



DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER
ACADEMY TRUST

Religious Education Policy

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Type of Policy:	DCAT Statutory Policy

Revision Number	Date Issued	Prepared by	Approved	Personalised by school	Comments
1	6.12.21	Nikki Bowen		NB	St James' RE Policy converted to DCAT Policy format.

Type of Policy	Tick ✓
DCAT Statutory Policy	
DCAT Non-statutory Policy	
DCAT Model Optional Policy	
Academy Policy	✓
Local Authority Policy	

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Introduction

St James' CE Primary Academy

Our vision:

Learning as a family in Jesus, through Love, Hope and Forgiveness.

Matthew 19:26 “with God all things are possible.”

The Purpose:

To provide an engaging, relevant education within a Christian environment, where everyone flourishes academically, socially, physically, morally, emotionally and spiritually.

Our Christian Values are: **LOVE, HOPE and FORGIVENESS.**

Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust

Our **vision** for our Trust is we exist to:

Help every child achieve their God-given potential

Our **aims** are clear. We aim to be a Trust in which:

Developing the whole child means pupils achieve and maximise their potential

Continued development of staff is valued and improves education for young people

All schools are improving and perform above national expectations

The distinct Christian identity of each academy develops and is celebrated

Our work as a Trust is underpinned by shared **values**. They are taken from the Church of England's vision for Education and guide the work of Trust Centre team. They are:

Aspiration

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
(Philippians 4 vs 13).

Wisdom

Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise
(Proverbs 19 vs 20)

Respect

So in everything do to others what you would have them do to you
(Matthew 7 vs 12)

Our vision of helping every child achieve their God-given potential is aligned with the Church of England's vision for education and is underpinned by the Bible verse from John: *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

1. Policy Aims

Aims:

The aims of Religious Education at St. James' CE Primary Academy are:

- ❖ To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as a 'living religion' that has shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- ❖ To impact on the pupils' understanding and development of Christian and British values
- ❖ To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- ❖ To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for the expression of truth
- ❖ To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs
- ❖ For children to enjoy Religious Education and be enabled to speak about religious ideas and faith
- ❖ To encourage young people to value themselves & the communities within which they live.

Definition:

The purpose of Religious Education (RE) is to support the development of children's values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This entails enabling children to interpret and respond to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions and to their own and others' cultural and life experiences. This takes the form of encountering religious stories, festivals, artefacts, places of worship, rituals and beliefs.

2. Key headlines

Vision for RE:

St James' CE Primary Academy is a member of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust, and RE is therefore considered a core subject. As a church academy, we promote an ethos where all are valued, and in our family atmosphere, all contributions are encouraged. Our RE enables pupils to gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings, practices and beliefs expressed in a variety of ways within Christianity and other principal religions and world views. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others.

Why is RE important?

Religious Education has never been more relevant, engaging or challenging as religion & religious issues are in the news every day. For pupils to be able to understand our constantly changing world they need to be able to interpret religious issues & evaluate their significance. From the pupils first day at school RE gives students valuable insights into the diverse beliefs & opinions held by people today. It helps with their own personal development & supports an understanding of the spiritual, moral, social & cultural questions that surface again & again in their lives. In tackling difficult questions it provides pupils with insight that can work to challenge stereotypes, promote cohesion, and tackle extremism. RE does important work encouraging young people to value themselves & the communities within which they live.

Religious Education:

- ❖ Is relevant for all children, whatever their religion or beliefs
- ❖ Teaches understanding of world religions and beliefs
- ❖ Shows how religion influences individuals, families, communities and cultures
- ❖ Explores the political and social impact of religion
- ❖ Encourages reflection on issues of justice and truth
- ❖ Provokes questions about the meaning of life
- ❖ Offers opportunities for personal reflection
- ❖ Develops and affirms personal identity and responsible citizenship
- ❖ Prepares children for adult life.

RE can help:

- ❖ Promote respect for self and others
- ❖ Contribute to an understanding of history and culture
- ❖ Enhance our understanding of global affairs
- ❖ Develop personal well-being and happiness
- ❖ Safeguard ethical standards in public life
- ❖ Generate social and community cohesion
- ❖ Tackle extremism and religious discrimination.

In RE pupils learn about:

- ❖ What people believe
- ❖ How people show their beliefs in their daily lives
- ❖ How people explain what they believe & understand using symbols & stories,

This helps children & young people to:

- ❖ Make sense of who they are
- ❖ To have opportunity to have their views challenged
- ❖ Make sense of life
- ❖ Make sense of right & wrong
- ❖ To develop tolerance and respect for other people's beliefs
- ❖ To develop their critical view
- ❖ To be better informed citizens.

How is RE taught?

- ❖ Pictures & photographs
- ❖ From text books and religious scriptures
- ❖ Artefacts
- ❖ Visits to places of worship
- ❖ Visitors
- ❖ Displays.

Children learn through:

- ❖ Discussion
- ❖ Asking & answering questions
- ❖ Sharing their knowledge & experiences
- ❖ Written work
- ❖ Presentations
- ❖ ICT.

