

# ALDERMAN COGAN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY ACADEMY



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Alderman Cogan's is a Voluntary Aided, Church of England Primary School offering a comprehensive Christian primary education to families in East Hull.

The School is a caring community built on Christian values and beliefs, which permeate all aspects of School life. The curriculum, including the National Curriculum, is presented within a Christian world view. Such a world view gives perspective and meaning to all learning at Alderman Cogan's. The school follows the York Diocesan Primary RE Syllabus 2013 alongside the Understanding Christianity project which aims to see pupils leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice. Pupils from 4-14 explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.

We seek to foster the God given talents and gifts amongst children, staff and governors for the service of each other, the school, the wider community and the Glory of God. Our aim is that all children reach their full potential.

This is the context in which this policy is written.

This policy was written in September 2018 and will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2021 or sooner if necessary.

School Mission Statement:

- ⊕ Our school and everyone in it belong to God
- ⊕ We are all 'wonderfully made' by God and loved by Him just as we are
- ⊕ Jesus Christ stands at the centre of all that we do
- ⊕ We will work together to follow His example and seek to be the best people we can be

I think it's important to do RE so that we can respect each other and different religions and make friendships in our lives.

If it is something we believe, we can pass the message on and it can be fun.

KS2 pupil

We need to learn RE because it is about faiths and there are different people with different religions and we need to respect that.

KS2 pupil

We do RE to know that we are not alone – Jesus or God is always with us; it also helps us to make friendships as we get to better understand other faiths.

KS2 pupil

## The legal position of RE in our school

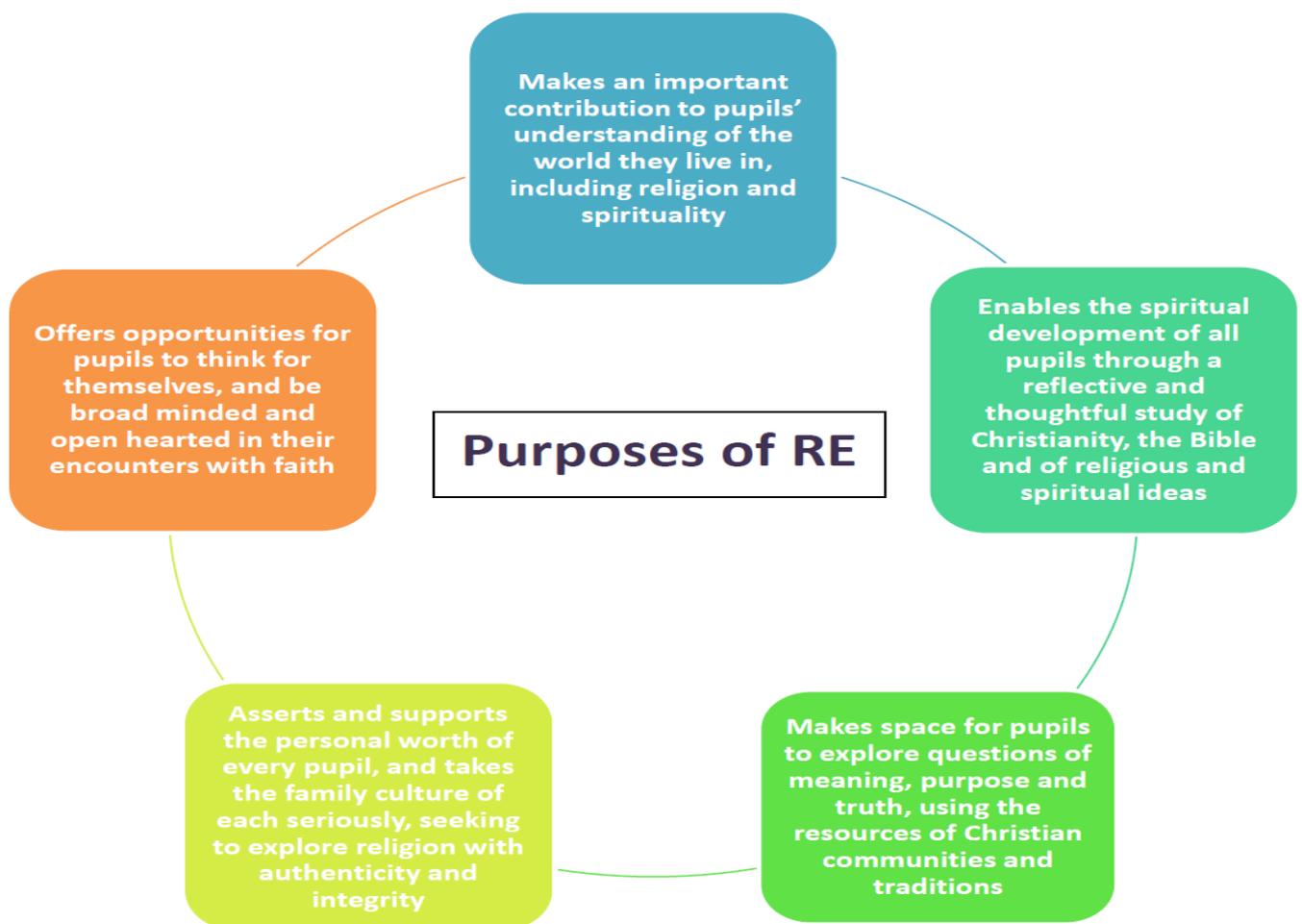
Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject, nor a foundation subject, but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'.

