



# Religious Education Policy

## Introduction

St. Michael's is a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School in the Diocese of St. Asaph and Religious Education occupies a special place in our school. Religious Education is part of the whole educational experience that helps pupils make sense of themselves, their own experience and the world in which they live.

As St. Michael's is a Voluntary Aided School, both Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship must be provided in accordance with the stipulations of the Trust Deed. We follow the Church in Wales Syllabus which has been endorsed by the Bench of Bishops of the Church in Wales. Families who send their children to this school are in the main Christian, but we do have some children from families with no formal church links or religious beliefs. RE is concerned with learning about religions and learning from religion. It is a legal requirement that Religious Education is taught unless a parent makes a written request to the Headteacher for a child to be withdrawn.

Christian beliefs are lived through the ideals of humility, love, peace, unselfishness, patience and joy. These ideals will be reflected in the everyday life of the school through the feasts, festivals, rites, practices and teachings of the Church in Wales. We believe at this school that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child (spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually) is reflected in the RE curriculum.

## Aims

We aim to provide opportunities to:

- acquire and develop an understanding of Christianity and its practice by the Anglican Church in Wales
- contribute to the pupil's own spiritual development as each one searches for meaning and answers to life's ultimate questions
- develop the pupil's ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religious, spiritual and moral questions and to apply these insights
- enable pupils to appreciate and value the contribution of Christianity and the Church in Wales to the Welsh cultural heritage
- acquire an appreciation of, and sensitivity towards, other world faiths
- understand the values, attitudes, and lifestyles that Christian faith demands and the effect of faith on relationships and responsibilities in the wider community, the family, among friends and in the school

## Attitudes

These are implied in the whole organisation and ethos of the school. However, RE has a particular role to play. Many attitudes we want the children to develop are exemplified in the life and teaching of Jesus. These need to be related to the children's own experience so that they can develop a much more "internal" understanding of themselves.

- Attitude to self: the uniqueness and equal value of every person before God and His love for each one of us
- Attitudes to others: an appreciation and acceptance of others, sensitivity to their needs, respect for their views
- Attitude to the physical world: respect and care for the environment as God's creation
- Wonder and awe: God's gifts, God's purpose for us, a reverence for life
- Attitude to learning: a curiosity to know more, to understand better, a determination to realise potential. A growing responsibility for our work, a sense of satisfaction and achievement

The emphasis for RE is Christianity, as practised through the Anglican faith. We recognise however, that as children are growing up in an increasingly multicultural society, they should learn about and develop an awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures. Therefore, some aspects of the practices and beliefs of Judaism, Islam and Sikhism are taught alongside Christianity (see Scheme of Work). The faith background of staff and children is respected at all times. Visitors from other faiths will be welcomed into the school.

### **Skills**

- To think and act responsibly
- To ask questions
- To examine evidence and make judgements
- To respond sensitively to the needs of others

### **Experience**

It is important to give the children a range of experiences which will help their religious understanding, such as:

- Church visits
- Preparation for church services with parents, e.g. Harvest, Easter and Christingle
- Studying the Bible and other Christian writings
- The presentation of Bible stories
- Reflective Area in each classroom
- Role play
- Use of a school Prayer Space
- Participation in Anglican church services
- Visits from clergy, to deepen understanding of the role of the priest in both the church and wider community
- Learning about the celebrations relating to major Christian festivals
- Learning about the practices and beliefs of those of other faiths (Judaism and Islam)
- Learning about the historical contribution of the Welsh church to Welsh culture and the role of the Early Welsh Saints.

### **Knowledge**

The areas of knowledge through which children acquire their religious understanding and skills and attitudes are contained in the six themes set out in the scheme of work. These are: Bible, Jesus, Church, Christian Life and Values, Festivals, Other Faiths.

The time allocation for RE is 5% of teaching time, which equates roughly to 1 hour a week in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 1 classes and 1.5 hours a week in Key Stage 2.

### **Skills**

The new R.E. Core skills are referred to in planning both in R.E. and in other curricular areas.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children will be given access to the RE curriculum regardless of gender, ability (including gifted pupils) ethnic origin and social circumstances and be given opportunities to make the greatest possible progress.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The school will ensure that the children with SEN have full access to the RE curriculum at their own level of achievement.

### **Resources**

It is the responsibility of the RE co-ordinator to ensure that adequate resources are available for the successful implementation of the scheme of work for RE in the school. R.E. resources are continuously assessed and updated, with funding from the school budget and grants such as The

Archbishop Rice-Jones Trust. Resources such as teachers' books, photo-packs, videos ,DVD's and CD Roms etc are kept in the staffroom, bibles are kept with the school reading scheme books while books, artefacts, Godly Play items and other faith resources are stored in the Ystafell Fach. Each teacher has a list of resources available, divided into topics according to the R.E. scheme.

In addition, St Michael's Church is also used as a valuable learning resource.

Co-ordinator: Mrs Rendall