

St Luke's CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy



Last reviewed on:	5 th September 2023
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Next review due by:	5 th September 2026
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Completed by:	Miss Gemma Whittingham
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Link Governor:	Rev Peter Jones
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Statement of intent

St Luke's CE Primary School is committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. As members of our community, we adhere to our school rules of being: 'Ready, Respectful, and Safe.'

Our Vision

At St. Luke's, we will provide a loving, nurturing and caring community rooted in strength, wisdom and perseverance, where everyone is encouraged to flourish and fully achieve their God-given potential. We want all members of our school community to thrive and be a light in our world. (Rooted in Matthew 5:14-16 – City on a Hill)

Our Equality Statement

At St Luke's CE Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At St Luke's CE Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Education Reform Act 1988
- The Education Act 1993
- DfE (1994) 'Religious Education and Collective Worship'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Collective Worship Policy
- Spirituality Policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education Policy

2. Christian vision, values and mission statement

Vision

At St. Luke's, we will provide a loving, nurturing and caring community rooted in strength, wisdom and perseverance, where everyone is encouraged to flourish and fully achieve their God-given potential. We want all members of our school community to thrive and be a light in our world. (Rooted in Matthew 5:14-16 – City on a Hill)

Children's Vision

Growing together in strength, love and wisdom, we shine

"We shine like bright stars in the sky."

Values

- Love:
The Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37)
- Wisdom:
The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builder (Matthew 7:24-27)
- Respect:
The Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:1-30)

Mission Statement

Our Christian Vision and Values are expressed through our school's mission statement. We will:

- Instil a sense of wonder at God's creation which nurtures a desire to learn and care for people and the environment.

- Encourage all children, irrespective of background or ability, to flourish academically and creatively thereby fulfilling their God-given potential so they “shine like bright stars”.
- Develop and maintain a constructive, purposeful and aspirational school environment in which high expectations of Christian behaviour and conduct allow all members of our community to learn and grow.
- Help pupils and adults to develop lifelong values so that they can contribute successfully to their local community and navigate an increasing complex national and global community.
- Ensure that all members of our community are given the opportunity to understand and respect difference and diversity knowing that all have been created in the image of God.
- Provide support for the positive mental health and wellbeing of our children and staff so that all feel respected and valued and do not lose heart when facing the challenges of school and the wider world.
- Be a Christian community where there are strong, caring relationships based on kindness and mutual respect, demonstrated through courtesy, forgiveness and reconciliation.

3. Intent of the Religious Education Policy

At St Luke’s CE Primary School, the aim of our Religious Education curriculum is to help children to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain; to appreciate the way that religious beliefs shape life and our behaviour, develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the distinctly Christian vision, mission statement and values. Throughout our school, Religious Education plays an important role, along with all other curriculum areas, in promoting the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all our children – allowing them to achieve their God-given potential and flourish. We seek to instil a sense of wonder at God’s creation which nurtures a desire to learn and care for people and the environment. We aim to help pupils and adults to develop lifelong values so that they can contribute successfully to their local community and navigate an increasing complex national and global community.

This policy outlines how the school implements the Religious studies curriculum within the school and within each classroom.

4. Implementation of Religious Education Policy

At St Luke’s CE Primary School, we follow and meet the requirements set in the Agreed Staffordshire Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus categorises the Religious Education curriculum into six dimensions:

- Meaning, Purpose and Truth
- Identity, Diversity and Belonging
- Expressing Meaning
- Practices and Ways of Life
- Beliefs, Teachings and Stories
- Values and Commitments

These six dimensions are taught throughout the academic year across each individual year group. The Agreed Syllabus specifies an objective which each year group must work towards directly relating to each of the six dimensions.

These objectives are meticulously merged with those of the Understanding Christianity scheme-of-work, which provides detailed planning and carefully chosen resources to help develop the children's understanding of the "big picture" of the Bible and promote religious literacy.

Although Christianity is the key focus during lessons and through daily acts of collective worship, we introduce our children to Islam in KS1 – as well as Hinduism in KS2. 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.

There are no presumptions 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 and we value the links which can be made between home, school, and a faith community.

Although Religious Education permeates through collective/class worship and the entire curriculum and ethos across the school, RE is taught as a discrete subject once a week. Teachers use the federation's Scheme-of-Work to plan engaging and creative lessons which are carefully differentiated to challenge and support all pupils. RE lessons should last for 50-60 minutes.

Unlike many subjects, RE work is not completed in the children's Learning Journey books.

Instead, work is completed in a separate Reflection Journal or whole class floor book.

Although extended writing is a useful activity for assessing the children's understanding, it is not necessary for formal writing to be used in every piece of work.

5. Organisation and planning

The school's Scheme-of-Work (SOW) is a document which outlines the content each year group must teach throughout the academic year. The SOW has been carefully constructed to ensure that all requirements of the Agreed Staffordshire Syllabus are met – as well as effectively utilising the Understanding Christianity planning and resources produced by the Church of England.

Each unit on the SOW is accompanied with a planning document. These planning documents use resources from the Understanding Christianity scheme-of-work and other RE Today publications. Teachers use these planning documents to develop creative and engaging lessons which allow all pupils to engage and achieve.

Differentiation in Religious Education

Differentiation is best defined as “the process by which differences between learners are accommodated so that all students in a group have the best possible chance of learning.” (Geoff Petty).

The main purpose of differentiation is to challenge and raise standards of learning by ensuring that curriculum objectives are accessible to all our children despite their backgrounds or abilities. We see differentiation as a form of integration and not exclusion.

