

St. Michael at Bowes
Church of England
Junior School



Religious Education
Policy

Date: March 2021

***‘An inclusive Christian community
building on firm foundations for
successful lives.’***

St. Michael at Bowes Curriculum Policy Statement

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Introduction

At St Michael at Bowes we believe that our vision underpins everything we do and as such we strive for our children to ‘build on firm foundations’ in order for them to lead successful lives.

The purpose of Religious Education at St. Michael at Bowes is to nurture the spiritual and moral development in our children through learning about and from religion. As our school is a Church of England school, the curriculum reflects the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England, though the curriculum is designed to be accessible to, and nurturing of, children of all faiths and none.

The governing body is responsible for the selection of the curriculum and the delivery of R.E. in the school. This is delegated to the Head Teacher and the Religious Education subject leader on a daily basis. Following the Diocese of London Guidelines for Religious Education, two thirds of the curriculum will be based on the Christian faith, with the remaining third focusing on major world religions represented in our school community.

Religious Education will be allocated not less than 5% of the timetable. In Key Stage 2 this translates as 1¼ hours per week, totalling 45 hours over the year.

At St. Michael at Bowes School, staff ensure coverage by block planning units of work for each term, based on the LDBS agreed curriculum: Every Child Matters to God.

Withdrawals

Parents have a right by law to withdraw their children from acts of worship. In this event, after discussion with the Head Teacher, the school will undertake responsibility for the supervision of withdrawn pupils with regard to health and safety. On consultation with the Head Teacher and the parents, alternative work will be provided.

Aims

The purpose of teaching Religious Education in school is to:

- Provide staff and children with the knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and its relevance to their daily lives.
- Facilitate spiritual knowledge and growth among staff and children through fostering a climate of respect for differing cultural and religious traditions.
- Extend the ability of staff and children to reflect upon themselves as holistic beings, experiencing life through body, mind and soul.
- Give both staff and children the tools with which to communicate with God through prayer and scripture, if they so wish.

Objectives

Through our teaching we will:

- Provide a course of Religious Education within the framework of the London Diocese Board of Schools appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our school.
- Plan and deliver 1¼ hours of Religious Education per week, either as one long session or a series of shorter sessions. This time does not include time spent in collective worship or in daily acts of prayer.
- Give prominence to classroom R.E. displays which are to be link to the topic being studied and changed each half term. The background of the displays will match the liturgical colour of the current Church season.

- Use the ladder of skills model to provide effective assessment, next steps marking and skills-based learning objectives appropriate to the age and ability of the children.
- Assist and encourage experience of Christian life and worship.
- Through the study of major world religions encourage understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice in our community.

Entitlement

The children's entitlement is based on the London Diocese Board of Schools Primary Scheme of Work: Every Child Matters to God, together with the R.E. Today 'I Can...' statements based on the guidance of DfE and QCDA.

There are two attainment targets in Religious Education, namely:

A.T. 1 Learning about Religion

... to gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity in particular and world religions in general.

A.T. 2 Learning from Religion

... developing the capacity and skill to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions.

At St. Michael at Bowes Religious Education is considered a 'core' subject and will be often taught as a discrete subject, although the approach may vary. Wherever possible, all children will learn from primary source material as well as through the use of outside speakers with relevant experience and school visits to places of worship.

Monitoring

The R.E. Coordinator will monitor work through observations, collection of samples of work for a school portfolio, book and planning monitoring. In addition, children's attainment will be assessed on a termly basis and will be recorded on Target Tracker in order to monitor pupils' progress over the years.

At St. Michael at Bowes we believe that academic rigour is as necessary in R.E. as in any other subject, though this should not negate spiritual and emotional growth, which are not always possible to assess using formal methods. While achievement will be recorded according to both attainment targets, a final assessment will be made by amalgamating attainment in A.T. 1 and A.T. 2 with the emphasis given to A.T.2

Inclusion

We believe that all children are entitled to equal access to the R.E. Curriculum and as such children with different educational needs will be facilitated in expressing themselves according to their abilities. This includes pupils on the SEND register, children with English as an Additional Language and those classified as more able. These children will work alongside other children in their group, but their needs will be met through differentiation in approach, language and expected outcome. In order to meet the entitlement of every child in our school planning for R.E. will follow the expectations specified in the separate **Special Educational Needs and Disability school policy**

Appendix to the R.E. Policy

Feast Days

At the beginning of each year Michaelmas (St. Michael's Day – 29th September) will be marked in whole school collective worship.

