

# Religious Education Policy

St John the Baptist, St Matthias, St  
John & St James and Holy Trinity

collaboration  
imagination  
aspiration  
Spontaneously creativity  
St Matthias  
St John the Baptist  
St James  
individuality  
Springfield  
St John  
Morningside  
Holy Trinity

PRIMARY  
ADVANTAGE

SCHOOLS ACHIEVING  
MORE TOGETHER

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**The Purpose of the Policy:**

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching and learning of Religious Education. It reflects the view of all teaching staff and was drawn up as a result of staff discussion. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and will be monitored by the R.E. Co-ordinator. Our schools are primary schools with a Christian foundation (Church of England) and as such, Christianity forms the basis of all the teaching in the school and how we treat each other.

We live in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society and will encourage the respect and understanding of other religions and cultures within the community in which we live. We take account of the teaching and practises of other principal religions represented in Great Britain. We intend to follow Christ's command to love and serve one another so that barriers between races, cultures and individuals are demolished.

**The Aims of the Policy:**

This policy aims to:

*Support children and young people in reflecting upon, developing and affirming their own beliefs, values and attitudes, through an exploration of shared human experiences and of the place and significance of religion in the contemporary world.*

We do this by:-

- Helping the pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of religion and faith
- Furthering pupils' growth and development through the study of beliefs and values of Christianity and other faiths as stated in our Mission Statement
- Contributing towards pupils' experience of Christianity as a living faith
- Establishing a clear and workable framework for the teaching and learning of Religious Education within the school
- Providing clear guidance for continuity and progression in the teaching of Religious Education throughout the school from class R to Year 6
- Showing a common purpose amongst staff, which may be clearly understood by parents, governors, advisers and inspectors

**The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children**

The 1988 Education reform Act requires schools to "promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils at the school and in society" (paragraph 1:2) through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. Although schools are not specifically required to promote the social development of pupils, it is very much a feature of the life and work of pupils.

In our schools, Religious Education plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children.

**Organisation and Planning:**

Religious Education has an important role in our Schools. Our Religious Education is broadly of a Christian nature, but we do teach aspects of other faiths that are represented in our society. These areas are approached with respect, sensitivity, care and integrity.

R.E. in our school is not only concerned with knowledge, it includes:

- Exercising the imagination
- Exploring spirituality
- Exploring commitment
- Experiencing awe and wonder
- Sensing mystery
- Reflecting on feelings

The following religions have also been selected for study at our schools

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Sikhism

RE will be taught and learned as a discrete and cross-curricular subject as a whole class activity with children working individually or in groups in the class or to the whole school as part of collective worship. R.E. is a timetabled subject.

**The scheme of work will enable children to:**

- Evolve concepts of deity, universality of religion, worship, ritual, sacrifice, symbolism, prayer, religious language, belief, faith and commitment, appreciation of the wonder and mystery of the natural world created by God in the context of the Christian faith.
- Have some understanding of ideas of self, relationships and corporate identity.
- Develop understanding of religious practices and their relationships to and effect, upon major life events.
- Develop an informed awareness of other world faiths regarding beliefs, customs, festivals, geographical distribution and personalities.

The above will be achieved by ensuring children have the opportunity of following “areas of experience”.

- Primary human experience, social, moral relationships, other faiths
- Response to God through nature, the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, spirituality, Christian studies.

Each of the above areas are concerned with knowledge, concepts, attitudes, understanding, skills and experience.

**Planning:**

Planning for Religious Education in our Church of England schools is based upon a scheme of work developed by RE leaders from across the PAF. It uses elements from the LDBS scheme of work, the Hackney Agreed Syllabus, as well as the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Syllabus. Whilst Christianity is studied in more depth than other religions, by adopting elements of different schemes we are able to ensure a broad and balanced RE curriculum. The aforementioned schemes are then supplemented by the schools planning to include the teaching of other world faiths. The completed scheme of work provides a continuous and progressive outline for the development of Religious Education throughout the school. Within this framework, the teaching of Religious Education is supported by topic themes specified for each year group and ensures effective coverage of all areas/concepts and allows for appropriate differentiation.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the Religious Education offered is carefully planned and matched to the ability/level of understanding of the children. It should raise the child’s awareness of the understanding and the nature of faith and help to develop attitudes of respect and tolerance towards others.

**Our Approach to RE Learning and Teaching:**

The teaching of RE is approached with the following principles in mind:

- No presumptions will be made as to the religious backgrounds and beliefs and values of the children and the staff.
- We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity.
- We value the links, which are and can be made between home, school and a faith community.
- We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils.

