



St Mary's C of E (VA) Primary School

Working together
in an inclusive Christian environment
to allow every pupil to shine brighter and brighter.

St Mary's is an inclusive school where we believe that all people are of equal value, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, ability or sexual identity. We recognise and respect differences.

Religious Education Policy

This policy is GDPR compliant.

Date of issue: Major updates February 2026

Last reviewed/adopted: February 2026 (Full Governing Board)

Next review date: Spring 2028

Signed: _____

Date: _____

School Vision and the Place of Religious Education

At St Mary's, our Christian vision, **"Shining Brighter and Brighter"** (Proverbs 4:18), underpins all that we do. Rooted in Christian love and faith, our vision calls us to seek wisdom, make good choices and walk in the light. We aim to develop confident children who know success, direct their talents towards excellence, and nourish mutual respect in strong partnership with parents and carers, the Church and the local community.

Religious Education plays a vital role in bringing this vision to life. Through high-quality RE, pupils are encouraged to grow in knowledge, character and kindness, enabling them to understand themselves, others and the world more deeply. RE provides opportunities for pupils to explore Christianity as a living faith, to encounter a range of religions and worldviews, and to engage thoughtfully with questions of meaning, belief and values. In doing so, pupils are supported to recognise their own unique gifts and experiences, to reflect on their personal stories, and to consider how they can use their learning to shine brightly in the lives of others.

RE at St Mary's therefore nurtures confident learners who are respectful, reflective and compassionate, helping them to flourish academically and spiritually and to contribute positively to the school, church and wider community as they continue to "shine brighter and brighter."

RE Policy Statement

Religious Education is a statutory subject and is provided for all registered pupils in accordance with the Education Act (1988). Although RE is not part of the National Curriculum, it holds equal status with core subjects and is a key element of the school's basic curriculum. As a Church of England school, RE is taught in line with the school's Trust Deed/Funding Agreement and reflects the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

Aims of Religious Education

Religious Education at St Mary's aims to promote religious literacy, enabling pupils to engage in balanced, informed and respectful conversations about religion and belief. In line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement (January 2026) and the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus (2023–2028), RE seeks to enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse, global and living faith through engagement with biblical texts and Christian theology.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change.
- Engage with challenging questions of meaning, purpose and truth raised by human experience.
- Understand the concept of religion and its influence on individuals, communities and society, locally, nationally and globally.
- Explore and articulate their own beliefs, values and worldviews with increasing confidence and respect for others.

Through these aims, RE contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to the flourishing of the whole school community.

Curriculum Intent and Design

Religious Education at St Mary's is taught as an academic, objective and pluralistic subject meaning that we will explore many beliefs carefully and respectfully, without telling anyone what to believe. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to build knowledge and understanding over time and to develop pupils' disciplinary skills.

The curriculum is underpinned by a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing on:

- **Theology** – exploring beliefs, teachings, sources of authority and how these are interpreted and lived out.
- **Philosophy** – considering questions of meaning, truth, morality and ethics.
- **Human and Social Sciences** – examining how beliefs and practices shape individuals and communities in lived contexts.

Our curriculum map ensures progression across year groups and phases, with enquiry questions approached through these three disciplinary lenses.

Coverage and Time Allocation

In accordance with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement:

- Christianity is the majority religion studied, accounting for at least two-thirds of curriculum time across each key stage.
- Pupils also study a range of other principal religions and non-religious worldviews, reflecting the diversity of British society and the local community.

At St Mary's, this entitlement is met through:

- Weekly RE lessons and/or blocked teaching.
- The use of additional RE-focused days or thematic learning where appropriate.

The curriculum follows the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus requirements for time allocation:

- KS1: approximately 60 hours over two years.
- KS2: approximately 156 hours over four years.

Curriculum Content and Progression

Our RE curriculum map shows clear progression from Nursery through Year 6, ensuring pupils revisit key concepts and deepen their understanding over time. Pupils primarily study:

- **EYFS/KS1:** Christianity and Judaism, with reference to other faiths and festivals relevant to the cohort.
- **Lower KS2:** Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.
- **Upper KS2:** Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

The *Understanding Christianity* resource is used to support theological understanding and progression within Christianity and The Emmanuel Project is used to support theological understanding and progression within religions and worldviews beyond Christianity.

Teaching and Learning in RE

RE is taught using an enquiry-based approach, encouraging pupils to ask questions, investigate sources, reflect critically and express informed viewpoints. Teaching strategies include discussion, debate, storytelling, art, drama, music, use of artefacts and engagement with texts.

Where possible, pupils are given opportunities to encounter religion as lived experience through:

- Visits to places of worship.
- Visitors from faith and belief communities.

RE lessons provide a safe and respectful space where pupils can explore ideas openly and learn to listen thoughtfully to others.

Assessment in Religious Education

Assessment in RE focuses on pupils' progress in developing knowledge and understanding through the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines.

Progression is demonstrated through:

- Increasing depth and complexity of knowledge.
- Making connections between beliefs, practices and concepts.
- Growing ability to interpret, evaluate and articulate ideas using appropriate vocabulary.

Assessment is ongoing and formative, using a range of evidence such as written work, discussion, creative responses and reflection. Judgements are made against age-related expectations, and progress is measured half-termly and reported annually to parents.

Inclusion and Entitlement

All pupils are entitled to access high-quality RE regardless of background, belief, ability or need. Teaching is adapted to ensure inclusion for pupils with SEND, EAL and those who are more able, using varied strategies and appropriate support to enable all pupils to make progress.

The Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from RE on grounds of conscience. We encourage parents considering withdrawal to discuss their concerns with the Headteacher so that they can make an informed decision. Where pupils are withdrawn, appropriate supervision will be provided in line with statutory guidance.

Leadership, Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Leader is responsible for:

- Implementing and reviewing this policy.
- Monitoring curriculum coverage, teaching quality and pupil outcomes.
- Supporting staff through guidance and professional development.
- Liaising with the Diocese, church and wider community.

The governing body monitors RE provision to ensure it meets statutory requirements and supports the Christian vision of the school.

Professional Development

The school is committed to ensuring staff teaching RE have access to high-quality professional development. This includes diocesan training, local authority support and opportunities to share best practice.

The Contribution of RE to Wider Curriculum Aims

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as required by Section 78(1) of the Education Act (2002). Through the exploration of Christianity and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, pupils develop moral awareness, social understanding and respect for diversity. This learning supports pupils in understanding the communities in which they live and the wider world, and in developing the skills to listen, speak and respond respectfully to others as thoughtful and informed communicators.

RE also supports pupils' personal development and well-being, helping them to become confident individuals and responsible citizens. Through high expectations and carefully structured enquiry-based learning, all pupils are supported to make progress from their starting points and experience success. RE develops pupils' ability to reflect, evaluate ideas and engage with challenging questions, supporting resilience, self-awareness and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to make informed moral judgements and develop the capacity to make positive and responsible choices as they prepare for adult life and lifelong learning.

In addition, Religious Education plays an important role in promoting community cohesion. It provides opportunities for pupils to explore diversity of religion and belief within the school community, the local area, the United Kingdom and the wider global community. Through this, RE promotes shared values, challenges prejudice and

discrimination, and fosters an ethos of mutual respect, understanding and inclusion. This supports pupils in recognising their responsibilities as members of local, national and global communities, contributing positively to a democratic society and respect for human rights.