St James' C of E Primary School
RE Policy
Reviewed by: Mrs Tanya Harris
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Vision Statement



Inspiring and growing all children through educational excellence to live life in all its fullness.

St James' C of E Primary provides an **ambitious, inclusive** curriculum within the context of caring Christian beliefs and practices. We offer **educational excellence** through encouraging all children to be **curious**, **creative** and **collaborative**.

Our children are **inspired** and **grown** through our **high standards** of teaching and learning, enriched by meaningful experiences, our **collaborative** approach, and a curriculum shaped by our vision for spiritual growth and Christian values.

Children leave St James' C of E Primary with a **sense of identity, empathy, wisdom, the ability to take on a challenge, and a sense of purpose**, enabling them to be ready for their **next stage of learning** and to **live life in all its fullness**.

Introduction

St. James' C of E Primary School, in accordance with the 2002 Education Act, section 80, provides Religious Education for all pupils as part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'. Religious Education is part of the 'basic' school curriculum although not part of the National Curriculum because it is taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus, in our case, the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus 2025-2028. The syllabus asserts the importance and value of religious education and religion and worldviews (RE and RW) for all pupils, with on-going benefits for an open, articulate and understanding society.

The principal aim for religious education in Gloucestershire is for pupils to understand how worldviews influence people's lives, including their own, through the study of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they better understand themselves and the world around them, and become better equipped to contribute to and flourish in society.

Intent

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own positionality and ways of living.

The following **purpose statements** underpin the syllabus, which is constructed to support pupils and teachers in fulfilling them:
This principal aim incorporates a religion and worldviews (RW) approach. RE following this approach will help pupils to understand:
• a variety of responses to and understandings of the world as presented by religious and non-religious worldviews
• relationships between beliefs, teachings, forms of expression within organised worldviews, and the lived experience of adherents – followers of faith
• questions of meaning, purpose and truth, including about ultimate reality, and how these questions may be posed, addressed, understood, evaluated and responded to differently within worldviews and across disciplines
• the concepts, language and ways of knowing that help organise and make sense of religion and worldviews
• how to deploy a range of different tools and methods used to investigate religious and non-religious worldviews
• how their own personal worldview shapes their encounters with and responses to the world, and how their context, experiences and study can shape their personal worldview.
In short, pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

Roles and Responsibilities
The role of the co-ordinator is to:

- To provide leadership and direction
- Meet aims and objectives of the school and subject
- Securing high standards of teaching and learning
- Developing whole school policy and practice for re
- Move the school towards raising standards in re
- Support the role of teachers in re
- Evaluate progress and identify areas for development
- Monitor re across the school
- Understand the contribution re makes to the overall education of pupils.

Implementation
Curriculum
The 2025–2028 syllabus is designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE and Worldviews. It responds to national calls for deepening pupils' knowledge about religions and for developing their 'religious literacy'. It does this by studying one religion at a time ('systematic' units), and then including 'thematic' units, which build on learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied. The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim. The curriculum for RE and Worldviews aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Understand how religious and non-religious worldviews influence people's lives
- Engage with religious and non-religious worldviews in thoughtful and scholarly ways
- Understand themselves, and others, and their personal worldviews better



This agreed syllabus requires that all pupils develop understanding of Christianity in each key stage. In addition, across the age range, pupils will develop understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. These are Buddhism, the Hindu Traditions, Islam, Judaism and Sikhi. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all our classrooms. These worldviews, including for example Humanism, will also be the focus for study in thematic units.

Pupils are to study in depth the religious and non-religious worldviews of the following groups:

4–5s Reception	Children will encounter Christian worldviews and other religious and non-religious worldviews, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.	Consideration of other religious and non-religious worldviews can occur at any key stage, as appropriate to the school context. Humanism is a recognised example of a non-religious worldview to be studied within this syllabus.
5–7s Key Stage 1	Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims	
7–11s Key Stage 2	Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews and non-religious worldviews, such as those of Humanists	
11–14s Key Stage 3	Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs and non-religious worldviews, such as those of Humanists	
14–16s Key Stage 4	Two religions are required, usually including Christianity. This will be through a course in Religious Studies or Religious Education leading to a qualification approved under Section 96.[4]	
16–19s RE for all	Religious and non-religious worldviews to be selected by schools and colleges as appropriate.	

Planning and teaching and learning

Teachers plan in accordance with the 'Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus' which sets the programme of study and statutory requirements of the syllabus.

The syllabus is structured around the three key elements that are woven together: *Understanding how religion and worldviews influence a person's life(content), Engaging with religion and worldviews in a thoughtful and scholarly way and Understanding themselves and others (positionality).* These three threads form the basis of the end of key stage outcomes, and the progressive 'learning outcomes' in each unit of study. The overview of enquiry questions shows how questions are based on core concepts in a spiral curriculum.