- We promote teaching in Religious Education that stresses open enquiry and first hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children.
- The syllabus is implemented in school by means of a highly sensory approach, where children may look at and handle religious artefacts, hear religious music or taste food from a religious tradition as well as hearing stories that are important to a faith community.

Learning in Religious Education may be by means of direct teaching to the class: by providing direct hands on experience with RE resources, such as photographs or artefacts: by teacher prepared material such as worksheets: through stories, poetry, drama: through visits to faith communities.

**Time allocation:**

The time allocation to Religious Education follows the recommendations that each Unit of Curriculum requires an allocation of not less than 5% curriculum time. Class teachers and RE Curriculum Co-ordinators endeavour to ensure that all children have equal access to the required amount of Religious Education curriculum time.

**Assessment:**

It is widely acknowledged that the spiritual and moral development of a child is difficult to assess. The theoretical/written side of Religious Education is much more straightforward and can be based on a child's knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and the Bible. The class teacher can assess a child's own development by observing how they react to different learning experiences and their general conduct and attitude towards others.

Summative assessment is used at the end of each unit of work, indicating the skills practiced, knowledge learned and concepts grasped by individual pupils. As with all subjects, pupils will be assessed as working toward/working at/working at greater depth within expected standards, at the end of each year.

**Withdrawal:**

It is recognised that parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education – in its entirety or in part. Any such request should be made to the Head Teacher. The class teacher, in consultation with the Head Teacher, will make arrangements for a child to be withdrawn during Religious Education lessons.

**The Role of the RE Leader:**

The Leader is responsible for:

- Writing and updating the Religious Education policy in the light of initiatives and change and to monitor the development of the subject throughout the school
- To evaluate progress and attainment of children across the school
- To guide and support teachers in the planning, delivery and assessment of this subject
- To monitor the effectiveness of the planned and delivered curriculum specifically in Religious Education
- To co-ordinate classroom practices and guidelines across the curriculum and to ensure the development of subject skills
- To audit and monitor resources throughout the school to ensure that there are sufficient, age appropriate resources for effective teaching and learning
- To ensure that staff are continually aware of new developments in this subject and to disseminate any relevant information to other colleagues

**Resources:**

It is an important part of the teaching and learning of Christianity and of other faiths that children have the opportunity to view and handle artefacts/resources. Therefore we plan for and continue to develop the resources we have in the light of the faiths we plan to study.

A range of reference materials for Religious Education is available – no one resource alone is used. Resources are stored centrally in the Resources Room. The resources are monitored regularly according to the priorities identified in our school development plan.

**Cross Curriculum Links:**

We believe that the whole curriculum should be concerned with the spiritual development of the child. It is not just the concern of the Religious Education lesson and Collective Worship. Religious Education therefore runs through the whole curriculum and is concerned both in an implicit and explicit way.

Religious Education will also feature in the curriculum through a cross-curricular approach as either the central purpose or as elements in general topics.

**Home/School Community Links:**

Effective, sustained contact between home, school and the local community is vital to the development of any child. Parents and other adults in the local community can be a valuable source of information and skills that can extend the work of the classroom into the locality.

Our schools have strong links with the local clergy. They regularly come into school to lead our collective worship, or the whole school attends church for collective worship and/or key Christian events throughout the year.

Visits to the local places of worship of different faiths are encouraged so that the children can develop greater understanding of other faiths and cultures. Speakers and visitors are also welcomed into our school as a further source of information as appropriate to the development of the Religious Education curriculum, and collective worship themes.

**Collective Worship:**

The ERA of 1998/1993 state that:

“All children in attendance at a maintained school shall on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship..... Collective Worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”.

The DFE circular 1/94 (Religious Education and Collective Worship) further states that Collective Worship should aim to:

- Promote the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- To consider spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.

**Please see our separate Collective Worship policy for full details of Collective Worship in our schools.**

**Equal Opportunities**

Every child is entitled:

- To a curriculum that reflects and values the life and history of all pupils, especially those represented in the local community.
- Not to feel excluded from R.E. because of gender, culture or class.
- To participate in active exploratory work, with an increasing degree of planning and self-control.
- To be able to demonstrate what they can do in as wide a range of activities as possible.
- To have equal access to the R.E curriculum.

**Race, culture and social background**

- Teachers recognise that children come to school with many different early experiences and will plan and approach R.E. activities with this in mind.
- Teachers should always value the child's experience, which stem from their home backgrounds and cultures.
- Teachers should consider cultural and religious issues when planning Religious Education experiences, e.g. tasting foods.
- Teachers should present positive images of children from different cultures in the resources they use.
- All children should have equal opportunity to succeed in Religious Education

**R.E. and Bi-lingual Learners**

Bi-lingual children must not be underestimated in Religious Education; they may have potential that is not reflected in their language work.

