

The Priory Parish CE Primary School



RE Policy



'To provide an inspirational RE curriculum where all children learn to become kind and compassionate human beings who have the courage, knowledge and skills to change the world for the better.'

Priory Parish vision for RE

Who are we and why are we here?

As a Christian family, together, we will realise our God-given ability to change the world."



Based on 'The Good Samaritan' Luke 10:25-37

Underpinned by our core Christian values of :

friendship love faith respect kindness responsibility

Our Curriculum Intent

Retention of powerful knowledge and vocabulary

Application

Inspiration

Success

Elevate

INTENT FOR RE

Challenging

Obtain

Master of knowledge

Personal

Ask

Share

Systematic

Inspirational

Openness to all

Nurture curiosity

IMPLEMENTATION

Our RE curriculum is carefully planned using 'Questful RE', which is the curriculum delivered to all schools in the Chester Diocese as well as the Understanding Christianity resource. The Understanding Christianity's approach to teaching about Christianity builds up pupil's encounters with biblical concepts through texts, placing the texts and concepts within the wider Bible story. Christian Values are fundamental to the whole curriculum and play a significant part in the whole life of the school. These, along with Fundamental British values, are examined in greater depth during the yearly, school assembly cycle.

R.E.- 'The core of the core'

"The drive for excellence and effectiveness in Church Schools is paramount, but not merely because the Government says so. The enabling of every child to fully flourish in their potential as a child of God, is a sign and expression of the Kingdom and is at the heart of the church's distinctive mission." (Chadwick 2012)

In our Church of England school, R.E. plays a significant role of developing the Christian ethos of our school. We believe that the high quality Religious Education provided in our church school is the key to enabling every child to flourish. Quality RE has the potential, more than any other subject, to have the most powerful and lasting effect on the child's heart and mind. Religious Education provides varied opportunities for spiritual development and personal reflection. It develops children's knowledge and understanding of the nature of religion and belief; it provokes challenging questions about meaning and purpose, truth and values, identity and belonging. Religious Education prepares children for active citizenship in today's diverse society. It enables them to develop sensitivity to, and respect for, others. As a church school the standard of our Religious Education provision should be nothing less than brilliant and its impact should be visible in all areas of the curriculum and school life. Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the Christian ethos of the school and is seen as 'The core of the core subjects.'

Taught within an environment where Christianity is witnessed and experienced in action, pupils will experience, explore and encounter a wide range of creative and challenging activities that will help them to discover the answers to ultimate questions such as these:-

- Who am I and what does it mean to be me?
- In what ways do/can I relate to others?
- How/where can I encounter God?
- How can I make a positive contribution to the world in which I live?

- What values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are important to me?
- What does it mean to have faith?
- Who/what influences and inspires me?

The aims of Religious Education in our school

Religious Education is rooted in the message of the Gospel and the living faith of the school.

The aims of RE are:

- Begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- 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 a troubled world;
- Understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.
- Reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- See how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- Understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- Develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- Recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shapes British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today;
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of others.
- To develop understanding of a religious faith as the search for and expression of truth;

- To contribute to the development of pupil's own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

Religious Education at The Priory Parish also helps pupils to:

- Learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- Recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- Recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- Enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- Enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

As a Church School, the Religious Education curriculum at The Priory Parish includes:

- Opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year;
- Visits to places of worship, especially our Church Christ the King and Chester and Liverpool Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the Church as a living community;
- Welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life;
- Liaising with our local Church family to enable these visits and links to occur;
- Skills to confidently use religious language to express knowledge and opinions;
- A well-used set of Bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of Bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts;
- The facility to listen to Christian 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions;
- Access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence;

- A sacred space in all classrooms that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection;

Religious Education at The Priory Parish:

- Pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- Pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- Pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- Pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- Pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- Pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society

Our RE Curriculum Intent Explained

Challenging questions about meaning and purpose.

Obtain deep knowledge about Christianity and world religion.

Master and apply knowledge, developing their own ideas, values and identities.

Personal- articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs.

Ask and answer 'questful' questions.

Share ideas, thoughts and wisdom.

Systematic- carefully sequenced knowledge and understanding

Inspirational- preparing children for citizenship and courageous advocacy in today's diverse society.

Openness to all- respecting different religions, ideas, values and identities.

Nurture curiosity- provide safe environments where children can question the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

The outcomes for pupils at the end of their education:

- Think theologically and explore ultimate questions;
- Reflect critically on the truth claims of both Christian belief and of those of other faiths;
- Develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply the Bible;
- Recognise that faith is a particular way of understanding and responding to God and the world;
- Analyse and explain the varied nature and traditions of the Christian community;

- Make a well informed response to Christianity;
- Respect those of all faiths in their search for God/Meaning.
- Reflect critically on all areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths;
- Enrich and expand their understanding of truth;
- Reflect critically and express their views on the human quest and destiny

Other Faiths

The school has a range of resources including literature and artefacts from a range of religions, namely Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism. Judaism and Islam are the primary 'other faiths' that are studied, although throughout their school career pupils will learn about some elements of the other faiths.

