



St Stephen's
CE Primary School

RE Policy

Date: September 2025

Date of Review: September 2026

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. John 10:10

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 13:34



“Learning, loving and growing; together as God’s children”

Introduction

We are proud to be a nurturing, inclusive, diverse church school at the centre of our community, where all children and staff are encouraged to continue ‘learning, loving and growing; together as God’s children’.

Our Vision

Our vision is about celebrating the uniqueness of every individual, inspiring a lifelong love of learning and experiencing life in all its fullness. It is rooted in John 13:34:

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”

Our school will be a place where:

- everyone feels safe, welcome and valued.
- everyone feels excitement, joy and challenge through developing their God-given gifts to achieve.
- everyone flourishes and excels, grows in character, faith and wisdom and develops hope and aspiration.
- everyone is equipped to move on in their journey with confidence, resilience and motivation.
- In partnership with others we seek to serve and make a valuable contribution to God’s world.

Our Core Christian Values

Thankfulness – Love – Respect – Forgiveness – Kindness – Friendship

Our Trust Values

Inclusion – Compassion – Aspiration – Resilience – Excellence

Introduction

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, we recognise the entitlement of parents for their children to be educated in a school where Christianity is taught in accordance with the school's Trust Deed.

Acknowledging the context in which children in twenty-first century Bury are brought up, we believe it is important to enable pupils to develop a secure and meaningful understanding of Christianity, alongside knowledge and understanding of other religions and non-religious worldviews.

Religious Education enables pupils to explore what people believe and how this influences the way they live, to develop spiritual understanding, and to reflect thoughtfully on values, meaning and purpose, both within the Christian tradition and beyond, in school and in the wider world.

The Legal Position

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' St Stephen's Church of England Primary School 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 Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided in the school. Therefore the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE

The Governors have agreed that at least 5% of our curriculum time is devoted to RE. Also Christianity will play a central role in RE, taking up between two thirds and three quarters of the time allotted. The Governors have also agreed that appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is included.

The Governors recognise that although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, they should be managed separately. Therefore each has a separate policy. The Governors have also created the role of link governor for R.E. and Collective Worship on the governing body. The coordinator s and link governor liaise to discuss various aspects of R.E. and this ensures an effective line of communication.

Learning about Religion

We learn about

- God who reveals 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 through his Spirit, experienced in the living faith of the Church through scripture, tradition and reason, **and how Christians understand and respond to this today.**

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally and reflectively to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which prioritise the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith, **and how these are lived out in practice.**

Religious Education at St Stephen's should help our children to:

- explore theological, philosophical and ethical questions and the challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on Christian belief and practice, **alongside beliefs from other religions and non-religious worldviews;**
- understand how Christian belief and other worldviews influence how people live today;
- understand the challenges faced by people of faith and belief in a pluralist and diverse society;
- develop skills in handling and interpreting religious texts, including the Bible;
- recognise that beliefs and worldviews are based on commitments to particular ways of understanding God, humanity and the world;
- begin to develop and articulate their own beliefs, values and commitments;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and diversity of the Christian community;
- engage in informed, respectful dialogue with people of other faiths and worldviews;
- become active citizens who seek to serve others and contribute positively to society;
- find sources of hope, meaning and purpose in a complex and changing world;
- understand how religious faith and belief can sustain people in difficult circumstances.

It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world that children are encouraged to develop respect for people of different religions and non-

religious worldviews. This respect is rooted in accurate, informed and empathetic understanding.

Therefore, RE at St Stephen's should also help our children to:

- learn about and from other religions and non-religious worldviews through study, encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect people of all faiths and beliefs in their search for meaning and purpose;
- identify areas of similarity and difference between beliefs and practices;
- deepen and broaden understanding while remaining secure in their own developing viewpoints;
- appreciate examples of commitment, service and moral living found in different traditions.