**Physically Disabled Children**

Children with physical learning difficulties should have full access to the Religious Education curriculum. We would aim to provide appropriate resources and staffing to facilitate this access.

**Evaluation:**

Evaluation is carried out to enhance the teacher and learning of Religious Education within our school. It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for Religious Education within the school, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress. Detailed evaluation is undertaken by the RE Leader.

Evaluation includes a regular evaluation of the content of Religious Education Curriculum to ensure that the requirements are being fulfilled in the best possible way. Monitoring of teachers' planning is carried out to check that plans are actively put into action in the classroom. Pupils' progress and performance is evaluated. The effectiveness of any INSET for Religious Education provided from within the school, or by an external agency, is evaluated either by means of a written evaluation sheet completed by staff after the course, or by verbal feedback at a staff meeting.

Evaluation may take place by means of a number of methods including:

- Looking at children's learning
- Analysis of teachers' planning as seen in Flipcharts, Long and Short Term Plans
- Discussion among groups of staff or the whole staff
- Classroom observation
- External inspection and advice

Evaluation takes place formally and informally. Written feedback is given to teachers.

## Appendix 1 – St John the Baptist Our Mission, Values and Beliefs

### We Achieve We Believe

St John the Baptist provides a safe and happy learning environment where children and adults are valued, nurtured and empowered. We believe a good education is the foundation on which our children's futures are built and equips them for their life ahead. We aim to develop the whole child through a diverse and culture rich curriculum. We are committed to providing an excellent education through helping children to **achieve**, by developing enquiring minds, instilling the motivation to learn and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively. Our approach is underpinned by our strong Christian ethos. We aim to help children learn to love and forgive each other and aspire to be the best they can be, rejoicing in their own success and the success of others. We also aim to establish a clear understanding of rights and responsibilities for all by embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We **believe** everyone in the school community is responsible for instilling Christian values that will help our children become confident and responsible members of society.

### The distinctiveness of the school as a Church School

At St John the Baptist we respect each other: We try to ***Love our neighbour as ourselves***. To help us achieve this, we have five ***St John the Baptist Beliefs*** which are underpinned by the 14 Christian values and grounded in key Bible verses (see RE section for further information). They are expressed using five key words: **Welcome, celebrate and care for each other** to make our school a safe and happy place (**Celebration**); **Co-operate, help and listen to each other** so we can learn from each other and settle disputes peacefully (**Cooperation**); **Work hard and try our best** so we can be proud of ourselves and our work (**Determination**); **Be honest and tell the truth** so we can trust each other (**Honesty**); **Look after the school and our belongings** so we have a pleasant place to work (**Respect**). Our Beliefs enable us to work together to share a common purpose. We see them as a positive way to learn how to become the best we can be. They are often referred to throughout the day by adults and children.



**Determination (Wisdom, Endurance, Justice, Hope)**

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.' Joshua 1:9

'Christ gives me the strength to face anything.' Philippians 4:13

'Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. <sup>2</sup> He said: 'In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. <sup>3</sup> And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, "Grant me justice against my adversary.'" Luke 18:1-3

**Honesty (Humility, Trust, Forgivefulness, Friendship, Justice)**

'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' John 8:32

'Do not tell lies about others.' Exodus 20:16

'Giving an honest answer is a sign of true friendship.' Proverbs 24:26

**Co-operation (Service, Compassion, Trust, Peace, Friendship, Justice, Creation, Koinonia)**

'How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!' Psalm 133:1

'But it should not be that way among you. If one of you wants to become great, then he must serve you like a servant. <sup>44</sup> If one of you wants to become the most important, then he must serve all of you like a slave. <sup>45</sup> In the same way, the Son of Man did not come to be served. He came to serve. The Son of Man came to give his life to save many people.'" Mark 10:43-45

'The body of Christ has many different parts, just as any other body does.'