Alderman Cogan's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Diocesan Syllabus.

## Rationale/Aims for teaching RE

In Religious Education at Alderman Cogan's CE Primary School we aim to:

- ➊ enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- ➋ 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
- ➌ develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- ➍ contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs



(from Diocesan Syllabus and Statement of Entitlement)

## **The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to community cohesion:**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'.

Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding. The teaching and learning of RE in our school provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life; reflect on their own and others' identity and their own role as unique, global citizens.

### **Personal development and well-being**

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to be able make positive and healthy choices.

Through our religious education lessons, the children learn about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour as well as learning about and developing personal responsibility. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, to challenge stereotypes and to build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

“At its very best, education should enable the flourishing of all children and young people as they grow into all that God has created them to be. RE plays a crucial role in this flourishing as RE looks at what it is to be human and how we engage well with one another, with the world around us, and ultimately with God. In spite of secularist agendas, religion continues to shape us and our world, and studying RE can give children and young people tools with which to examine beliefs, attitudes and values that mould us and guide us in life.”

**The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Dr John Sentamu**

## **Approaches to teaching RE:**

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching and learning in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. .

RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled. High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning taking into account the need to offer breadth of content. 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, so as to achieve all inclusive teaching and learning.

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including IT, art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, dance, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, visualisation and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

## **Resourcing RE:**

We use the Diocesan Scheme of Work and the Understanding Christianity project as a basis for our planning. As a source of ideas and teaching strategies we also make use of web based resources, including BBC classclips, CLEO and You Tube. We also make good use of RE Today publications and we attend training events to improve our practice. We also have regular in-service training in school, as well as a programme of lesson observations and book scrutiny resulting in opportunities to share good practice and to further enhance the teaching and learning of RE.

## **How RE is organised:**

RE is delivered as part of humanities work in Foundation Stage and as a discrete subject throughout the rest of the school (except where and when it naturally overlaps with another specific subject area) in accordance with the structure of the Diocesan Syllabus. 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, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Class teachers are responsible for the teaching of RE. The units of work are available on the school's learning platform and there is a central resource room, near the library, where additional resources are housed.

At KS 1 pupils study Christianity and Judaism.

At KS 2 pupils study Christianity, Islam and Hinduism and Sikhism.

In addition to one hour per week RE teaching, we also have two Big RE days per year, focusing on either Christmas, Easter or Pentecost (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and one other looking at multi-faiths or diversity within Christianity.

It was really good fun yesterday but what I liked most was the dancing about Jesus and the sculptor.

I never thought that you would do a special day about my religion!

I enjoyed the cooking, but I didn't really like the taste. I didn't know that Sikhs gave away food for free and to feel closer to God.

On the next RE day, I would like to learn about the Garden of Gethsemane and Jesus coming back to life.

## **Assessment and Recording of RE**

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils. Three times a year, at the end of each term, the class teacher will record the level achieved by each pupil and submit this to the assessment co-ordinator and the RE co-ordinator. The level achieved will be used by the co-ordinators to track pupil progress through the school and will be used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging.

A weekly record of work covered is kept by each year group, in addition to a portfolio of work, giving exemplars of the standard expected in each year.

## **Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE and how RE contributes to School Self Evaluation:**

The co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of the assessment data and regular lesson observations and book scrutiny. The RE co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the school self-evaluation process, with the Senior Leadership team and is also a member of the Foundation Values Groups tasked with the ongoing process of compiling the SIAMS Self-Evaluation Document.

## **Responsibilities for RE within the 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 are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

## **The right of Withdrawal from RE**

At Alderman Cogan CE School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience (in accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988). However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at Alderman Cogan CE school. Should they still wish to withdraw their children, then written notice must be given to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors.

**See appendix 1**

## **Teaching religious education to children with special needs**

In our school we recognise the potential in all children (and staff) and RE is accessible to all. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. When teaching RE 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.

## **Appendix 1**

### **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 its 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 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.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.