

Religious Education Policy

Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School



Member of staff responsible: Miss J Peel

Date Policy Reviewed: September 2024

Date Approved by Governors: Autumn 2024

Date to be reviewed: September 2025



Our Vision Statement

We love to learn. We learn to love.

With Christ as our Guide,

We love and learn together.

Our children are encouraged to respect their own faith and those of others in our caring Christian environment.

Christian values lie at the heart of all we do.

'God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.'
1 John 4:16

Living out our vision, we aim to:

Guide our children to prepare them for life; Respect themselves and one another; Aspire to achieve their highest potential; Care for the local and wider community; Every child is special in God's eyes.

GRACE

Guide Respect Aspire Care Each of us is special

Statement of Safeguarding Children

At St Philip's Church of England Primary School, our school community has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. This means that we have a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff must ensure that they are aware of our procedures. Parents and carers are welcome to read these on request.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's best interests.

Our Designated Safeguarding Officer is: Mrs. K. Macdonald (Deputy Headteacher).

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers are: Mrs D Thomas Miss. R. Moulden (Headteacher) and Mrs. S. Swire.

Safeguarding governor: Mrs. W. Harvey

Nelson St Philip's will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian beliefs and practice. This school is distinguished by the support of its entire staff family, for its Christian foundation, promoting a sympathetic understanding of Christianity and other faiths.

It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Religious Education in a Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character. In a Voluntary Aided School the management of Religious Education is a distinctive role of the governors and Headteacher. RE must be provided in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in its school.

The importance of Religious Education

To a Church school, religious education and collective worship should be seen as part of an integrated experience, with collective worship acting as an expression of what is taught in many RE lessons. Pupils gain a religious education in its fullest sense in a Church school through good, well-planned and well-organised collective worship, through the example of Christian and other faith teachers, and through the quality of RE teaching.

- Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues and understanding of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.
- Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' learning by enabling them to reflect upon themselves as whole people, experiencing life through the body, the mind and the spirit. The purpose of Religious Education is to help pupils understand the significance of religion and its contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at Nelson St Philip's CE Primary School. Our school has a Church of England foundation. We will promote Christian values within the school as exemplified by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. This is embedded within our school vision. We will recognise the children as individuals and educate them according to their rights in law, whilst providing opportunities for the children to fulfil their potential mentally, physically, socially, emotionally, aesthetically and spiritually.

Throughout Nelson St Philip's CE Primary School, RE contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children. These aspects of development can be found in many of the school curriculum areas, and are implicit in the ethos of the school.

- **Spiritual development** we will nurture and enrich the spiritual development of all members of the school family & encourages pupils' discovery of God the Creator & wonder of the world.
- **Moral development** based on the teachings of Jesus offer pupils a secure foundation stone
- **Social development** enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where to love one another, respect and responsibility is put into practice.
- **Cultural development** provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity worldwide and the impact on millions of people.

The Governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE which fulfils all legal requirements and the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2016. Although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, at Nelson St Philip's they are managed separately.

"In Church of England schools the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Church schools should provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied. Church schools should use some form of enquiry approach that engages with, for example biblical text, and helps develop religious and theological literacy. Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners." RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

“Christianity should be the majority study in RE in every school. In Church schools that should be clearly adhered to. KS 1 – 3 at least 2/3rds of RE curriculum is to be Christianity. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5%.”

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

The aims of Religious Education **in Church Schools** are:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils’ own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

Appropriate to age at the end of their education in Church schools the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

This can be expressed in more detail and distinctively as:

We learn about

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Religious Education in Church Schools should also help pupils to:

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

Religious Education in Church Schools should help pupils to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

Religious Education in Church Schools should enable:

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

We have close links with St John with St Philip's Church and our Vicar in worship. Rev. Lorelli Hilliard is also our RE school governor.

The management of RE is a distinct responsibility of the governors and Headteacher. RE is taught according to the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England Church. RE lies at the very heart of the curriculum and the Governors adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus which reflects the national framework for RE. Appropriate teaching about other faiths is also important; respect for other faiths must be accurate and sympathetic, consistent with the School's loyalty to its caring, Christian foundation. At Nelson St Philip's other world faiths are incorporated into our RE teaching and links are continuously made between religions where possible.

