

Religious Education Policy



Vision

At St. Thomas' C of E Academy, our curriculum is built upon our mission statement, to enable all children to "Grow, learn and shine together with God". We inspire children to be 'Active Learners' and 'Creative Thinkers' through the use of the 'St Thomas' IO Star Learning behaviours' and the 'St Thomas' 'Ds'.

Intent

RE provokes challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Teaching at St. Thomas' equips pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identity. Children develop an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in society, which is diverse in relation to religions and worldviews. St. Thomas' pupils learn how to study religions and worldviews systematically. They make progress by reflecting on the impact of religions and worldviews on contemporary life locally, nationally and globally to increasing levels of complexity and depth. Pupils gain and deploy the skills needed to interpret and evaluate evidence, texts and sources of wisdom or authority. They learn to articulate clear and coherent accounts of their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to have different views, values and ways of life.



Our curriculum is designed so that children:

- ✚ Know, describe, explain and analyse beliefs, and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities.
- ✚ Know, identify, investigate and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
- ✚ Know, appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- ✚ Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.
- ✚ Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value.
- ✚ Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.
- ✚ Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.
- ✚ Enquire into what enables different communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- ✚ Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

We aim to provide a broad and balanced education, which allows students to become successful learners, who enjoy learning, make rapid and sustained progress and achieve the very best. Learning is planned in such a way as to encourage the full and active participation of all pupils. We encourage children to be confident individuals, who are able to communicate and understand ideas, facts and feelings with fluency and expression.

Implementation

At St Thomas' CE Academy, we are committed to teaching high quality RE lessons that meet the aims of our pupils. Our carefully designed curriculum ensures a progression of key concepts, knowledge and skills both within and across each year group. Children enjoy weekly RE lessons of no less than 60 minutes. Each unit of work is well-planned and progressive.

- ✚ RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage Pupils encounter religions and worldviews through exploring special people, books, times, places and objects. They listen to and talk about religious stories. Pupils are introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They ask

questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

- ✚ RE in Key Stage One The focus of RE for KSI enables children to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews. They find out about simple examples of religion, that are drawn from local, national and global contexts. They use basic subject specific vocabulary. They raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas. The RE curriculum is engaging and interactive using story, music, drama, activity, teamwork, thinking structures and language work to enable deepening engagement from every child. Children also have the opportunity to visit places of worship.
- ✚ RE in Key Stage Two The focus of RE for KS2 enables pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, recognising their historical and local, national and global contexts. They are introduced to an extended range of sources and subject specific vocabulary. They are encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. Pupils learn to express their own ideas thoughtfully and creatively in response to the material they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views.

Our teaching of RE focuses on enabling pupils to make substantial progress to lay the foundations for further study in Key Stage 3.

Cultural Capital

We enhance the curriculum and our children's cultural capital in many ways.

- ✚ Rich knowledge, open minds. Our ambitious RE curriculum gives pupils the kind of rich knowledge of religions and worldviews that enable them to participate fully in the cultural life of modern diverse Britain. RE opens our children's minds to global diversity and cultures.
- ✚ Engaging with cultural and religious diversity. Our ambitious RE curriculum enables all pupils to understand the significance of spiritual and moral issues in our contemporary culture so that they can both contribute to and benefit from the multicultural society in which we live.
- ✚ Cultural competences. Our ambitious RE curriculum enables pupils to develop cultural competency and cultural navigation skills from their own worldview or religion in relation to the religions and worldviews of others.
- ✚ Access for all. Our ambitious RE curriculum gives pupils from every background access to the kinds of cultural capital with which religions and worldviews engage - e.g. in the arts, language, literature, sciences, sport, fashion and the economy in all its aspects. This includes the ways religions and worldviews challenge prevailing ideas, e.g. from moral perspectives.

Impact

The teaching of RE is of the highest quality at St Thomas'. Children's progress is assessed informally during each lesson, evaluating progress against set 'I can...' statements. As part of the St Thomas' feedback policy, verbal feedback is given to the children regularly and over the shoulder marking happens where necessary so that immediate feedback can be given and acted upon. Children are assessed against the Teacher Assessment Frameworks (TAFs) to identify any gaps that children have in their learning to inform future planning. TAFs support the long-term assessment that teachers make at the end of each academic year. As a result, children make rapid and sustained progress and they are passionate about their learning.

Curriculum books reflect high quality outcomes. Children are able to talk confidently about their learning and can remember their learning from earlier within the year or from previous years. Through the teaching of RE, we foster an ethos of curiosity and questioning. Our children understand that they are learning RE so that they will be able to build an accurate knowledge base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. This in turn supports children so that they are able to move beyond attitudes of tolerance towards increasing respect so that they can celebrate diversity. Teaching of RE has a direct impact on our children's skills for not only the next stage of their education but also their future life opportunities. Our ambitious RE curriculum helps our children to learn about the world that we live in and in broadens their horizons.

