



**Ivington C of E
Primary and
Pre-school**

*Reaching together with the Fruit of the
Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)*

Religious Education Policy

Approval of the Governing Body

This document is a statement of the aims, principles, and strategies for:

Teaching Religious Education

At

Ivington C.E. (VA) Primary and Pre-school.

It was revised during the:

Spring Term 2024

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body.

We aim to review this policy during the:

Spring Term 2027

Or sooner if necessary.



Linking with our Vision – Reaching together with Love, Joy and Peace (Galatians 5:22-23)

To provide a caring, Christian ethos for the school, which inspires and excites a shared enthusiasm for life and learning.

At Ivington CE Primary and Pre-school, through our strong Christian ethos and focus on nine important Christian values, we are committed to providing a deeply nourishing, spiritual, ambitious, and broad curriculum.

Our motto, 'Reaching together' underpins our belief in equality of opportunity for all, where we actively endeavour to promote understanding and appreciation of our diverse society and give each child a special place in the world where they feel valued, essential to our community and equipped with the necessary skills to make a positive contribution.

We perceive our role to be opening a 'Window on the World', through which our pupils are actively encouraged to develop respect for the beliefs and cultures which enrich their everyday lives and encourage others to do likewise.

We strive to eliminate inequality through our deep Christian ethos of respect and understanding of all groups in society, which ensures that everyone at Ivington will be treated fairly despite his or her creed, colour, disability, or gender.

More details are available in our Inclusion, Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities policies.

The health, safety, and welfare of all the people who work or learn at our school are therefore of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure, and pleasant working environment for everyone. The governing body, along with the LA, takes responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of all children and members of staff.

R.E. in Herefordshire

Religious Education has a unique place as a subject in the national Curriculum. It is part of the basic curriculum for all learners in maintained schools alongside National Curriculum subjects, yet it is the only one in which what is taught is decided locally.

Religious Education can make a unique contribution to the outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters' document.

RE encourages children to be healthy through:

- Exploring what it means to respect the body while reflecting on religious beliefs.
- Encouraging a healthy mind through activities such as stilling, reflection, prayer.
- Encouraging a positive self image by enabling personal reflection.
- Enabling the consideration of teachings from the faiths regarding drugs.

RE encourages children to stay safe by:

- Giving opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination.
- Giving opportunities to consider rules and principles that guide.
- Helping them to consider who it is safe or wise to be influenced by.
- Reflecting on the value of security gained from family life.
- Encouraging them to be increasingly able to take responsibility.

RE encourages children to enjoy and achieve by:

- Providing a rigorous, challenging, good quality curriculum that enables pupils to learn about themselves.
- Encountering living faith through e.g. visits and visitors.
- Setting clear and challenging standards and assessment criteria.
- Creating an 'inclusive' RE curriculum that inspires all pupils.

RE encourages children to make a positive contribution by:

- Enabling pupils to explore the concepts of identity, community and belonging.
- Encourages pupils to evaluate the influence of religious rules and codes for living.
- Giving opportunities to consider the nature of 'being human'.
- Enabling pupils to express their own views and ideas.
- Encouraging open mindedness in handling questions to which pupils have different answers.

RE encourages children to achieve economic wellbeing by:

- Experiencing a curriculum that will allow them to grow and develop into individuals prepared for working life.
- Giving opportunities to consider and sometimes challenge the meaning of 'economic wellbeing' and faith responses to wealth.
- Encourages pupils to continue exploring religious and spiritual issues that lead to life long learning.

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people.

At Ivington C.E. Primary School we aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a sound knowledge not only of Christianity but also of other world religions and main faiths that are represented in our society today.

Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn from religions as well as about religions.

Aims of Religious Education

The principle 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 ideas and ways of living.

The threefold aim of R.E. elaborates the principle aims of Religious Education which inform the programmes of study taught through the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus:

Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain, and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary.
- explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities.
- recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation.

Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways.
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices, and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses.
- challenge the ideas studied and allow the ideas studies to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values, and commitments clearly in response.
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding.

The legal requirements for Religious Education

Religious education must be taught to all registered learners in maintained schools.

“Religious education should be provided for all registered pupils except for those withdrawn at the request of their parents. This will include school children in reception class...” (The Education Act 2002)

Religious education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools.

Religious education must be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus – a syllabus that “must not be designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious beliefs on pupils.”.

The parents who choose to withdraw their children from R.E. will be expected to have given written notice to the school governors.