'God put our bodies together in such a way that even the parts that seem the least important are valuable. <sup>25</sup> He did this to make all parts of the body work together smoothly, with each part caring about the others. <sup>26</sup> If one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honoured, the whole body will be happy.' 1 Corinthians 12:12 & 24-26

**Celebration (Thankfulness, Friendship, Hope, Creation, Koinonia)**

'Rejoice with those who rejoice' Romans 12:15

'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.' Philippians 4:8

'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' Ephesians 2:10

**Respect (Reverence, Wisdom, Service, Trust, Peace, Friendship, Koinonia)**

'Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people.' Romans 12:16

'Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with

all your mind.'" <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

'Respect everyone and show special love for God's people.' 1 Peter 2:17

Determination



Work hard and try our best so we can be proud of ourselves and our work



Honesty



Be honest and tell the truth so we can trust each other



Co-operation



Co-operate, help and listen to each other so we can learn from each other and settle disputes peacefully



Celebration



Welcome, celebrate and care for each other to make our school a safe and happy place



Respect



Look after the school and our belongings so we have a pleasant place to work





## Appendix 3 – St Matthias

### Our Mission, Values and Beliefs

St Matthias provides a safe and happy environment for all our children and staff to learn, develop and excel in their academic and social education. We believe that our children have to be supported to achieve and prepare for their lives ahead. Working together with their families, we will instill the values and care needed to ensure they become responsible, confident and capable members of society.

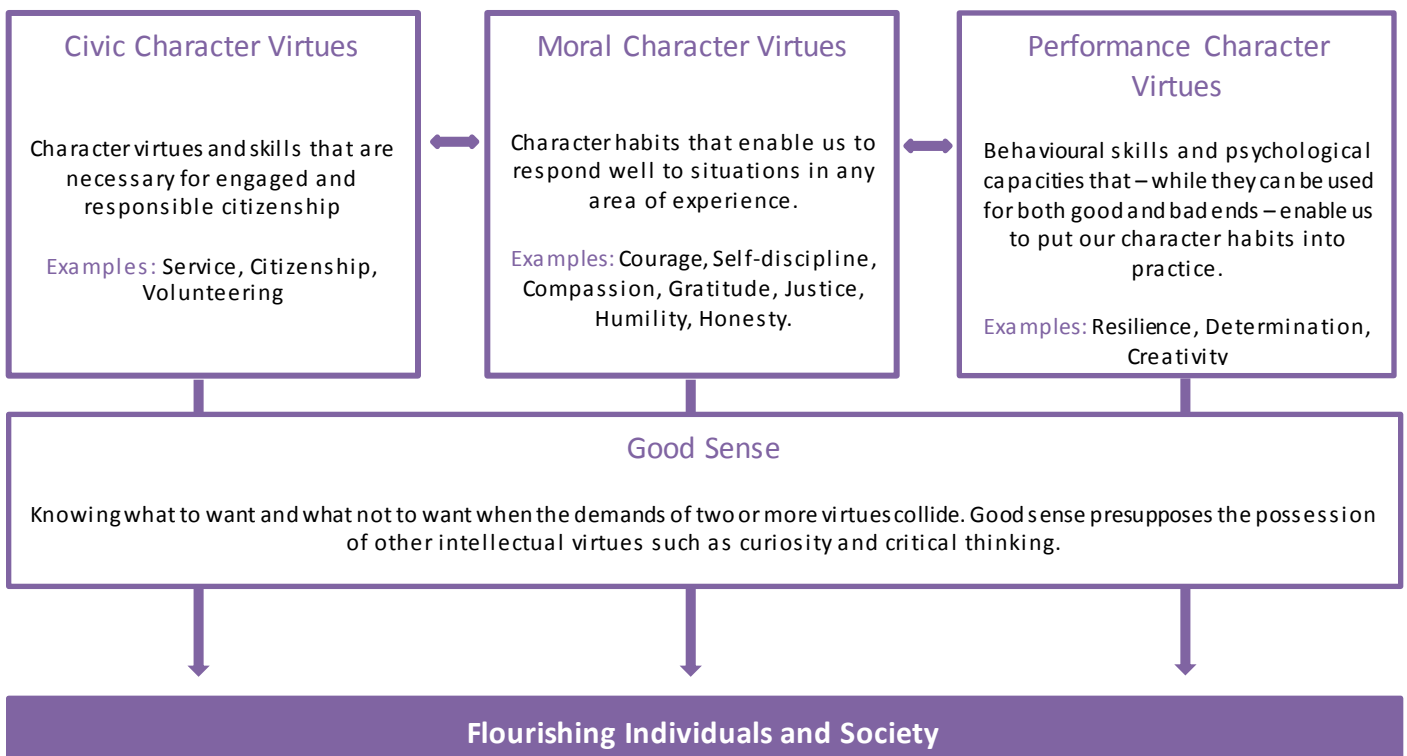
Our Christian ethos is underpinned by the principal of ‘Love Thy Neighbour’ and children encouraged to love themselves and others to ensure respect for all and the right knowledge.

We believe it is imperative that all children have the necessary skills and attitudes to equip them for an unknown but prosperous future that allows them to make positive choices about their own lives. We offer a consistent approach to learning to ensure they have the skills necessary to apply a variety of situations.