The RE curriculum maintains balance with Christianity as the majority study in RE in KS1 – 2 with at least 2/3rds being Christianity. We also enrich our Christianity input with additional whole-school days on underlying concepts and beliefs of Christian and World Faith festivals. RE entitlement is totally separate from the requirements for Collective Worship. At Nelson St Philip's sufficient dedicated curriculum time is given to meet explicit RE objectives and staff aim to provide 50 minutes to one-hour commitment to the delivery of RE per week.

To demonstrate the subject's comparable status with other core curriculum areas in both staffing and resourcing, we prioritise the building up of staff expertise in RE through ensuring:

- All staff teaching RE have access to appropriate professional development.
- All teaching staff and governors have an understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- Our governing body monitors standards in RE effectively.

We expect that Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

The Aims of RE

- Think theologically & explore great questions about life, death, meaning & purpose;
- Reflect critically on the truth claims of Christianity;
- See how the truth of Christianity is relevant today & face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist & post-modern society;
- Develop skills to handle Bible text;
- Recognise faith as a commitment to a particular way of understanding God & the world;
- Respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living;
- Develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique & precious;
- Experience the breadth & variety of Christian Community;
- Engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths & traditions;
- Become active citizens serving their neighbour;
- Find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- Understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances & in the face of opposition.

Differentiation of Work and SEN Provision

We will endeavour to provide a differentiated approach to learning which treats pupils as individuals. This will be provided through: -

- The delivery of carefully structured teaching approaches;
- Imaginative learning experiences which arouse and sustain children's interest, and which encourage a variety of responses;
- Provision of appropriate resources e.g. simplified challenges for recording written work, or pictures to use as stimulus;
- Teacher's response and questioning;
- Adaption of the curriculum to enable all pupils to access the RE curriculum according to need.

The teaching of RE across EYFS, KS1 and KS2

At St. Philip's, we follow the Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for the teaching of RE. RE is taught in single year groups in KS1 and in mixed year groups on a cycle A/B programme in KS2, except Year 6.

EYFS: EYFS units

Year 1: Year 1 units

Year 2: Year 2 units

In KS2, there is mixed year group teaching.

Class Marsden: Year 3/ Year 4 (Cycle A/B programme)

Class Towneley: Year 4/ Year 5 (Cycle A/B programme)

Class Wycoller: Year 6 (Year 6 units)

*The 3-year cycle ensures that none of our children will be taught the same unit for second time in another year group due to mixed age classes.

Resources

Many resources for RE are found in the environment and in other areas of the curriculum within school. We have appropriate topic related resources which are specific to RE throughout school. We subscribe to NATRE which gives teachers the opportunity to engage with up to date information and online resources.

Pupil Progress & Assessment

By using the syllabus "Questful RE" provided by Blackburn Diocese, we hope that we will provide both continuity and progression for the children across all strands of Reception and across both key stages. Although subjects such as Christmas and Easter may be visited many times during a child's time in school, each time a different approach will be used, and a slightly different area covered, so that progression can be seen in the quality and depth of learning. Evidence of the work done in RE will be found in the children's RE books, class floor book, on wall displays, in collective worship, and in the way both children and adults treat and respect each other.

Equal Opportunities (2010 Equalities Act)

As with all other subjects in our curriculum, the school aims to give all children, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, social and cultural background, religion or disability, sexual orientation, equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life.

The policy for Religious Education aims to ensure the provision of equal opportunities for all, stressing the entitlement of all children to a well-balanced, differentiated RE curriculum, with the exception of those pupils who are withdrawn from these activities by their parents on religious or moral grounds.

The contribution of RE to Christian and British Values

At Nelson St Philip's CE Primary School, British Values are embedded throughout school life. The Christian value of Love (1 John 4:16) 'God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.' links in well with our school vision:

We love to learn. We learn to love. With Christ as our Guide, we love and learn together.

Living out our vision, we aim to:

Guide our children to prepare them for life; Respect themselves and one another; Aspire to achieve their highest potential; Care for the local and wider community; Every child is special in God's eyes.

Active promotion of our vision and values, throughout all aspects of our education and wider school life, make them key parts of our distinctive character. British values are regularly promoted through high quality teaching and assistance across the curriculum, within our Collective Worship, and by our positive behaviour policy, allowing pupils to develop and demonstrate the skills and attributes.

