St Paul's CE Primary School

Religious Education Policy

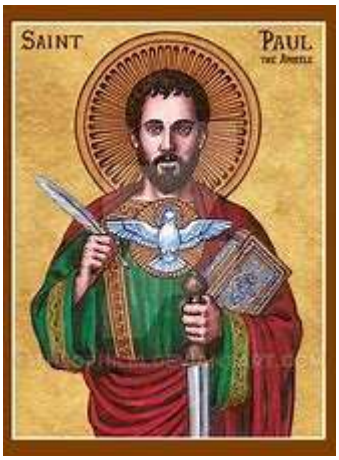
Agreed by Governing Body on:	**22.05.24**
Policy review date:	**May 2026**

Religious Education Policy

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.

Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019).

St Paul's CE Primary School



St Paul's CE Primary School:

St. Paul's School promotes the Christian faith within a warm and loving atmosphere, so that our children achieve their educational goals and fulfil their individual God given potential.

The school will provide education and worship, which promotes the arts, builds on children's talents and respects people of all faiths and cultures.

We celebrate God's love for every child in our school and encourage each child to develop a sense of belonging within the Christian journey, using the creativity and gifts God has given them.

We nurture our children's curiosity about our diverse and wonderful world and foster their sense of global citizenship. We are committed to an ethos of love and inclusion built on the teachings of Jesus Christ, in an environment which embraces everyone and supports the future of our young people, as they progress through and beyond our school.

The community of St Paul's CE Primary School believes that Religious Education is not simply a subject but the foundation of the whole educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Christian religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of our school. St Paul's CE Primary School is a Christian community embracing a positive partnership between the school, home and parish. St Paul's CE Primary School offers its community the opportunity to deepen its relationship with the Father, through His Son, Jesus, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, nurtured through prayer, worship and knowledge of scripture.

At St Paul's CE Primary School, we aim to help all children understand that they are uniquely created and loved by God and are part of a community where each member is valued and respected. Children will be helped to appreciate the richness and diversity of God's wider world and understand what Christians believe and do.

The Christian Ethos of St Paul's CE Primary School

We are a Church of England School. We embrace the Catholic Anglican tradition of all three churches on the school's foundation - St Paul's, St Michael and All Angels', and St Nicholas'. The Christian Ethos of our school permeates all that we do. It is inseparable from our identity and our mission. The Christian life of faith is the driving force behind every activity in the school, appealing to the imagination, touching the heart, nourishing the soul, and governing the life of each and every member of our school community. Only in this way can our children discover the joy of entering into Christ's 'being for others'.

The distinctive nature of our Christian School

We aim to provide a community where the values of the Gospel are made explicit and are witnessed to by all members within it. We have a shared Vision and lived faith as expressed in our Mission Statement, and this is manifest through staff relationships, pupil behaviour, expectations and our dealings with the parents, carers and the wider community. We have an emphasis on personal achievements in order to help support the realisation of potential of all. Through the content and process of our Religious Education teaching, and supported by all other activities in the school, we seek to integrate all life's experience and all learning into an ever-deepening appreciation of Faith in Jesus Christ.

Aims

Our aims are expressed through our mission statement and core values:
WISDOM – We encourage our children to be creative and use the gifts God has given them to grow in wisdom.
HOPE - We will nurture our children's curiosity of the world and its people to have hope, as they flourish and move beyond our school.
COMMUNITY – We will provide a warm and loving atmosphere and teach respect for all people and cultures, to create a welcoming community.
DIGNITY – We will celebrate the unique value of each member of the school, so that all reach their God given potential.

Our aims in RE for all pupils are:

- To help children appreciate and act on the two greatest commandments – 'Love the Lord your God' and 'Love they neighbour as thyself'.
- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking by:
    - Considering the 'big questions' raised by human experience and reflecting on how different religions respond to them.
    - Responding to these questions with reference to religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions, relating them to their own understanding and experience.
    - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study of religious and other traditions.
- To promote interest and enjoyment in Religious Education.
- To deepen children's knowledge and understanding of the Christian Faith, its relevance to the personal search for meaning, purpose, values and its impact on our local community, and on our society today.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery.
- To help each child to develop a sense of their own identity and worth.
- To develop understanding of the nature of moral behaviours, beliefs and attitudes this will enable them to become responsible members of society.
- To empower the whole school family to be all that they were created to be.

All children will be:

- Helped to recognize and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimension of life.
- Enabled to know and enter into the beliefs, feelings, attitudes, values, practices and worship of the catholic tradition of the Church of England.
- Led to a deeper personal faith where they can deepen their relationship with God.
- Developing a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs.
- Enhancing their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development.
- Developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues.
- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their own understanding and experience.
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious.
- Developing positive attitudes including open-mindedness, fairness, commitment, appreciation and wonder, self-awareness and respect for all.

