian Vision for our school community  
We have chosen the 'Tree of life' as the emblem for our school.  
The biblical scripture chosen for our school is Jeremiah 29 vs 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.'*

The Tree of Life and our chosen scripture verse personify wisdom

### **Our Christian Vision for our school community**

The tree of life is an image which is central to Christianity. It is established in old testament understanding of the creation of the world, as of the relationship between God and humanity.

The personification of wisdom is seen in the tree of life. Something which is reflected through many other of the major world religions.

'Our children are the tree and the leaves and Birmingham is their city. Our children will be the ones to bring about healing and restoration within families, schools and communities.

The scripture verse helps us to reflect on the wisdom God gave to Jeremiah, we know this because he says, ' For I know the plans I have for you'. It also stresses the importance of Christians remaining hopeful during difficult times.

A lot of our families have had to overcome many challenging circumstances, prior to their arrival at our school. It is therefore our Christian duty to provide our students with a garden and a community to live well together in and to grow, a deep and rich education in which they will put down their roots to develop wisdom, knowledge, and skills.

We will give them the sunlight to reach for hope and aspiration, and they will be tended by people who show them respect and dignity so they become respectful adults who treat others with dignity.'

This policy has been drawn up by the governors of the school in consultation with the headteacher, collective worship coordinator, incumbent and other members of staff.

St. George's C of E Newton Primary is a Church of England Academy, with a Voluntary controlled heritage. In addition to the national legal requirement that there should be daily worship, as a church school, we have a Trust Deed which states that worship should be 'in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England' and in accordance with the School Ethos Statement in the statutory Instrument of Government. Collective Worship takes place every day for all pupils.

### **Rationale/Aims for teaching RE**

The 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

St George's C of E Primary Newtown, is a Birmingham Diocese sponsored Academy and we teach RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and The Church of England Education Office's 'Religious Education in Church of England Schools - A Statement of Entitlement' (2016)

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

Through RE, we aim to develop children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.

We aim to develop our students understanding of:

1. Other major world religions.
2. World views and the impact on society, culture and the wider world.
3. The need to respect those of all/no faiths in their search for God;
4. Common beliefs and practices between different faiths.
5. The enrichment of their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.
6. The distinctive contribution RE makes to the life of the school and other curriculum aims (and community cohesion)

As a church school we are called to find ways to work towards every pupil having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and with the person of Jesus Christ. In the Birmingham Diocese, this means that we will endeavour to ensure that encounters with the Christian faith will be positive for the pupils and that they will hear of the story of Jesus.

Such encounters will enable our students to develop an understanding of the treasures of the Christian faith in a way that invites, but does not coerce.

Our RE curriculum provides opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values grounded in our Christian values.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Learning about and from religious traditions helps pupils to explore the concepts of religion whilst being able to celebrate the common values and differences of each faiths spiritual, moral and cultural belief.

This also helps our students to understand how religious beliefs can influence people's behaviour, actions and motivations.

## **Personal development and well-being**

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE offers children opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It considers the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

## **Sandwell Agreed Syllabus**

We use the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus to teach Religious education at St George's C of E Newtown. The Syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils and specifies for teachers what should be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject. In Key stage 1 and 2, the students learn about different beliefs and teachings, practices and ways of life and how different religions express themselves in different ways.

We employ a variety of teaching methods.

Art, music, dance and drama.

Students experiencing times of quiet mindfulness to develop their own thoughts and ideas.

Story, pictures and photographs.

Artefacts to help children develop their understanding of religious beliefs and forms of expression.

Discussing religious and philosophical questions giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others.

Developing the use of ICT (particularly webinars and the internet) in helping children's awareness of religions and beliefs.

When it is deemed to be COVID safe we plan to visit local places of worship and receiving visitors from faith communities.

In Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity, Sikhism and Islam

In Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Islam

## **Inclusion**

We have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. It is necessary to consider the following three principles in order to develop a more inclusive curriculum:

Setting suitable learning challenges including SEN and more able students

Responding to pupils diverse learning needs

Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

## **Assessment and Recording of RE**

Assessment student's attainment in RE is based on 2 criteria:

Their progress in the RE curriculum A significant aspect of the assessment of pupil's progress is made in a formative way by the class teacher. It is done through marking of work against learning objectives and by discussion, where the teacher is looking for the child's ability to question, reflect and reason. The summative aspect of pupil's attainment is recorded through self- assessment/awareness of learning both at the beginning and end point of each 'unit' of work. Attainment is monitored by the RE co-ordinator using book sampling, pupil discussions and observations.

Pupil's RE books stay with them year on year and progression and attainment of learning objectives through a range of learning styles can be seen across the whole school.

What they learn through being in a church school where religion is an important factor in their life. The school bases its assessments in RE by recognising that in this church school there are more influences on a child's attainment than just the RE curriculum.

## **The right of withdrawal from RE**

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the Head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St George's C of E Primary Academy Newtown.