



JOHN CROSS C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL
July 2023

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

At John Cross Primary school we strive to provide the best possible teaching, learning and experience of Religious Education not just within the RE curriculum, but within all aspects of our teaching and learning thereby enabling all children to flourish and the school's distinctive Christian character to be evident in all aspects of school life.

Our Christian Vision is:

Following in the footsteps of our founder John Cross, we are committed to providing a loving, Christian family school built on mutual love, respect and co-operation. A safe and stimulating learning environment will enable our pupils to believe and achieve now and in the future.

Our strap line is, '**Believe and Achieve**'.

Our Christian Narrative

Our Bible verse is '**Life in all its fullness**' **John 10:10**

'Life in all its fullness' fully permeates every aspect of life at John Cross. John Cross was the benefactor of our school, whose generosity and compassion for children was rooted in his strong Christian faith which led to him donating the funds to build the first school in order to 'educate the children of Bilsborrow in the principles of the Christian religion.' (John Cross's will 1718). By walking in the footsteps of John Cross, we follow his Biblical values which shape the social, moral, cultural and spiritual aspects of school life. For 300 years since the school was founded, staff have nurtured a symbiotic relationship with the community, ensuring God's love is evident through thoughts and actions, embedding Christian values which have provided the basis for individuals to shape their personal beliefs and respect for others. Today, we continue to follow the loving example of Jesus Christ in order to enable all our pupils to flourish socially, academically and spiritually.

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Our caring and loving school environment is inclusive of children of all faiths and backgrounds and is where each child is loved, celebrated, and welcomed. We hold high aspirations for our pupils, whom we seek to become well-rounded, confident, honest, resilient, compassionate, ambitious, responsible and thoughtful people, who consistently demonstrate sound moral character, fulfil their God-given potential, and have a strong sense of community and their place within it. All of this ensures that each child has solid foundations for their futures.

Our strong community links enable good working partnerships with parents, the local church and wider community, where working together enriches the opportunities and experiences that our children receive. Within the school community, children learn to collaboratively integrate, respect, and believe in the intrinsic and developing value of each other, to value themselves and the contributions they can make in immediate, wider, and global relationship, and learn how God can inspirationally help them to fulfil their potential.

In order to enable our younger members to engage in the theological rooting of our vision, we have chosen to further explain this by including the story of The Feeding of the Five Thousand, which was proposed by Henry in Year 4. Firstly, the story demonstrates the strength of a community of people of different ages working together to support each other spiritually, physically and emotionally. As in this story, Jesus sets the example for us to follow by the compassionate way he ensured that others needs were met before his own by accepting a child's offer of help and as a consequence the community of gathered people were able to receive both physical and spiritual nourishment. As Jesus did, we too believe in empowering our children to be the game changers, to stand out from the crowd, to take the first courageous steps, as the child in the story did, in order to show generosity and compassion by doing or giving what they can so that God can fulfil his plans for our school, community, nation or world and others as well as ourselves can Believe and Achieve and live 'life in all its fullness.'

The aims of our School are:

- To help everyone realise their full potential
- To promote spiritual, moral and social growth
- To understand the fast changing, diverse world in which we live
- To encourage intellectual and physical development
- To learn about and live out our Christian Faith
- To promote mutual respect and responsibility
- And to wholeheartedly play our part, whether that part is to learn, to lead, to teach or to support others

Audience

This policy is intended for all staff, governors and parents. Copies are distributed to all staff, located on the computer network, made available to governors and are distributed to others on request.

Mission Statement for Religious Education

The curriculum that is provided is rich, varied and creative ensuring that all of our children acquire a deep understanding of the Christian faith through which beliefs, practices and values are understood and linked to Biblical texts. The RE Curriculum is linked to the school values through which spiritual, moral and cultural developments are made, these values are also being taught and developed through Collective Worship. Together with the RE curriculum, these values underpin all that we do, shape who we are becoming and enable each and every pupil to flourish.

Underpinning all aspects of RE within the school is the teaching and understanding of God's Big Story which is displayed in each classroom and frequently referred to. The management of Religious Education is an important responsibility of the role of the headteacher and the governors and is provided by the following of the BDDE's syllabus for RE and also by the endorsement of the RE Statement of Entitlement 2019. <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/RE%20Statement%20of%20Entitlement%20for%20Church%20Schools.pdf>

Religious Education teaching makes up at least 5% of teaching time during which time Christianity is taught 80% of the time and other world faiths, 20%.

At John Cross we aim to ensure that pupils understand Christianity to be a living faith which is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago, both in the community in Bilsborrow and throughout the world. We expect pupils to gain a growing understanding of how Christianity has shaped British culture over the years. Through the teaching of the curriculum, pupils gain an understanding and respect for the other major world religions and views and are able to compare and contrast their understanding of Christianity with these, thus providing the children with a greater understanding of the world and the society in which they are growing up. This also enables them to see the faith of others in relationship to their own which ultimately builds harmonious relations within communities and promotes tolerance and inclusion.