Principles of teaching and learning - The RE Curriculum:

RE at St. James' CE Primary Academy, is taught following the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV and the resource, Understanding Christianity. With due regard to the National Society Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education and the values of the academy, 5-10% of curriculum time is devoted to RE and taught by the class teacher. Learning activities addressing both learning about and learning from religion in an enquiry/concept based programme. RE can be taught as either weekly lessons or in blocked units as appropriate. Decisions on which approach would be most appropriate should be made by individual teachers, in consultation with the RE leader, depending on the topic for each half term or whole school topic. Whole-school 'RE days' (e.g. to highlight special times in the liturgical year) raise the profile of Religious Education further still, allowing for opportunities to pursue focused cross-curricular links and embed Religious Education in the life, values and ethos of the academy.

Each unit of work is 'concept' led, making reference to children's own experiences and thoughts. All year groups will be taught aspects of Christianity with a focus on certain Christian celebrations and pupils will also explore a variety of other faiths, in a fair-minded enquiry approach.

Subject Leader:

The subject leader, Nikki Bowen, is responsible for the monitoring of RE throughout the school. This includes book monitoring, lesson observations, analysis of data and staff and pupil voice

opportunities. The subject leader also has a 3 year subject action plan. For further responsibilities see roles and responsibilities document.

Teaching and Learning:

In each year group, children continue to develop their understanding of the Christian faith, as well as learning about and from one of the other three major world faiths: Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Guidance on planning can be found in the subject leader folder and in the agreed syllabus. This planning takes account of the progression of skills required to show progress.

In KS1 pupils study Christianity and Hinduism.

In LKS2 pupils study Christianity and Judaism.

In UKS2 pupils study Christianity and Islam.

RE in the Foundation Stage is exciting and mysterious. Children are exposed to religious material to stimulate their curiosity, challenge them to ask questions, feed their imaginations and bring them to a sense of wonder. Children celebrate diversity, the language and religion of children, religion in the community and religious story. Teaching is supported in line with the rest of the school using units from the Living Difference IV syllabus and the Understanding Christianity resource. These align to aspects of 'Understanding the World' and specifically 'People, Culture and Communities' (EYFS Framework, September 2021). Where possible, links are made between RE and other areas of learning, to provide a holistic approach, as children work towards the Early Learning Goals.

This is taught as per the below curriculum overview for the year;



St. James' Church of England Primary Academy R.E. coverage 2021-2022

	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
TERM 1	Wonderful World Context – Creation Resource – UC Enquiry question Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	Thankfulness Context – Creation Resource – UC Enquiry question Who made the world?	Looking after the World Context – Creation Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question Who made the world?	Creation Context – Creation/Fall Resource – UC Enquiry question What do Christians learn from the creation story?	Promises Context – People of God Resource – UC Enquiry question What is it like to follow God?	Belonging Context – Salat Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What does it mean to be Muslim today?	Gospel Context – Gospel Resource – UC Enquiry question What would Jesus do?
TERM 2	Celebrating Birthdays Context – Incarnation Resource – UC Enquiry question Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas?	Getting ready Context – Incarnation Resource – UC Enquiry question Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Getting ready Context – Incarnation Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Identity Context – Hanukkah Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question Why do Jews celebrate Hanukkah?	Light and Darkness Context – Incarnation Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question What does it mean to call Jesus The Light of the World?	Messiah Context – Incarnation Resource – UC Enquiry question Was Jesus the Messiah?	Interpretation Context – The Two Birth Narratives Resource – Living Difference Enquiry question Why are there different versions of the Christmas story?
TERM 3	Celebrating new life Context – Creation Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question How do Christians celebrate New Life?	Precious Context – Water Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question How is water used as a symbol?	Light Context – Light as a symbol Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question How is light used as a symbol?	Remembering Context – Passover Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What do Jews remember at Passover?	Authority Context – Torah Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question Why is the Torah important to Jews?	God Context – God Resource – UC Enquiry question What does it mean if God is Holy and loving?	Science and Religion Context – Creation/fall Resource – UC Enquiry question Creation and science: conflicting or complimentary?

	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
TERM 4 Easter	Celebrating new life Context – Salvation Resource – UC Enquiry question Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?	Sad and Happy Context – Salvation Resource – UC and Living Difference III Enquiry question Why does Easter matter to Christians?	Sad and Happy Context – Salvation Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question Why does Easter matter to Christians?	Easter Context – Salvation Resource – UC Enquiry question Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?	Pentecost Context – Kingdom of God Resource – UC Enquiry question When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	Kingdom of God Context – Kingdom of God Resource – UC Enquiry question What kind of King is Jesus?	Resurrection Context – Salvation Resource – UC Enquiry question What difference does the Resurrection make for Christians?
TERM 5	Power Context – Ganesh Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question Why is Ganesh important to Hindus?	Forgiveness Context – God Resource – UC Enquiry question What do Christians believe God is like?	Remembering Context – Baisakha Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What do Hindus celebrate at Baisakha?	Trinity Context – Incarnation Resource – UC Enquiry question What is the Trinity?	Thankfulness Context – Shavout Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What do Jews celebrate at Shavout?	Freedom Context – People of God Resource – UC Enquiry question How can following God bring freedom and justice?	Peace Context – Peace in Islam Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What do Muslims believe about peace?
TERM 6	Remembering Context – Janmashthami (Krishna's Birthday) Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question How do Hindus celebrate Krishna's Birthday?	Creation stories Context – Hinduism – stories Hindu children hear Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question What do Hindus believe about Creation?	Good News Context – Gospel Resource – UC Enquiry question What is the good news that Jesus brings?	Love your neighbour Context – Gospel Resource – UC Enquiry question What kind of world did Jesus want?	Creation Context – Creation/Fall Resource – UC – GD level. Enquiry question What do Christians learn from the creation story?	Concept – Umma Context – Community Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question Why is Community important to Muslims?	Concept – Ritual Context – Eid-ul-Fitr (celebration marking end of Ramadan) Resource – Living Difference III Enquiry question Why do Muslims celebrate Eid ul Fitr?