All lessons are underpinned with a 'Kagan' and 'Magenta' philosophy, which makes sure that children are wholly involved, work is collaborative in nature and children have the autonomy to lead their learning. All lesson content is inclusive, in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities – work is accordingly adapted where necessary, so no ceilings or barriers are created for any child. We want tasks given to be self-sustaining, whereby children are probing and providing their own answers to questions about the different beliefs and world views.

A Religious and Worldviews approach includes questions that:

- include an interpretive element (e.g. how do these people understand and apply this?)
- offer a clear context (e.g. how do these two people/groups respond at an identified time and place, and why?)
- recognise that there are different answers that are valid (e.g. different individuals, groups, or traditions may have different responses, and that these may change across time and place)
- include an evaluative element, recognising that different answers may be acceptable in different contexts

Teaching sequences will include:

- A key question is set, exploring the ways that worldviews influence people's lives, based on the strands of the National Statement of Entitlement
- Pupils consider the best ways to answer that question – what methods or tools are needed
- Content is chosen that enables pupils to address the question
- Pupils explore that content to find answers to the question, deepening their knowledge and understanding of the area addressed, and the methods used
- As they go through the investigation, they consider how their own position affects their learning
- As they evaluate their findings, they also consider how their learning may have affected their own position

Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) describes the phase of a child's education from birth to the end of the Reception year at the age of 5. Religious education is statutory for all pupils registered on the school roll.

The agreed syllabus for RE sets out experiences, opportunities and appropriate topics for children in the Foundation Stage which connect to the EYFS seven areas of learning.

RE sits very firmly within the areas of personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. The framework enables children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others, and to learn how to form positive and respectful relationships. They will do this through a balance of guided, planned teaching and pursuing their own learning within an enabling environment. They will begin to understand and value the differences of individuals and groups within their own immediate community. Children will have the opportunity to develop their emerging moral and cultural awareness.

Assessment

Teachers will be responsible for tracking each child's progression within RE – both through summative and formative means. Judgements will be made according to teacher observation, short assessment tasks, pupil voice and book reviews. Once information has been collated, judgements will be placed on SONAR – each year group will assess against the 3 threads of the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – *Understanding how religion and worldviews influence a person's life(content), Engaging with religion and worldviews in a thoughtful and scholarly way and Understanding themselves and others (positionality)* – throughout the year.

Impact statement

Religious and Worldviews Education at St James' enhances pupils':

1. Awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression
2. Ability to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses
3. Drive to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a global society
4. Understanding of respect for and sensitivity to others, particularly those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own
5. Understanding of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures

Equal Opportunities

Religious and Worldview Education should seek to ensure that it promotes respect, mutual understanding and tolerance for those who adhere to different faiths and those unable to accept a religious faith. Pupils need to recognise, understand and respect diversity of values to determine and justify their own religious or secular position. Religious and Worldview Education, alongside other parts of the curriculum, should enable and help pupils in their understanding of religion within a multi-cultural context,

as well as playing a vital part in dispelling ignorance and promoting religious, cultural and racial understanding. All these ideals are embodied in the equal opportunities policy.

Health and Safety

When organising off sites visits, teachers will refer to the school policy, 'Organising Educational visits'.

Entitlement

RE is legally required for all pupils. It is a core subject of the curriculum for all pupils and an entitlement for all pupils through their schooling, from Reception year up to and including Key Stage 5.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is a minimum allocation of five per cent of curriculum time for RE. This is set out in the table below and based on the most recent national guidance.

4-5s	**36 hours of RE** (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
5-7s	**36 hours of tuition per year** (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)
7-11s	**45 hours of tuition per year** (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours of RE)
11-14s	**45 hours of tuition per year** (e.g. an hour a week)
14-16s	**5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours of tuition across the key stage** (e.g. an hour a week for 5 terms, or 50 minutes per week, supplemented with off-timetable RE days)
16-19s	**Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable**

Withdrawal from RE - Legal Requirements

This right was first established when Religious Education was known as religious instruction and was often associated with induction into the Christian faith. Today, Religious Education is different. It is an open and inclusive subject that enables pupils to explore and reflect upon a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE curriculum. The school has a duty to supervise pupils who are withdrawn, although it is not required to provide additional teaching or incur additional costs.

At St James', we acknowledge and respect the right of parents and carers to withdraw their child from Religious Education. We will comply with any request for withdrawal and parents are not required to provide a reason for their decision. We will not seek to persuade parents or carers to change their minds. However, we will ensure that parents and carers have a clear understanding of the aims and purpose of RE and its place within a broad and balanced curriculum, so that they can make a fully informed decision.

Should a parent or carer wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons, they are asked to notify the school by emailing admin@st-jamespri.dgat.org.uk.

Any queries regarding withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE Subject Leader in the first instance and, subsequently, to the Headteacher.

Review and monitoring of the policy

This policy has been developed through discussion with teaching staff and the governing body. It will be updated in line with new changes and initiatives to the curriculum – RE being part of the National Curriculum from 2028. The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the RE co-ordinator.