Christmas and Easter will both be marked by the presentation to the school of a performance held at St. Cuthbert's, Chitt's Hill.

Collective Worship

As a Church school, collective worship is at the heart of life at St. Michael at Bowes. It is, therefore, covered in a separate **Collective Worship** policy.

Prayer Life

Throughout their time at St. Michael at Bowes, there is an expectation that the children will become familiar with a variety of scripture and that every opportunity will be given for the children to express themselves through a variety of forms of prayer.

The expectation is that each day will be marked by 'morning' prayer and 'evening' prayer at the end of the school day. All children will be taught how to compose prayers, and each class is expected to keep and update Class Prayer book from which the children may read.

The children will also learn the School Prayer, which is in the Collective Worship Policy.

It is recommended that children pray before lunch, although this is not compulsory.

Examples of prayers to use in class are:

Lunch

Bless us, O God, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty. Amen.

End of Day

*O my God, I come to say:
Thank-you for your love today;
Thank-you for my family,
And all the friends you give to me.
Protect me in the dark of night,
And in the morning send your light.
Amen.*

It is also good practice to make time for reflection at the end of the day.

Guidance for end of the school day time for reflection

When you first start these sessions you will need to explain the purpose and importance of them to the children. The children need to know that you value what they have to say because you care about how they feel.

- Create the right ambiance; this needs to be a quiet prayerful and spiritual time for the children creating an environment of calm and trust.
- Children need to know that what is said in their classroom is for their class only and what individuals say must be respected by everyone and not talked about in the playground.
- Play some meditative music or some Tazié chants quietly in the background if you so wish.
- Light the RE table candle and turn off the classroom lights
- Younger children may sit on the carpet so that they can all see one another while older children may sit at their desks.
- Start with a prayer. It might be nice if every child has a copy which they will eventually get to memorise. Something like ...

Dear Lord Jesus,

We have come together to think about the school day that will soon be ending.

We thank you for the good times we have shared together today and for all the things we have learnt.

We remember the sad times during the day when we might have said or done hurtful things to others.

Help us to be truly sorry for any hurt we have caused and help us to forgive those who have hurt us.

We ask for your special blessing on our class so that we may grow in our friendship with others and continue to live as you would like us to.

Amen.

- Go over the day from your own perspective. Say what you have enjoyed about the day and what has disappointed you. Be prepared to make your own disclosures about hurt you may have caused and apologies you want to make
- Extend the invitation to the anyone in the class who feels they need to say sorry for any hurt and distress
- Encourage and support any apologies that have been made. It is essential that they are made with sincerity and with the right atmosphere this will happen
- At the end of the session thank the children for their contributions and remind them that as they have ended the day reconciled with one another they will start tomorrow as a new beginning.
- Finish the day with the class prayer.

Children are also encouraged to make use of the Reflection Zone and write prayers to place on the prayer tree or put in the prayer box. These prayer intentions are then kept in a school prayer book. By the end of the Autumn Term, children in Year 3 are expected to be able to join in with the Lord's Prayer.

Visits

Each year group is required to arrange at least one visit to a place of worship representing the major faiths present in the school. It is recommended that visits match the other faiths focus of the year group. This may be a visit to a place of worship, an exhibition or museum. These visits are part of the Curriculum and it is the school's expectation that they are attended by all children in the class.

Although a first visit to St. Michael at Bowes church is reserved for the new Year Three intake in the Autumn Term, Year 4 are encouraged to compare St. Michael at Bowes with other churches in the area in the Summer term.

Each half term a year group will visit St Cuthbert's church for a service.

Trips to St. Cuthbert's, Chitt's Hill, for the purpose of show rehearsals do not count as an educational visit.

Displays

Displays are expected to be half termly and reflect what is being taught in the class. The backing paper for these displays must reflect the liturgical colours used to demarcate the different seasons of the Church's year:

- Autumn I – Green (ordinary time)
- Autumn II – purple (Advent)
- Spring I – white (Christmastide)
- Spring II – purple (Lent)
- Summer I – white (Eastertide)
- Summer II – green (ordinary time)

The Big Book

Each class has a Big Book to document the learning in RE and other areas of the school curriculum. It serves as another way to capture thoughts and reflections from RE lessons when the lesson is more discussion based or has more practical outcomes. It supports pupils to develop deeper and more

rounded responses to the Big Questions in their RE units. It also serves as a way to record all pupils' reflections after whole school or year group events, including but not limited to: visits and visitors, whole school focus days and weeks, national and international awareness events, charity and outreach work and 'special' collective worship (e.g. Harvest Festival)