Our Religious Education Curriculum has a distinctive content including:

- opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year;
- study of the story of the local Christian community, including its history and lived faith;
- visits to places of worship, including the local parish church, to develop understanding of faith communities as living communities;
- welcoming visitors from faith communities to share their beliefs, practices and experiences;
- liaison with the local parish and wider faith communities to enable visits and links to occur;
- development of pupils' ability to use appropriate religious vocabulary to express understanding, ideas and opinions;
- access to a range of religious texts, including age-appropriate Bibles, and examples of texts from other faith traditions where appropriate;
- opportunities to listen to and reflect on Christian music, including psalms, hymns and spiritual songs from a range of traditions;
- access to religious artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence;
- spaces that can be used as a focus for prayer, reflection and stillness.

Religious Education at St Stephen's should enable:

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and respectfully about personal beliefs and viewpoints without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make strong and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions and worldviews;
- pupils from Christian families to express and reflect on their beliefs and values;
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to have their beliefs recognised and respected;
- pupils with no religious background to develop understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews;
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe space to explore questions of meaning, belief and purpose in today's society.

RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural development.

Spiritual development within RE in a Church school enriches and encourages pupils' exploration of belief, meaning and purpose, including the Christian understanding of God as Creator, alongside reflection on their own inner lives and the wonder of the world. Moral development is shaped by the teachings of Jesus Christ, which provide a strong foundation for ethical thinking, while also enabling pupils to consider how values and moral choices are informed by other

religions and worldviews.

Social development supports pupils' understanding of what it means to live well together, including within a Christian community shaped by Jesus' command to love one another, and within a diverse society. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multicultural faith, and of the richness and diversity of religious and non-religious traditions that shape life in Britain and beyond.

Teaching and Learning Style

We base our teaching and learning in RE on the principle that effective Religious Education enables pupils to both learn about religions and worldviews and to reflect on what beliefs, ideas and practices mean for people and for themselves. Teaching supports pupils to develop understanding, values and spiritual awareness, and encourages them to think critically and reflectively about their own views in relation to the content studied.

Teaching and learning in RE build on pupils' prior knowledge and experiences and extend their understanding of Christianity, other religions and non-religious worldviews. Learning is supported through the study of religious festivals such as Easter and Passover, visits to places of worship, and engagement with visitors from faith and belief communities.

Pupils research religious and belief topics, study individual traditions in depth, and make comparisons across religions and worldviews, for example in relation to festivals, beliefs or rites of passage. They discuss religious, philosophical and moral questions using a range of approaches, working independently and collaboratively, including through the use of digital technology where appropriate.

We recognise that pupils have differing starting points and needs. Learning opportunities in RE are therefore adapted to ensure all pupils can make progress. This is achieved through:

- setting tasks that are open-ended and allow for a range of responses;
- providing graduated levels of challenge;
- using resources and scaffolds of differing complexity, matched to pupils' needs.

Teaching religious education to children with special educational needs

At our school, Religious Education is taught to all pupils, whatever their ability. Religious Education forms part of a broad and balanced curriculum and provides learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. This is achieved through setting appropriate learning challenges and responding to individual needs through high-quality, adaptive teaching.

Assessment in Religious Education is used to inform teaching and support pupil progress in line with the agreed syllabus. Where progress is a concern, teachers consider a range of factors including classroom organisation, teaching strategies, resources and levels of support, so that provision can be adapted to enable pupils to learn more effectively.

Where pupils have identified special educational needs or disabilities, Religious Education teaching is adapted in line with the SEND Code of Practice. Support may be recorded through individual support plans and, where applicable, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Targets may include relevant aspects of Religious Education where appropriate.

All pupils are enabled to access the full range of Religious Education activities. Where learning takes place outside the classroom, such as visits to places of worship, appropriate risk assessments are carried out to ensure activities are safe, inclusive and accessible for all pupils.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in school to deliver the Religious Education curriculum effectively. Resources are stored centrally and include a range of artefacts and materials to support the teaching of Christianity and other religions and worldviews. Each classroom has access to an age-appropriate Bible within the prayer or reflection area, and class sets of Bibles and New Testament texts are available for use across the school.

The Right of Withdrawal from RE

The Religious Education provided by St Stephen's CE Primary School is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. 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 ethos, removal of pupils from 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 will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation as it may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

RE Co-ordinator: Mrs I Potter

Headteacher: Mrs S Denney

Date: September 2025

Renew date: September 2026