Our Religious Education Curriculum

St. Paul's is an Aided school therefore we deliver RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the Understanding Christianity framework as recommended by The School Liaison Officers of Chichester Diocese. The Ethos and Worship of Saint Paul's School reflects its foundation by St. Paul's Church and that of Saint Nicholas and Saint Michael's also.

St Paul'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, following advice from the diocese, use the Understanding Christianity framework, and the Emmanuel Project for other religions and world views.

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. Senior leaders ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is a priority for the school.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- Is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- Reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable our pupils to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief (religious literacy).
- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- Provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- Supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, critical thinking skills and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- Encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs.
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it
- Ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs.

RE is taught through stimulating class discussion, practical activities, group work and individual projects using a multi-sensory approach. We place an emphasis on the exploration of challenging questions which develop higher order thinking skills. The enquiry-based approach has roots in the key questions taken from the syllabus ensuring breadth of study and progression across the school. Cross-curricular links are made where appropriate. Teachers aim to make R.E. lessons special and different to other lessons by including some of the following: lighting a candle, listening to music, taking time to quietly reflect or by saying a prayer.

Cross-curricular links

Religious education supports the development of general educational attributes such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship. Where authentic opportunities exist, we make connections to learning in other subject areas in line with our school policy on teaching and learning.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- handle artefacts
- consume food
- visit places of worship/external organisations

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Planning for teaching and learning

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, ICT, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection. Lessons are planned with a balance between input, discussion and activity.

There is an emphasis on the use of the Understanding Christianity framework to support the teaching and learning of RE. Both frameworks are based on a spiral curriculum and are structured as units of learning. Each unit takes a core concept and gives a key question through which to explore the concept. The unit identifies the knowledge 'building blocks' and focused outcomes that are expected of pupils by the end of teaching, the outcomes relate to three elements of learning.
(as does The Emmanuel Project for other religions and world views)

- **Making sense of the text:** developing pupils' skills of reading and interpretation: understanding how Christians interpret, handle and use biblical texts; making sense of the meanings of texts for Christians.
- **Understanding the impact:** examining ways in which Christians respond to biblical texts and teachings, and how they put their beliefs into action in diverse ways within the Christian community and in the world.
- **Making connections:** evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the texts and concepts studied, and discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

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 to the school. Our clergy members also come in regularly to support the teaching of core Christian concepts in class across the school.

Learning tasks should be clearly differentiated and a range of activities planned to ensure a wide variety of learning styles are included. For example, opportunities for drama, art, extended writing and ICT should be planned for.

Planning is monitored by the R.E subject leader to ensure continuity, differentiation and progression across the school. Good use is made of the *Understanding Christianity* resources as well as the *Emmanuel Project* to support lessons, varying the strategies used for teaching and learning. Please refer to the *Understanding Christianity/Emmanuel Project* materials for more detail about planning, teaching and learning strategies, suggested learning activities and curriculum coverage.
www.understandingchristianity.org.uk
www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/religious-education/emmanuelproject/

Religious Education at St. Paul' school is delivered in the following way.
We use the Understanding Christianity framework as a basis for our planning, as a source of ideas and teaching strategies. We also make use of the Brighton and Hove SACRE syllabus. Additional resources purchased to support high quality RE teaching like the Emmanuel Project resource.
Provide defined reflection areas for pupils in every classroom.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions.
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Seeking information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in individual, paired and group work.
- Exploring a range of artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.

In accordance with the structure of the locally agreed syllabus and the Schools Worship and Ethos committee.
At KS 1: pupils study Christianity and Judaism.
At KS 2: pupils study Christianity and Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.
At KS 1: 36 hours of RE are taught over a year and at KS2- 45 hours are taught over the year.

Teaching RE to children with special educational needs
We teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. This is part of the school's duty and commitment to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress and we celebrate their success.
A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used to take into account the pupils' age, stage of development, understanding and needs. Children need to work in a safe, secure environment in order to explore their own and other children's beliefs, values and experiences. Adults should be sensitive to a child's family situation and background and give consideration to these issues when planning the lessons.

A high level of interactivity is effected through agreed class rules for talking, listening and respect, developing a trusting relationship between the teacher and children. The following is expected - collaborative work, reflection time, genuine respect for each contribution, negotiation, accommodating new information and skills, building on current experience and first-hand learning and using a range of active teaching and learning strategies.