Syllabus Content

The teaching of RE entails the teaching of both learning about religion and learning from religion. The syllabus reflects the concept of a quest in which pupils are actively encouraged to ask questions about, and to discuss their faith and the faith of others in a respectful environment.

Time Allocation

The Chester Diocese recommends approximately 5% of the total curriculum should be allocated to R.E. The majority of the time should be R.E with a Christian emphasis (66-80% the balance being allocated to other faiths. The school has allocated one session per week (5% of the total teaching time) for the teaching of R.E. although this may in fact be increased by the class teacher if required or if appropriate. R.E. topics and themes may be explored in other areas of the curriculum.

Planning

Long and Medium Term planning are provided through Questful RE, with suggested ideas for weekly activities. This ensures progression, continuity and subject coverage throughout the school. Planning is used to set clear achievable goals and ensure work is matched to children's abilities. Planning is the responsibility of the class teacher with the guidance of the subject leader. Other lesson ideas are retrieved from 'Understanding Christianity.'

Resources

Teachers use the following schemes of work to support the teaching of Religious Education.

- Questful RE
- Understanding Christianity

Recording Learning

In Religious Education, pupils record their learning in the following ways:

- Personal RE scrap books
- Class Spiritual development journey logs
- EYFS floor books

Meeting The Needs of All Pupils

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs. Religious Education is taught in class groups with all pupils included. All our teachers know the pupils in their class and their differing needs very well. They plan and adapt lessons to help all pupils know and remember more so they make very good progress. Some pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, or those with English as an additional language, may need extra support to access, understand and remember key concepts. For these pupils, teachers use a range of effective strategies, whilst promoting independent learning as far as possible. These may include: adapting and scaffolding pupil activities and resources and focussed additional support from an adult in class. Some pupils very quickly grasp the main concepts being taught and are

able to think more deeply to extend their learning. To ensure they reach their full potential, teachers may: set more complex activities that require thinking at greater depth (use of Understanding Christianity resources), ask pupils to apply their knowledge to a different situation or go further by asking them to explain their thinking to others or present their findings to a group.

Children with SEN are given full access to all areas of curriculum. They may have differentiated work and/or additional support from other adults in the classroom (see also SEND/Inclusion Policy).

Assessment

Assessment begins at the planning stage, when teachers plan to teach from where they know children are currently. Both learning about religion and learning from religion are taught and assessed. Regular book monitoring ensures that challenge is evidenced through the teaching of RE. Marking in the books reflects the Learning Objectives for RE rather than for other areas of the curriculum, although spelling of key religious words may be corrected as we expect RE work to be completed to a high standard always. End of unit assessment sheets are completed by each class teacher to assess progress and attainment.

The Right to Withdraw from RE

Parents may withdraw their children from RE lessons or any part of the RE curriculum and the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Where the pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parents want the pupil to receive. These arrangements will be made by the parents; the school is not expected to make these arrangements. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or by another school in the locality. If neither approach is practicable, the pupil may receive external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not significantly impact on the child's attendance.

Curriculum end points

The RE curriculum is designed with clear key knowledge end points at the end of each year and ultimately each key stage. The RE curriculum that is taught in each year group is designed to work towards those end points. Our RE curriculum enables our pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, analyse evidence and arguments and develop a view point and opinion. Key aspects of English such as persuasive language, advocacy and critical thinking are woven in our RE curriculum.

The ladder of expectation and achievement in the *Questful* RE syllabus provides an indication of the expected level of achievement. The ladder is intended primarily to contribute to planning excellent tasks at the right level appropriate for the pupils' experience, knowledge and ability. The ladder can be used to make judgements about the level of individual pupils' achievement at the end of each year group. This is supported by assessment sheets for each unit which contain knowledge and skills objectives for teacher a pupil assessment.

Curriculum planning and sequencing

Children in Years 1 to 6 are taught RE using a spiral curriculum, revisiting previous concepts in the big idea which is visually transformed into a frieze, based on the study of the units year-on-year, building on their prior learning. The curriculum at The Priory Parish is mainly a knowledge-engaged curriculum that consciously develops both knowledge and skills. A key feature of the syllabus is the opportunity for pupils to investigate, reflect, evaluate and make meaning. In doing so they will discover more about themselves, their relationships with others, their relationship with the world around them and their relationship with God.

EYFS

In the EYFS the knowledge and skills in RE come from the starting point of the child. The Early Years *Questful* units are designed to encourage an atmosphere of community where everyone, child and adult are learning together. Right from the start planning involves a child centred approach which aims to inspire and motivate. Children are confident to ask questions and make choices. Continuous provision is provided for all and children are given opportunities to explore various types of equipment. Often this is child-initiated but

on occasion is also completed through adult-led activities. This results in enthusiastic, interested and creative children.