Differentiation must reflect the learning objective and can be achieved in a variety of ways either by task, by support or by outcome and should be chosen by fitness for purpose.

We want all children to achieve success, therefore we will ensure they are given differentiated tasks that are matched to their level of attainment so that they can demonstrate successfully what they know, understand and can do.

The main feature of effective differentiation is good planning resulting in effective teaching and learning with children making good progress. As well as this, we expect to see in all classes interested well motivated children responding to challenges, children working productively on task and being aware of their own progression.

6. Impact of our Religious Education Curriculum

Through Religious Education, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. Our children develop a strong sense of religious literacy and are able to identify key themes that run through Christianity and other religions – such as belonging, truth and values.

Through the teaching of Religious Education, our children become part of a Christian community where there are strong, caring relationships based on kindness and mutual respect, demonstrated through courtesy, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Religious Education offers our children the means by which to understand how other people choose to live and to understand why they choose to live in that way. Consequently, Religious Education is invaluable in an ever changing and shrinking world.

Assessing the impact of Religious Education curriculum

As in all areas of the curriculum, assessment plays a key role in ensuring progress for all children.

Teachers assess the progress of the children throughout lessons using formative strategies such as marking at the point of learning, written and verbal feedback and use of discussion. The children’s Reflection Journals are marked either during or after each lesson in accordance with the federation’s Marking and Feedback Policy. Teachers use this formative

assessment to adapt their planning throughout a unit of work – making adjustments to address misconceptions and differentiate appropriately.

Teachers use summative assessment to measure the children's progress at the end of each unit of work. Each unit of work is accompanied by a "big question" – such as "What do Christians believe God is like?" or "What do Muslims use when they pray?". These questions prompt the children to think deeply about religious concepts, often relating them back to their own lives and experiences. Teachers consider the children's understanding of these big questions when assessing.

Each big question is broken down into a series of small, more specific questions. There are between four and six smaller assessment questions for each unit of work. Teachers assess whether the children have an emerging, expected or exceeding understanding of each question. Teachers use the school's Foundation Assessment Spreadsheet to input this data.

Monitoring the impact of our Religious Education curriculum

The impact of the Religious Education curriculum is constantly monitored by the subject leader – supported by the Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher.

There are many ways in which the impact of the curriculum is monitored throughout the year, although specific methods are used at given times of the year.

- Autumn Term – Overview monitoring, Pupil Voice and book scans
- Spring Term – lesson monitoring
- Summer Term – key knowledge monitoring and pupil voice

The focus of these monitoring activities will be asserted before they take place and will be determined by the strengths and weaknesses identified during previous monitoring.

Other methods of monitoring include evaluation of planning, group monitoring and general curriculum discussions.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

As Part of the Religious Education Policy all staff will:

- Comply with all aspects of this policy.
- Work closely with the subject leader to develop this policy.
- Devise individual lesson plans.
- Develop children's use of theological vocabulary and religious literacy.
- Plan and deliver good to outstanding lessons.
- Plan differentiated lessons which are interactive, engaging and of good pace.

- Have high expectations for all children and providing work that will extend them.
- Assess, record and report on the progress and attainment of pupils.
- Achieve high standards.
- Celebrate the success of pupils in lessons.
- Implement the school's equalities policy and schemes.
- Report and deal with all incidents of discrimination.
- Attend appropriate training sessions on equality.
- Report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

The Head of School and The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Ensure good practice is shared throughout the school.
- Be prepared for all types of school inspection.
- Work closely with the link governor and coordinator.
- Provide leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- Provide guidance, support and training to all staff.
- Make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy.
- Annually reporting to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

The Subject leader will:

- Annually reporting to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
- Ensure that the Scheme-of-Work is updated regularly.
- Ensure that planning documents are updated regularly.
- Ensure that all staff are confident and secure with expectations.
- Monitor teacher's planning to ensure lessons are planned effectively.
- Evaluate the teacher's assessments to ensure fairness and consistency.
- Monitor the impact of the curriculum through the use of pupil voice, book scans and lesson observations.
- Providing constructive feedback to staff following monitoring and observations.
- Identifying areas of strength and weakness amongst teaching staff and providing CPD where appropriate.

The Governing Body will:

- Identifying areas of strength and weakness amongst teaching staff and providing CPD where appropriate.
- Work closely with the Head Teacher and the subject leader.
- Ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date.
- Ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy.
- Attend training related to this policy.
- Report to the Governing Body every term.
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

The Pupils will:

- Be aware of and comply with this policy.
- Be encouraged to work in partnership with the school by making decisions and exercising choice in relation to their educational programme.
- Listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher.
- Ask for further help if they do not understand.
- Participate fully in all lessons.
- Participate in discussions concerning progress, attainments, strengths and areas of development.
- Treat others, their work and equipment with respect.
- Support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.
- Liaise with the school council.
- Take part in questionnaires and surveys.

8. Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education lessons and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the headteacher following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

- The elements of the lesson in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in.

- The practical implications of their withdrawal.
- Whether the parent will require notice in advance of such lessons, and if so, what period of notice is preferred.

Alternative arrangements will be put in place for pupils who are withdrawn from Religious Education lessons

Alternative arrangements may involve religious lessons relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative arrangements will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

9. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher in agreement with the governing board.

This policy will be evaluated in accordance with feedback from questionnaires and class discussions.

Any changes made to this policy and the collective worship programme will be communicated to all members of staff.