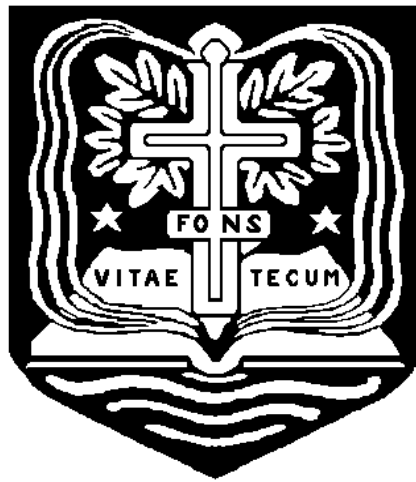


# Welwyn St Mary's Primary School

## Believe and Achieve

We encourage all our pupils to have confidence to believe in their own ability, and that of others, and to challenge themselves so they may achieve their best



## Religious Education Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years unless there are legislation or LA policy changes.

Reviewed by Staff: May 2020

Approved by Governors: May 2020

# WELWYN ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

### Intent:

Welwyn St Mary's Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School and as such its R.E. curriculum is required by law to be determined by the Governing Body in accordance with the Trust Deed. This states that religious instruction shall be given in accordance with the doctrines, rites and practices of the Church of England.

We realise that certain social divisions and prejudices act as obstacles to achieving that goal. We are committed to challenging any discrimination and being fair to all irrespective of their nationality, race, class, age, gender, academic status or disability. This commitment is evident in the school SEN policy and our resources and teaching strategies for Religious Education are founded on the school equality scheme. For example, texts show positive images of characters from a range of different backgrounds.

'Educating for life in all its fullness' is the goal of the Church of England Vision for Education - educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills; for hope and aspiration; educating for community and living well together, and educating for dignity and respect. Our aim is to embrace this vision in our teaching.

At Welwyn St Mary's School the governors and staff support the views expressed in the document "Christianity in Church of England Schools" (Diocese of St Albans), which states that:

*"An aided school should positively set standards of behaviour and morality which are formed by Christ's teachings and not merely accept or reflect existing social and moral standards".*

At Welwyn St Mary's School there are pupils from practising Christian families; those who are from religions other than Christianity, and some families that have no faith at all.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the teaching of R.E. (Education Reform Act 1988). Any parent who wishes this may consult the headteacher.

## **Implementation:**

### **Values and Aims**

We are proud of our church school heritage and the deep connection to our community and parish. Our curriculum vision, framed by the statement 'Believe and Achieve', is centred on the development of the whole child; head, heart and hand. We value our strong and close association with St Mary's Church and hold several services each year in the church building. The Rector and other members of the Church team lead weekly assemblies and support and contribute to the life of the school in many ways including through the governing body.

### **Attitudes and Skills**

R.E. has an important role to play in developing the attitudes and values which are explicit in the organisation, curriculum and ethos of our school. Many attitudes we wish the children to develop are seen in the life and teaching of Jesus and these are related to the children's own experiences through RE, collective worship and our ethos.

Children's learning and understanding of the 'big story' of Christianity is developed through

- reflection
- investigation
- questioning
- empathy
- expressing feelings

### **R.E. in the Curriculum**

Our R.E. curriculum reflects our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually - 'head, heart, hand'

Specifically, R.E. at Welwyn St Mary's enables children of whatever ability and level of development to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths, and to appreciate its influence in our society

- be supported in their personal search for meaning
- be encouraged to question, reflect, to wonder and to face the mystery of life
- recognise and be sensitive to people who hold different beliefs in the community

Some teaching of R.E. will develop naturally out of topics already being studied by the class. However, most of the R.E. will be taught separately.

In Welwyn St Mary's C.E. Primary School, as a Voluntary Aided school, R.E. is not at present taught in accordance with the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education. However, the Agreed Syllabus provides useful teaching support and guidance.

We have enhanced our scheme of work by introducing the resource 'Understanding Christianity'- a resource produced by RE Today, in collaboration with the National Society.

Understanding Christianity, it's 'big story', living a life of faith here in Welwyn and around the world, Christian traditions and the church calendar underpin our rich curriculum. Children learn through story, art, celebration and first-hand experience with opportunities to question, reflect and explore belief and the impact of faith on people's lives. This scheme covers the central beliefs and teachings of Christianity as well as moral issues within an overall Christian ethos.

From the earliest age children learn about world faiths, their customs and traditions and during Key Stage 2 Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam are studied in greater depth. Visitors to school and visits to places of worship significantly enrich the curriculum and the experiences of our pupils.

Understanding Christianity was introduced in 2019 and the scheme of work will next be reviewed in 2023

Christianity is the main foundation of R.E. and other faiths are introduced as follows:

**KS1** Christianity and other faiths are introduced through festivals, stories, symbolism and artefacts.

**KS2** Year 3 - Christianity and Hinduism  
 Year 4 - Christianity and Sikhism  
 Year 5 - Christianity and Islam  
 Year 6 - Christianity and Judaism

## Resources

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are each resourced with relevant books, videos and a box of artefacts. Staff also encourage visitors of other faiths to talk with the children about their beliefs and way of life. Visits to places of worship are encouraged - as an example, Year 4 have experienced a 'Faith Tour', visiting a Gurdwara, Mosque and Church, learning about the different faiths.

## Continuity and Progression

Our scheme of work aims to ensure continuity and progression through a thematic approach. The main strands spiral through the school's R.E. programme and will seek to develop knowledge and understanding alongside appropriate skills and attitudes.

## Differentiation

Teachers assess the abilities of children in their classes and provide support and challenge for children when appropriate.

## Teaching Methods

R.E. is taught by non-specialist teachers. The co-ordinators are able to offer ideas and guidance when required. Teaching methods are varied in order to stimulate interest and include class and group work, visits and visitors, poetry, story, drama, artefacts and the use of television and I.T. when appropriate. Discussion is a very important aspect of R.E. and is encouraged in order to draw out the moral and spiritual aspects and give an opportunity for pupils to ask questions and to express their own beliefs and values.

## **Impact:**

### **Objectives**

To enable all pupils through class themes and other work:

- to become increasingly aware of religious ideas and experiences through stories and acts of worship which emphasise the Christian tradition
- to have an enquiring, reflective and respectful attitude to the natural world which develops an understanding of the relationship between God and His creation
- to gain an understanding of other world religions, beliefs and ways of life

- to develop sensitivity towards others and to form relationships based on love, sympathy, forgiveness, respect and consideration
- to acquire a coherent knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus
- to understand the basic structure of The Bible and become familiar with key personalities in The Bible stories
- to explore the nature of Christian worship and the use of signs and symbols in expressing feelings and belief

### Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Formative assessment strategies, based on the learning outcomes for units of work, are used by teachers to monitor progress and by pupils to reflect on their learning. Attainment for each pupil is summarised on the annual reports to parents. Tracking standards for all pupils in RE is shared annually with staff through the school assessment database.

### Management and Co-ordination

The R.E. subject leaders manage this area of the curriculum in line with our job description for subject leaders.

**S Anstey/E Harrison**  
**R.E. Subject Leaders**

**Reviewed: May 2020**

**Review date: May 2024**