Using the Questful Early Years RE Units

The Early Years RE Units are designed to encourage an atmosphere of community where everyone, child and adult are learning together. Right from the start planning involves consultation with the child so that a blend of child and adult initiated activities will take place. This child centred approach will inspire and motivate both children and adults. The needs of visual, audio and kinaesthetic learners will be met, thoughts and ideas shared, and the depth of learning will be greater. Children will feel confident to ask questions and make choices. The results will be enthusiastic, interested, and creative children.

The EYFS unit sheet gives teachers an aim and therefore a clear direction for the topic along with key questions and key vocabulary. The RE content to be covered with suggestions for teacher initiated activities and additional classroom provision, mirrors the pedagogy of the rest of the syllabus units. This makes the EYFS RE units a sure foundation for the whole school and sets the ethos of 'questfulness'. The EYFS RE units gently introduce the children to the 'big ideas' of Christianity (the concepts) and begin to highlight where the stories they explore fit into God's big story. This also prepares the children for the RE they will encounter in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Each unit begins with...

The exploration of a collection of objects in a box, a **Chatterbox**. A Chatterbox can be any kind of box or tub with a lid. The boxes look special and interesting. The suggested objects for Chatterboxes have been carefully chosen to create discussion and questions that lead to activities covering the content of the unit, however, the children may lead in a different direction. This is exactly how it should be with the children's interest driving the topic but, in order to ensure that the children are experiencing some RE, there will possibly be the need for a few teacher initiated activities. Each EYFS unit sheet lists the objects for the Chatterbox, however this list is not exhaustive or restrictive so teachers can feel free to be creative.

At the beginning of the lesson, Chatterboxes are opened together in small groups or as a whole class and discover what is inside. The children take turns looking at and handling the objects. The conversation and questions will generate ideas for the learning activities.

Chatterboxes are revisited as children journey through the unit.

Key stage 1

In Key Stage 1 the units have been chosen from the syllabus that we consider allow the exploration of the big idea which is the basis of the syllabus. The units also provide links to the wider curriculum including within the story of creation exploring recycling and looking after the planet and in the harvest topic looking at Fair Trade. Links are made to other faiths across the curriculum. There are many cross curricular links with PSHE and English.

Key Stage 2

In KS2 the curriculum builds upon the higher-level thinking developed with the dive deeper and I wonder questioning started in KS1. The eight key concepts of the big idea continue to be revisited but with a great level of challenge in terms of the links that are made across the Bible and links with other faiths. We ensure that our RE curriculum builds on previous learning and that it is connected to other subject areas, especially English and PSHE to create a greater coherence and context for the children.

During their time at The Priory Parish, we believe that the vocabulary rich, knowledge engaged curriculum provides children with first hand experiences that bring the subject to life and root the curriculum in a local context.

The discussion, debate and social advocacy opportunities that thread through our curriculum equip our children, whatever their social background, the soft skills such as critical thinking and teamwork that are vital to success in 21st century Britain. We often use cross-curricular teaching to make the curriculum relevant and meaningful to children and for putting knowledge into context.

A broad and balanced curriculum

We have always been committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum that is not narrowed in end of key stage years. Didsbury CE operates in accordance with the Guidance set out in the RE Statement of Entitlement, (The Church of England Education Office 2019). At Didsbury CE we adopt the principal that 5% of the curriculum being dedicated to RE. This is the minimum recommended in national guidelines. There will be occasions when RE takes a larger slice of the curriculum, reflecting the Church School's greater commitment to the subject.

We passionately believe that the RE curriculum builds upon the skills and knowledge of the core subjects. For example, the RE curriculum gives opportunity for high level and substantial pieces of writing that contextualise the skills taught in the English and links to courageous advocacy in the PSHE curriculum.

High academic ambition

Throughout the RE curriculum at The Priory Parish, there is an expectation of high academic standards and children at our school enjoy the opportunity to be advocates for change and ambassadors of respect and tolerance in society. The design of the curriculum and the opportunities available for the children mean that high standard of writing in RE is the same as it is in the core subjects. We passionately believe that all children regardless of background can reach those high standards. For children with SEN our RE curriculum and the resources we use are adapted so that they have the opportunity to receive their full educational entitlement. Visuals and differentiated work are provided to support children with EAL.

Our RE curriculum is designed so that all may be challenged to fulfil their potential and encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. This provides children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be ready for their next stage of education.

Parental Rights of Withdrawal

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school

Collective Worship

At The Priory Parish CE Primary School, the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life. Through this and in the general ethos of the school we seek to promote our vision statement of 'As a Christian family, together, we will realise our God-given ability to change the world.'

It is a time when we come together to share our love of God based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly. We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection. We have regular contributions to assembly.

Withdrawing Pupils from Collective Worship

The 1996 Education Act gives parents the legal right to withdraw their children from collective worship. This is upheld under the 1998 Act.

As an Anglican school we hold great value in the power of collective worship to formulate, enhance and celebrate the power and wonder of our Christian faith. That said, if parents wish to withdraw their child from collective worship we request that the reasons be put in writing and submitted to Mr Edwards

Policy written by Sophie Ellison (RE subject lead) To be reviewed September 2024