Marking and Feedback

Aims of RE marking and feedback:

- To give regular, constructive feedback to pupils, both written and orally to ensure pupils understand what they have been successful at and to know what they need to do in order to make further progress.
- In written feedback, teachers should give positive feedback to pupils and highlight a specific target for improvement and if appropriate address any misconceptions the pupils may have.
- Marking and feedback should be given in the following lesson or within 5 days and pupils should be given time to respond to the feedback in order to make improvements and extend their learning.
- Both verbal and written feedback should be relate to the learning intention but may also link to other key learning points.
- Teachers may also offer verbal feedback to a group, or as a whole class to move the pupils learning forward and pupils should be given opportunities to carry our self/ peer assessments as they progress through a lesson or unit of learning.
- Comments should encourage children to reflect and analyse.
- Questions and thoughts are used to develop children's thinking and understanding and children are always given time to respond.
- Correct spelling of key religious vocabulary is expected.
- At the end of each RE unit, teachers will evidence whether the children have met the success criteria and provide a positive comment and a precise area for improvement.

Assessment:

Formative assessment during the lesson helps ensure that all children can access the learning objective. 'Next Steps' questions or challenges are set at the end of lessons. Next Step questions allow children to show that they have met the LO or help the child who has misunderstood or not shown enough understanding. Next Step questions are also used for children with a deeper understanding to be able to share this more fully or to be challenged further.

Self-Assessment Children self-assess at the end of every lesson using agreed age appropriate methods.

End of Topic After units of work, the teachers will record the appropriate level on the assessment tracker sheet. Teachers use their judgements based on discussion, questioning and evidence in books, to record a 'level'. All topics are assessed. These assessments are handed in to the RE Leader,

who analyses attainment and progress at whole class and group level and feeds back to teachers as appropriate. The level/MET achieved will be used by the coordinator 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.

Moderation Assessed work is moderated at staff meetings, with another local CE primary school. Where possible the school also works with the Diocese or Local Deanery to carry out joint monitoring and moderation to secure judgements.

Reporting:

RE is reported formally to parents annually in a written report. Each year group teacher ensures that levels of attainment are recorded on a central system in order that the Head teacher and R.E subject

Display and Prayer Tables

RE displays are given special focus throughout the school and in each classroom. Class displays are changed for each topic and include a mixture of key questions, key words, and prayers. As far as possible, these should be interactive, inviting prayers, comments or questions. Prayer table colours should also link with the liturgical year.

Displays in the school hall celebrate whole school events. Work around the focus display is used to celebrate learning and is added to throughout the year. The display in the school's entrance celebrates the school's Values and Ethos.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. Lesson observations, planning and book scrutiny will form part of the whole school monitoring process in line with other core curriculum subjects and actions and areas for

development will be used to inform the school development plan. Where possible, monitoring by the RE Coordinator will be conducted in conjunction with the RE Link Governor and Headteacher.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacrament of the Eucharist takes place when the children are in the summer term of Year 5. It is a Parish based programme but all members of staff support this both in the Parish and at school. A special celebration assembly is held for all First Holy Communion pupils after receiving the Sacrament.

Resources

Objects and fabrics suitable for all seasons of the liturgical year.
Resources to support child led worship.
All classes have access to Bibles (Shared resource) and Bible storybooks.
Each class has access to the bank of interactive resources through the *Understanding Christianity* website.
Faith boxes that include artefacts, texts, photographs, recipes, puppets, persona dolls and stories.
(Our school also has access to additional resources provided by the diocese).
Posters
Candles
Music
Other Faiths, including Jewish and Islamic ritual objects, books and videos
Collection of RE reference books on a variety of topics.

The Diocese of Chichester also recommends the following resources:

Walk through the Bible - Free Old Testament videos and resources for KS2
BBC's A-Z of Religion and Beliefs for secondary schools
Lovewise School Resources - Suitable for use in RE, PSHE & Citizenship lessons - marriage, sex and relationships from a Christian perspective
Spinnaker RE and Assembly resources
HEARTSMART - a primary school resource that builds resilience, emotional intelligence and active empathy in the hearts of children.
Fischy Music - RE & Collective Worship Pack

Happenings Cards - Collective worship, quiet corner, prayer time
Thy Kingdom Come - Interactive Prayer Stations based on the Lord's Prayer written by the Diocese of Guildford

Links with Parents/Carers

We highly value the importance of parents/carers in their child's spiritual development and our aim is to fully engage in partnership with them.
Post Pandemic we will do this through:
Inviting parents to all school religious celebrations such as Candlemas, Ascension Day, Harvest and Christingle each with a mass at the end.
Involving parents in other key events such as Fairtrade Breakfast, community litter picks and all other special events supporting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
Ensuring parents are well informed about school life through weekly newsletters and curriculum newsletters.
Holding parent consultation meetings twice a year and providing a written end of year report that includes Religious Education.