Our teaching is based on a 'Questful' approach which means that the children search for the answers to their questions or questions generated through the curriculum by exploring Biblical texts, peer discussions, visits from external sources and by questioning our skilled and knowledgeable teachers. This approach plays a central role in the development of pupil's spiritual and philosophical understandings by enabling an exploration of their own beliefs and values through respectful listening and consideration of the opinions of others.

RE teaching in our school is distinctive because it:

- Enables the children to reflect on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- Explains how the truths of Christianity are relevant today
- Develops the children's skills to handle Biblical text;
- Enables the children to recognise that faith is a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- Gives the children an understanding of how the Christian faith can be absorbed and lived out;
- Encourages the children to respond in terms of beliefs, commitments, ways of living, ethical decisions and choices affecting their own and others' lives;

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- Helps the children to develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- Enables the children to experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community by inviting visitors into school, engaging with church events in the community attending church services.
- Enables the children to engage in respectful and thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- Teaches the children to become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
 - Helps the children to begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
 - Encourages the children to reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
 - Helps the children to understand the challenges faced by Christians in today's world.
 - Enables the children to find a reason for hope in a troubled world
 - Shows the children how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

As a church school there are opportunities for children to grow in the understanding of their own faith. School maintains good links with the local parish, wider community and global community involving them in the delivery of the subject where appropriate. Children's work is displayed in the church from time to time. In addition, all pupils will have a safe place to explore, freely discuss and express their personal opinions about the deep questions and challenges of life whilst gaining age appropriate knowledge and understanding of Christianity.

SEN Provision

All children are equally important at John Cross but we do recognise that some children require more help than others and maybe considered to have special educational needs. Such children are given additional, appropriate support and help which is carefully planned and detailed in the child's individual learning plans. During RE lessons, children are able to fully participate with their peers and grow in their understanding. In order to do this, work is set at an achievable level, and help is given where needed.

Teaching and learning methods.

Our skilled teachers use our many resources and a variety of teaching methods to support the teaching and learning of RE, taking the children on a journey of enquiry to ensure pupils of all backgrounds have a safe place to explore the many questions that they or others have. Teaching in class can be individual, group or whole class teaching. A variety of teaching and learning methods as well as resources are used. Some examples of the resources that we have are:

Teaching methods

- Teacher led sessions where information is provided
- Group or paired work
- Talk Partners, where pairs of children discuss an issue before sharing their thoughts with the class.

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- Class discussion where the children are invited to join in and express their personal opinions and share experiences.
- Use of differentiated tasks where children of different abilities are able to work at their own level.
- Use of role-play
- Educational Visits to gain first hand experiences.
- Guest speakers
- Creative tasks that may include: singing, dancing, painting, filming, acting, miming,
- Hot seating
- Interviews
- Freeze framing.

Physical Resources

- 1) Using our outdoor areas to explore God's incredible creation.
- 2) Each class has it's own God's Big Story display.
- 3) Use of Blackburn Diocese Board of Education syllabus.
- 4) Additional teaching resources sourced in line with curriculum requirements.
- 5) On line resources such as YouTube, FreeBibleImages, Prayer Spaces In Schools.
- 6) Bibles and other books
- 7) Zoom for visitors and assemblies.
- 8) CDs from Blackburn Diocese Board of Education syllabus.
- 9) Adults and children of different faiths or no faith who are able to share and discuss their perspectives and experiences.

Religious Education

At John Cross, we follow the current BDBE Religious Education syllabus. To ensure all children cover the all the key units as they progress through the school, our curriculum coverage is mapped by the subject leader. Individual lesson plans are devised and delivered by the class teacher, who uses the key questions, objectives and experiences to ensure effective coverage. During book scrutinies, coverage is checked and discussed with the class teacher if required.

Foundation Stage

In Foundation stage chatterboxes are used to teach the EYFS units.

KS1

At the end of KS1, children have started to gain a knowledge of basic Biblical language and have an understanding of the key events in the Christian calendar. They have started to learn about who Jesus and his disciples are through the many Bible stories that they learn about. Every half term, during term time there is a whole school service in church at the beginning of the day. The children can also attend church to

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take part in the Nativity, Harvest, Education Sunday and Mothering Sunday services. Every year, the infant class produce a Nativity production Here is the link 2020 which can also be found on the school website https://www.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR3ouyvCiK9kSuzWuENe1DJe0luv5Q_N0QRzaJlctZmpcAaEh0_fwOsc7fl&v=dITtzi9PTCo&feature=youtu.be

During their time in the infants, the children's confidence in asking questions always increases and through discussions, worship and cross curricular to PSHE, the children gain an understanding of their own and other's values. It's during these early years that the children learn about holy books, special ceremonies and names of some of the other major world religions.

KS2

By the end of KS2, the children will understand the key concepts of the Big Story and understand God's repeated rescue plans and the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus as God's final rescue plan. They will understand the major teachings of Christianity, how these link to Christian values, practices and beliefs. and have been taught to live out these values to the best of their ability. They will understand that Christianity is a living, diverse and worldwide faith and learn how other Christians in different cultures or different denominations live out their faith.