#### The distinctiveness of the school as a Church School

Our school values the importance of bring a Church school with morals and values the support and promote the children’s learning both academically, socially and emotionally. We have Christian values system which promotes the values of service, love, justice and endurance. We seek to serve and engage with the local and global community and have ever growing links with the Church and the wider community. We strive to ensure that we provide a caring, inclusive and thoughtful school that serves the local community and supports our children equally. We seek to enable our children to have a value system based on love and respect for all. We work closely with Father David at St Matthias Church to ensure that we work together and support the children and families in the community.

Fruits of the Spirit: Character Education (October 2015)



The Centre for Real-World Learning at the University of Winchester, in Figure 2, suggests that character can be viewed in terms of a set of attributes which are good for society (prosocial) and another set – very close to the category of performance character – which are important for learning (epistemic).

The Secretary of State has made character education one of the five priorities for the Department of Education, while her shadow in the last parliament Tristram Hunt has also emphasised the importance of character in a “rounded education”. When reported in the media, this emphasis is interpreted mostly in terms of the performance virtues of grit and resilience. However, the Department for Education’s

Character Education Grant specifically invited different approaches to character education, and the Church of England is pleased to have been invited to run a project exploring how teachers can be equipped with confidence to explore character development in the classroom. We see the current discussions on character education as raising two key questions. First, what character attributes

should be taught, if any, and why? And second, can or should character be directly taught, or should it be implicit in the way other subjects are taught? We hope to contribute to the discussion of both these questions.

*Figure 2: Centre for Real-World Learning: Desired Outcomes of Learning*

**Prosocial:**

- Kind (not callous)
- Generous (not greedy)
- Forgiving (not vindictive)
- Tolerant (not bigoted)
- Trustworthy (not deceitful)
- Morally brave (not apathetic)
- Convivial (not egotistical)
- Ecological (not rapacious)

**Epistemic:**

- Inquisitive (not passive)
- Resilient (not easily defeated)
- Imaginative (not literal)
- Craftsmanlike (not slapdash)
- Sceptical (not credulous)
- Collaborative (not selfish)
- Thoughtful (not impulsive)
- Practical (not rapacious)

## Appendix 3 – St John and St James Our Mission, Values and Beliefs



Learn together, journey together, pray together

We aim to express and celebrate our mission in every aspect of our school community.

We **learn together** by creating a safe and secure learning environment in which every child is known and valued and motivated to learn. We aim to prepare our children for the world by bringing the world into the classroom.

We **journey together** towards educational excellence, personal and spiritual fulfillment. We use a cooperative approach to support children from our rich, diverse community.

We **pray together** and prepare our children for life with a strong set of values to enable them to reflect and make positive choices with confidence. We respect each other and we treat each other, as we would like to be treated.

The school is rooted in the Christian values of **peace, thankfulness, endurance, trust, service and justice** which drive its vision, ethos and values. The school puts much emphasis on fostering good relationships and providing a supportive environment based on Christian values with constant affirmation and promotion of equality of opportunity and celebration of diversity.

## Appendix 4 – Holy Trinity

### Our Mission, Values and Beliefs



Holy Trinity provides a safe and happy learning environment where children and adults are valued, nurtured and empowered. We believe that everyone in the school community is responsible for instilling in our children the values that will help them to become confident and responsible members of society.

Our approach is led by the Christian principal, “that you do to others as you would have them do unto you” and we aim to establish a clear understanding of rights and responsibilities for all. We believe a good education is the foundation on which our children’s futures are built and equips them for their life ahead.

We aim to develop the whole child through a diverse and culture rich curriculum. We are committed to providing educational excellence and helping children to develop enquiring minds, the motivation to learn and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively.

The school is rooted in the Christian values compassion, endurance, respect and justice, which drive its vision, ethos and values. The school puts much emphasis on fostering good relationships and providing a supportive environment based on Christian values. The school strives to be a caring and inclusive school that serves the local community well and supports all learners through early identification of particular needs as well as through the curriculum and good teaching and learning support. An emphasis on positive relationships within the school community support personal and social development, and partnerships with the church and wider community are strong.

Original Policy written	May 2011
Revised	February 2016
Adopted by FGB	April 2016

We would like to acknowledge the work of other colleagues in drafting this policy. We have drawn on a range of sources including policies from other schools, good practice guides, published schemes and LA and Statutory guidelines where appropriate.

The Federated Governing Body has reviewed this policy with careful consideration of our approach to equalities as outlined in the Equalities Policy, adopted in September 2013