The Religious Education curriculum forms an essential part of our school’s spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the Herefordshire LA’s Agreed Syllabus. It meets all the requirements set out in that document and takes into account our Denominational Status and traditions. It is supported by the ‘Understanding Christianity’ resource, with which the headteacher and many other staff members have undergone training on.

Our R.E. syllabus reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, but, at the same time, takes into account the teachings and practices of the other major religions.

Our syllabus is designed to enable children to reflect upon the mysteries of life and to recognise the significance of awe and wonder in religious belief.

Links with the church

- Pupils attend Ivington and The Priory church for acts of worship several times a year for all of the major Christian festivals.
- Pupils also visit the church to explore and study the building, its artefacts, and symbols.
- Several church members are governors of the school and other church members come into school regularly as classroom helpers to work with children.
- The headteacher attends church regularly on a Sunday and is a member of the PCC.
- There are occasionally opportunities for the school to extend its links with the wider church community by attending services and workshops at Hereford Cathedral.
- Our school has a strong partnership, funded through the Leominster Deanery link with Tengeru, with Ambureni Primary School in Tanzania.
- Our school maintains close links with the Diocese of Hereford, especially the Education team.

Teaching and learning style

We base our teaching and learning style in R.E. on the key principle that good teaching in R.E. allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them and to learn from them.

Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the R.E. curriculum.

Our teaching and learning styles in R.E. enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions.

We use the experiences of religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Passover etc. to develop their religious thinking.

We organize visits to places of worship and invite representatives of religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

Children carry out research into religious topics.

They study particular religious faiths and also compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals.

Children discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups.

Sometimes, they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies and services.

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks).
- grouping the children by both ability and mixed ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group.
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

Curriculum planning in Religious Education

Please read in conjunction with our curriculum progression plans for the teaching of religious education.

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Herefordshire LA's Agreed Syllabus and the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit. We endeavour to ensure that progression is built into the scheme of work and that it offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. Our planning ensures that the three aspects central to any religion are covered.

Beliefs of its adherents and the ways in which the beliefs are manifested in Practices of the faiths and expressed in Lifestyles, values, and moral standpoints of believers.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term, and short-term).

The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage (progression planning). The RE subject co-ordinator works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each ½ term. The R.E. subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. As we have mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a three-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the Agreed Syllabus, but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. They keep these individual plans and discusses them on an informal basis with the R.E. subject leader.

Religions to be taught

Christianity is to be taught as the predominant religion. We also take into account the beliefs, viewpoints and ideas of children and their families.

EYFS: Christianity and aspects of other principle religions.

KS1 (Y1/2/3): Christianity, plus Islam and Judaism.

KS2 (Y4/5/6): Christianity, plus Hinduism, Judaism and Islam and comparing and contrasting beliefs and traditions from different religions, as well as Non-religious world beliefs.

The programmes of study are designed to enable pupils not only to learn about and understand religious beliefs, practices, and lifestyles but also to respond through reflection on their own experience to the insights and teachings of these faiths. This reflection on beliefs, practices, lifestyles, moral values, and ultimate questions, is as important as the development of knowledge and understanding of religions.

Foundation Stage

We teach Religious Education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

In reception classes, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the Religious Education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals that underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Pre-School

In Pre-School, we start with things that are familiar to the children and provide lots of hands-on activities. We always build on children's interests and enthusiasms as well as their learning and development needs, themes are developed accordingly. Such themes may include special times, special people and special places.

Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Also, preparing a text for presentation to an audience. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education. The children find, select, and analyse information using the internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs, and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching Religious Education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development.

Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives. We strive to give our pupils the chance to develop their capacity to reflect on what they have seen or heard at all times, and to give them the opportunities to experience spirituality and develop self-knowledge.

Teaching Religious Education to children with Special Needs

In our school we teach R.E. to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of R.E. is a vital part of our school curriculum policy and the whole ethos of our church school, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching R.E. we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Equal Opportunities

Teachers should enable pupils to begin to develop some sensitive understanding of matters relating to gender, race, other cultures, and differences between people in respect of their abilities. Such understanding should be approached within the context of perspectives which religious education brings to it and in particular, of the notion of equal worth of all people.

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in Religious Education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the levels of attainment. We use these as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The R.E. subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in R.E. in each year of the school.

Resources

We have resources in our school to be able to teach all our Religious Education teaching units. These resources are steadily being added to in order to improve our delivery of the curriculum and to enrich the experiences we can offer to our children. We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store. There are sets of bibles for both key stages and a collection of religious artefacts. We have a good supply of R.E. topic books and some computer software to support the children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

The R.E. subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The R.E. subject leader aims to carry out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.