Through visits and supporting lessons, children will grasp the similarities and differences of other world wide faiths to learn acceptance, tolerance and respect for others living in our multicultural society. They will be able to engage in meaningful discussions with those of other faiths and those of none whilst remaining true to the school's Christian foundations. Through this and other such means, they will be continually be challenged to think about their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions and use these to enrich their own spiritual understandings. Children will experience prayer, Christian worship and celebrations and will be able to express their own views and opinions.

We learn about

- God who reveals the 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 in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which gives priority to the values of unconditional trust, forgiveness, compassion, friendship,

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural

At John Cross, Religious Education makes a highly significant contribution to the children's spiritual development through learning and reflecting on who they are, who God is and how they fit into the world around them. They learn about creativity and are able to reflect on the experiences that they have. They

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learn about other faiths, values and traditions and develop respect, tolerance and understanding. Our strong values are rooted in Biblical teaching where the children learn about each value in turn, consider how others have applied this value to their life and then apply it to their own. Our values are constantly reinforced through all aspects of life at John Cross enabling our children to become confident, well mannered, polite and respectful individuals who are confident to enter the next phases of their lives. Through our many discussions and class activities, children learn to relish the differences between one another and are able to cooperate well with one another, respect alternative opinions and accept new ideas. Our many visitors such as the students from Capernwray and visits such as our trip to the mosque in Blackburn enrich our curriculum and develop a strong understanding of life beyond Bilsborrow and the many exciting places, cultures and traditions of people from all around the world.

Christian and British Values.

At John Cross, we believe in developing the whole child through the delivery of daily worship based on our core values. These values are also strongly linked to the curriculum and embedded throughout the day in everything we do, who we are and how we conduct ourselves These values are:

Our Christian Values are:

- Forgiveness:
- Friendship
- Compassion
- Trust
- Hope
- Perseverance

At John Cross, every child is unique, special and important

Since British Values cross over with Biblical Values, the 5 British Values are constantly being taught daily through Collective Worship, PSHE and RE lessons and are reinforced continuously throughout our daily working lives as fundamentals of how we work and play at John Cross.

- Democracy.
- The rule of law.
- Individual liberty.
- Mutual respect.
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Assessment & record keeping

All children are assessed in accordance with the attainment grid laid out in the BDBE RE syllabus. Each teacher assesses one unit per term and formal records from this are kept centrally by the RE coordinator. The children will also carry a self assessment out for each unit too. Progress regarding RE is reported annually to parents through their school reports. Standards and progress throughout the school are monitored through termly book scrutinies and annual lesson observations. During these:

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- 1) Work is assessed against the unit objectives against the ladder of expectation.
- 2) Standards of RE work are compared against the children's standards or work in English.
- 3) Discussions in the class scrap book will also be monitored to gauge depth and understanding of the topic.
- 4) Discussions with the children directly.
- 5) Some comparisons between year groups are also made to assess progress across the whole school and ensure that core concepts are being embedded and developed effectively.

Extra Curricular Opportunities

The very popular 'Glow Club' has now been running for at least 10 years (with a couple of short breaks including during Covid 19). This lunchtime club gives the children the opportunity to hear Bible stories, pray together, join in with craft and games. The club is run by the RE coordinator and Mrs Thornton. During the Summer months, many activities are outside in the woods where the topics enable God's wonderful world to be appreciated and enjoyed.

Each class has nominated at least 2 worship leaders per year group who are able to develop leadership skills through involvement in the planning of the school worship schedule, school events and projects.

Subject and Staff Development

Development of the RE curriculum is the responsibility of the RE coordinator.

1. Attending the termly RE coordinators' meetings.
2. Attending training when the opportunity arises.
3. Constantly seeking new online or physical resources.

The RE coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that other members of staff are adequately resourced and trained to fulfil their responsibilities. This is achieved by:

1. 1:1 discussions with class teachers.
2. Sharing new resources.
3. Briefing staff during staff meetings.
4. Giving constructive feedback following book scrutinies and lesson observations.

Supporting policies

Our RE teaching is supported by the following policies:

- SEN
- British Values
- Behaviour
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The Parental Rights of Withdrawal

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The Religious Education that is provided by this school and the worship opportunities are all in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This foundation permeates all aspects of school life and its conduct. Therefore, removal of pupils from Worship and the Religious Education cannot insulate such families from the religious life of this school community.

In a situation whereby a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher should discuss where the objections lie and seek to accommodate this request.

Parents are within their rights to request that the governing body provide Religious Education according to the locally Agreed Syllabus only where they cannot arrange for their children to attend another school where this is already provided. The governing body are required to make this provision unless the circumstances of doing so prove unreasonable. If this is the case, then the responsibility for doing so falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may then decide that the provision of separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the request will then fail.

Headteacher: Liam Reynolds

RE Coordinator: Clare Irwin

Date 3/7/2023

Review date

July 2024