Through this, we ensure that the initial footsteps are in place for a positive and prosperous life within the ever-changing society of Modern Britain.

Democracy:

'And they judged the people at all times. Any hard case they brought to Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves. Exodus 18:26'

This value is embedded in School life as the 'voice' of each child is highly valued and respected in the wider school environment. As educators we actively listen to all the children but also instil an understanding of respect within the children to also listen to the teacher and fellow pupils. To reinforce the value of Democracy the School council is actively supported by the entire teaching staff giving the children an opportunity to be heard and see a real change within the school environment. Elections to the school council and eco- council members are completely based on pupil votes, giving the children a chance to experience political life through manifestos, elections and signing an agreement of how they will behave and support all the student body.

Rule of Law:

The overall importance of laws and other rules, regardless of level of influence, is consistently reinforced and encouraged at Nelson St Philip's CE Primary School. At the beginning of the school year all classes sit down and discuss the code of conduct for their classrooms to make sure they are relevant and understood by all, however they are also taught that there is a responsibility to each of the rights given by the classroom rules that they must follow. They are taught this so that they can uphold them and understand why there are consequences when the code of conduct is broken.

'For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. Romans 2:13'

Overall to follow and maintain these rules they are taught the importance of right and wrong and how this works within school working with our Christian values but also later along their path into the future.

Mutual Respect:

Respect is one of the key Christian, school and life values that we support and actively encourage with all the children throughout their learning journey. We believe, at Nelson St Philip's CE Primary School that Respect is and should be deeply embedded in both learning and behaviour of all members of our school society.

By making this a key component throughout the academic and social learning process we believe that children learn that their character is judged on the way they act and treat others and is also linked directly to the Christian ethos of the school.

'But you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord. Leviticus 19:18'

As a result, we teach the children that all members of the community must treat each other with respect that they rightfully deserve. We encourage the children to show respect and

understanding of other cultures, heritages and points of view, within home, school and the wider world, as well as a key need to care for the outside environment.

Individual Liberty:

‘Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.

Proverbs 28:6’

At Nelson St Philip’s CE Primary School, we fully encourage and support the children to make their own choices. We provide a safe and caring environment which allows the children to develop their ability to make choices that benefit themselves and others within and outside the school environment. We endeavour to help children to identify and recognize when bad choices have been made and what solutions can be made to rectify the issues. We do this through a variety of mediums, for examples, PSHE and RE lessons, following our school and Christian values of love, empathy, respect and courage and to create the classroom conducts so they know and can exercise their rights but also learn what responsibilities go with the rights and many more.

Tolerance of those with different Faiths and Beliefs:

Key Christian concepts and values are a key building block of Nelson St Philip’s CE Primary School and the understanding and celebration of other faiths, cultures, philosophies and beliefs only work to bolster and support tolerance within our school society.

‘With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’ Ephesians 4:2-3

In embedding this tolerance throughout the academic and social education of the children we believe that it promotes diversity and understanding and is a fundamental to this British value and with this encourage love and respect to all who come to Nelson St Philip’s CE Primary School no matter who they are.

Overall at Nelson St Philip’s CE Primary we use the 5 key British Values as part of the major building blocks of our entire school society and a major footprint in our learning journey. We endeavour to reinforce an appreciation of British Values intertwined with our own school and Christian values to further enrich and benefit your children for now and further on in their learning journey, continuing on into later life. They are taught to relish the opportunity given to them and are taught this at an age appropriate level, so that they understand that these key rights and responsibilities are not universal. To be born in a country full of opportunity and fair systems that are afforded due to these British Values should in still a true sense of pride and joy.

‘Rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Thessalonians 5:16-18’

Further information can be found within the following documents:

Prevent Strategy • Teachers Standards • Equality Act 2010 Advice for Schools

Parental Rights of Withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by Nelson St Philip’s CE Primary School is in accordance with the Church of England. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England or Methodist Church ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.

If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

Parents may request the governing body to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing body **will** make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing body be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

Review and Development of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the RE Subject Leader team including the RE Governor, the Headteacher and Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body, to ensure that:

- It is contributing to the achievements of high standards and progress in RE throughout the school
- It complies with statutory requirements and any new legislation;
- Any necessary actions are included in the School Improvement Plan.