Links with Our Wider Community

At St Paul's CE Primary School, we are part of thriving parishes, local and wider world communities. All of these communities help to deepen the spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding of our pupils and help them to see their place in the wider world. Our pupils have enrichment of their faith through:

- St Paul's, St Michael and All Angels', and St Nicholas' Churches are all very involved in the life of the school. Joining the parish for celebrations where the children are welcomed into the church throughout the liturgical year and play a key part in celebrations.
- Sharing key events in school with parishioners.
- Serving the local community through fund raising. The School Council, organise fundraising for Genes to Genes day, Red Nose Day, Children in Need, Off the Fence (Homeless Charity), NSPCC and Inspired through Sport.
- We have volunteer readers from our Parishes.
- Serving the local community by suppling a range of food to a local food bank from our Harvest Festival celebration annually.
- We have an ambassador and eco committee who meet regularly to discuss issues. We are very committed to recycling in school, to help save our planet.
- Serving the wider world community through our Ugandan link school in Mpigi, St Paul's sponsor children to attend and raise money for resources and buildings.
- Serving the wider world community by linking with other international schools - Uganda link since 2010 and Spanish link since 2008.
- Developing pupils' understanding of the wider world community through full participation in international days and events such as Black History Month, Armistice Day and International World Day of Prayer .

The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader

The first purpose of the RE subject leader's role is to help improve the quality of the teaching and learning that the pupils receive in Religious Education. RE Subject leaders/ Coordinators role is:

- To be responsible to the Governing Body, Head teacher and all colleagues for the monitoring of planning, teaching and assessment of religious education based on the development of the children at each stage in their learning.
- To liaise with the Diocesan RE Adviser, particularly through attendance at the Primary Coordinators' meetings, and inform the Governors, Head teacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within religious education.
- To ensure monitoring is timetabled in order to support staff and raise pupil progress and attainment and include classroom observations, work scrutiny and collective worship observations in line with school practice.
- To work with the Head teacher and all colleagues, to undertake a regular audit/review of religious education in line with the school improvement/development plan.
- To manage a budget and ensure resources are available to support the teaching and learning of religious education, including other faiths.
- To organise school based INSET, when appropriate, to continue and support the professional development of all staff for religious education.
- To offer support, advice and challenge individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education Resource, *Understanding Christianity*. Give advice and support on creative and innovative teaching methods and assessment processes to ensure all groups of pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.
- To set up and maintain a portfolio of annotated work in order to monitor progression and continuity.
- To ensure in-school moderation for religious education is in line with other core subjects.
- To ensure that cross-curricular links such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Information Technology and EPR/PSHE/RSHE are reflected in religious education.
- To ensure any updates or new initiatives associated with religious education are communicated to staff, parents/carers, governors and the parish community.
- To liaise with other primary colleagues and carry out cross-school moderation. Liaise with secondary colleagues when possible.

Equal Opportunities and SEND

At St Paul's CE School, we recognise the right of all children to have complete access to Religious Education and to develop fully their spiritual being including support in the receipt of the Sacraments. We acknowledge the responses, thoughts and ideas of all pupils and value them as a vehicle for discussion and for deepening understanding and development of religious knowledge.

We recognise that some of our pupils may be from other faiths or none and will support and include all pupils.

In accordance with British Values, the school will promote "*an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour*" (Department for Education November 2014)

Legal Requirements

Religious Education is provided for all registered pupils in accordance with the statutory requirements. (DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28). The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or playgroups.

Parents have the right to withdraw pupils from RE. We comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision.
* Any queries about withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE subject leaders in the first instance and thereafter to the Headteacher. We acknowledge that teachers also have the right to withdraw from teaching RE unless they are 'reserved' teachers. However, as a church school, all members of staff are asked to support the Christian ethos of the school and therefore we expect teaching staff to teach RE when asked to do so. Any member of staff wishing to withdraw from

teaching RE should discuss their wishes with the Headteacher. Should a member of staff still seek to withdraw following this discussion they should provide written notice to the Headteacher and governing board.

Additional advice and support may be accessed from:
The Diocese of Chichester Education Department.
Education Department, Church House,
211 New Church Road,
Hove, BN3 4ED
Phone: 01273 425 687
Email: schools@chichester.anglican.org
Website: https://schools.chichester.anglican.org/

Signed ……. Chair of Governors

Signed ……. Headteacher