Christianity unit	Second religion
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Nikki Bowen – May 2021 (Updated with DCAT terms September 2021)

The subject is taught in accordance with the academy's teaching and learning policies and a number of strategies are used to enable us to cover all styles of learning. These include:

- ❖ Exploiting cross-curricular links wherever possible
- ❖ RE is taught creatively using mediums such as drama, music, art and literacy
- ❖ Good use is made of Computing to develop learning in RE
- ❖ A mix of whole-class, group and individual approaches
- ❖ Mixed ability or ability grouping where appropriate.

Wherever possible, we use first-hand experience as a stimulus for learning. We encourage children to question the stories to deepen their own understanding of the concept being studied. We encourage children to form opinions through discussion and debate.

The school has good links with St James' Parish, where visits for worship and learning are carefully planned to ensure that all children have a quality experience. Outside visitors also contribute to the teaching of RE at St James'.

Recording - Pupils have a dedicated RE book that moves up through the academic years with them. The work is used to inform teachers' assessment and therefore subsequent planning. Every child has a front cover added to their book at the start of a new section of learning, which enables them to understand the cycle of enquiry and have space to keep notes on their learning. Each book also has the building blocks document to support teachers in providing appropriate feedback and next steps for learning.

Inclusion - RE is taught through a range of learning strategies that enable children of all learning styles to achieve. In order to meet the needs of all pupils, work is differentiated appropriately. In line with our family ethos, all pupils, regardless of background, are offered the opportunity to express their beliefs and opinions in a safe and supportive environment.

Enrichment - Where possible, links are made to other curriculum areas and visits are planned to enhance the provision of RE. In addition, visitors from the community are invited to our school to participate in RE lessons. We also have access to a number of religious artefacts and these are stored in school.

Progression and standards:

The RE leader provides long-term planning and individual teaching staff are responsible for the short-term planning of each unit of work to suit the individual needs of the class. Support from the RE leader is always available if needed.

Monitoring of RE teaching, discussion with learners, work scrutiny and moderation will take place by the RE leader regularly. The Local Governing Body will also have oversight of this process. The aim of any monitoring is to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning and assessment leads to an improvement in the performance of learners across the school.

Teachers will assess RE progress and record on Target Tracker. RE data (assessed regularly) will be analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of attainment, progress and how well gaps are narrowing for different groups of learners. Pupil achievement in RE should be equal or better than comparable subjects. Children's attainment in RE is reported to parents on a termly basis and their progress commented upon annually in written reports. Pupil achievements and learning in Religious Education are celebrated in regularly updated whole-school and class displays in both the classroom and corridors as appropriate.

Responsibilities for RE within school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- ❖ all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- ❖ the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- ❖ those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- ❖ teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese and other providers to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- ❖ teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- ❖ clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- ❖ RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The legal position of RE at St. James':

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

In a Church of England Academy, such as St. James', the requirements for Religious Education are specified in the funding agreement for the academy. For a VA school that converts to academy status the model funding agreement specifies that an academy with a religious designation must provide RE in accordance with the tenets of the particular faith specified in the designation.

Religious Education is central to the church's understanding of education and mission. 'The National Society Statement of Entitlement' outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England School.

- ❖ To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage.
- ❖ To enable pupils to know and understand about other major 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.

At the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and able to:

- ❖ Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living world 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.

Parental right of withdrawal:

In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the teaching of parts of or entire RE lessons. In order to avoid misunderstanding, any parent wishing to withdraw their child may arrange a meeting with the Principal in order to discuss any issues. Requests to withdraw children from RE on the basis of prejudice toward specific religions rather than for reasons related to personal faith commitment should be reported to the Trust via the Academies Officer and logged.

It should be noted that when spontaneous enquiries relating to religion and spiritual issues are raised in other areas of the curriculum, these cannot constitute RE within the meaning of the legislation and a parent could not reasonably insist on a child being withdrawn at such times.

Managing the right of withdrawal:

- ❖ The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- ❖ Parents should be made aware of the learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- ❖ The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- ❖ The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- ❖ Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- ❖ Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- ❖ If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Appendix:

SIAMS Revised Evaluation Schedule

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/SIAMS%20Revised%20Evaluation%20Schedule%20%28September%202021%29.pdf>