



ROOTED IN GOD'S LOVE, EVERYONE GROWING TOGETHER  
TO BECOME THE BEST THAT WE CAN BE

# Religious Education Policy

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Chair of Governors	Paul Adnitt
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*At Barrow URC Primary School, we work hard to ensure that all of our pupils are included in all parts of school life. We begin with high quality teaching, ensuring that all of our staff are trained to support all children. For children with special educational needs or disability, we may make reasonable adjustments or call upon the support of external experts. We have high expectations for all of our children and track the progress they make carefully, ensuring timely and high quality intervention is in place where necessary. It is important that we work closely with families, with the child always at the heart of our approach. We provide a safe, inclusive environment, in which all children feel welcome and valued. In our school, the child is always at the heart of what we do. Our seven core values- Respect, Honesty, Trust, Love, Peace, Kindness and Forgiveness- are the pillars of our school community and help us to provide a safe, caring environment in which all our children feel welcome and valued.*

## **Rationale**

At Barrow URC school, Religious Education is an integral part of our school life.

We are a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with a Christian foundation and, as such, Christianity forms the basis of (all the teaching in) the school and how we treat each other. Religious Education at Barrow URC school reflects our Christian values and ethos. It is a rich secure setting in which children can learn, grow and equip themselves for life.

Our Christian vision statement is theologically rooted in the Christian scriptures. It is our aim that every child, and indeed adult in the school flourishes as a child of God 'Rooted in God's love, everyone growing together to become the best that we can be' as we learn, care and share, through work play and prayer. (Ephesians chapter 3 verse 17)

As a United Reformed Church primary school we encourage our children to be inspired by the life and example of Jesus Christ. We strive to provide the best possible education for the children in our care, recognising their unique gifts and personalities, and seeking to promote excellence in both behaviour and work. Our aim is to nurture the children's essential individuality with a secure, happy and ordered environment, reflecting the love of the family of God. Barrow URC children are taught to recognise their own self-worth and potential and to respect other peoples' views, culture and religion. Barrow is undoubtedly a school with a distinct Christian character and we are proud to be a United Reformed Church primary school – we are truly one of a kind!

## **Principles and Aims**

At Barrow URC the Religious Education provided is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the United Reformed Church as laid down in the Trust Deed. As set out in our Mission Statement, we feel that Christian values provide the key to the school ethos. The spiritual development of all in the school community is seen as fundamental. We seek to nurture an understanding of the Christian faith and a respect of other world religions.

We believe that Religious Education has a vital part to play in the education of children of primary age. The subject is concerned with:

- \* developing knowledge, understanding and awareness of Christianity and other principal religions;
- \* fostering a sense of awe and wonder
- \* encouraging respect for those holding different beliefs;
- \* promoting spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development.

At the time of writing, Barrow has 181 pupils on roll with a predominately White-British ethnicity. We therefore need to ensure that our RE teaching gives children a wealth of experiences of other faiths and multi-cultural Christianity. (Multi-faith weeks, other faith festival days, worship plan contains other faiths and stories of key men and women of different ethnicity). The school emphasises world religions each spring, encouraging cultural understanding and respect. Children

explore diverse faiths and visit places of worship, such as mosques and temples. This commitment aims to instil empathy and acceptance, preparing children for a globally interconnected society.

Following after Jesus' example, we strive to be a place which welcomes all, regardless of background, ability and circumstance. Our school is fully inclusive and we support children to overcome barriers to learning in a positive way. Children are supported using tailored curriculums, individual education plans, provision maps and advice from specialist teachers and educational psychologists. Children with additional needs are supported and encouraged to be fully included in all aspects of school life. Staff at Barrow are highly skilled and access regular training on how to support children with additional needs including cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social and emotional and physical and sensory.

Religious education is an important school subject. It can make a substantial contribution to the general personal and social development of every child in line with the overall aims of the school, as well as to their academic achievements.

Religious education has a particular part to play in pupils' spiritual development. We see spiritual development in terms of pupils' capacity to reflect on fundamental aspects of life. This is not to be viewed too narrowly in terms of R.E. and Collective Worship; other subjects should also contribute to pupils' spiritual development. Our rich 'Personal Development Backpack' showcases our commitment to this.

Religious education has a part to play in helping children to learn about the rich ethnic and cultural diversity found in this country and the wider world. It is also a valuable means of exploring attitudes about the roles of women and men in the Bible.

Through Religious education we seek to nurture an understanding of the Christian Faith and a respect of other world religions.

## **The Syllabus**

Religious education in this school is provided under the terms of the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE which fulfils all legal requirements and the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2016. The emphasis of the scheme is to allow children to go on a journey of discovery, a quest to discover more about ourselves, others, the world and God.

The principal aim of R.E. is to enable pupils to:

'acquire knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain, and to develop the ability to explore, respond to and reflect on human experience, drawing on their study of religion.'

Work in R.E. will contribute to the development of certain general study skills. The subject is particularly suitable as a vehicle for developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. R.E. will involve intellectual challenge for both the most and the least able. Although RE will be discreetly taught every week, it should be referred to through the week via the working wall, scrapbook or morning task.

### **Special Education Needs provision**

Teachers will plan activities according to the needs and abilities within the class, tasks should be scaffolded or extended appropriately. The needs of children on the SEND register will be accounted for and appropriate to their TLAPs (Targeted Learning Action Plans) , with reference to the SEN policy. Because we believe that all people are created in God's image, we seek to value each child, enabling them to be determined and confident.

R.E. and Collective Worship are legally distinct. R.E. is an educational process, while worship is an opportunity to take part in the affirmation and celebration of certain basic values. While recognising the separate nature of the two activities, teachers will, on occasion, draw upon work in R.E. as part of worship, and vice versa.

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 give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

Religious Education should also help pupils to:

- learn about other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;

- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

RE in Church Schools should help pupils to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

Religious Education should enable:

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;

- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

Each class is taught RE weekly. Approximately 5% of curriculum time will be devoted to Religious Education as a discrete subject, approximately 80% of that time being spent on the teaching of Christianity. In addition, in a church school there will be many other occasions when a significant contribution is made to pupil's religious development through other subjects and aspects of school life.

The subject is approached in a variety of ways, using multi-sensory approaches to help all children to learn.

At KS1 and KS2, all children are taught units of work that cover both Christianity and non-Christian faiths which include Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism. Foundation Stage children cover Christianity and other festivals.

Formal recording is not always necessary, as each class has a RE floorbook. Recording can take many forms. Our assessment procedure involves assessing the children against the end of unit statements and the children who have exceeded and are still working towards the required level are recorded. This will aid next terms planning for differentiation and be passed up to the next teacher.

Resources are kept centrally in the resources room and regularly checked and renewed, as necessary.

Visits are made to relevant places of worship and when appropriate, we also encourage visitors to school to broaden the children's experience.

Classroom worship areas are prominent and interactive, encouraging children to answer questions and think of questions they would like to be answered.

The aims of the school are rooted in Christian beliefs and underpin all aspects of our school life.

Good relationships with the wider community, national and international, through school and children initiating charity fund raising.

## **Parental Rights of Withdrawal**

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the United Reformed Church 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 United Reformed Church ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and/or 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 should explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to.

Parents may request the governing board to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing board should make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so.

Should the governing board be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

## **Complaints about the provision of Religious Education**

It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved by the Headteacher, in consultation with the Governors, and possibly with advice from the Synod moderator. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee for the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the local Synod.

## **Relationship to School Worship**

Our Programme for Worship is updated each year. The aim is to link worship to areas of the RE Syllabus, behaviour policy, our Personal Development Backpack, Christian and British values and ethos of the school.

## **Links with Clitheroe URC Church**

Close links are maintained with Clitheroe URC Church through:

☐ Visits to church, where the children attend as individuals, rather than a whole school body, ensuring that they can take part in the service at an age appropriate level. Each month, a Sunday service is planned for a certain year group with children's age and families in mind.

- ☐ Visits to Church in line with units and study of the history of the URC.
- ☐ Weekly whole school Worship each Thursday led by a minister.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The whole school community is responsible for preserving and developing the religious character of the school and is led by:

Chair of Governors: Paul Adnitt

Ethos Committee: Paul Adnitt, Janet Grime and Revd. Michele Jarmany

Headteacher and Worship leader: Nicola McArdle

Subject leader: Lucie Cox

### **The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader**

- ☐ To show by example good RE practice.
- ☐ To monitor the effectiveness of the planned and delivered curriculum specifically in RE.
- ☐ To guide and support teachers in this subject, and to provide, where necessary, appropriate training and development.
- ☐ To audit and monitor the quality of RE resources, including online and other web-based technologies, to ensure effective learning and teaching across the school.
- ☐ To work closely with the link Governor, the Diocese and the Headteacher.

### **The Role of the Ethos Committee**

- ☐ To be a critical friend to both the RE co-ordinator and the senior management team, to ensure high quality RE provision.
- ☐ To liaise closely with the RE Subject Leader, and Headteacher.
- ☐ To attend appropriate training linked to RE.
- ☐ To feedback to Governors, keeping them informed of RE across the school.

Responsibility for leadership and the management of Religious Education to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils is led by Lucie Cox and Nicola McArdle.



**Cycle of evaluation**

The RE subject lead will join the Headteacher and Ethos Committee in the Summer term for a reflection session. On this day, working with the Headteacher the lead will:

Review Policy

Review the SEF

Review Worship policy

Analyse evaluation of last year's worship.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies, including the Worship Policy, and the SEN policy to ensure all children have access to the curriculum.