



"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

St. Maxentius C.E. Primary School

Religious Education Policy

'RE is like the Tardis. Despite the small space it occupies in the curriculum, it is huge, encompassing nothing less than humanity's most searching questions, its deepest hopes, the history of the world's beliefs and their diverse manifestation in the modern world.' (NATRE)

The intent of our RE curriculum is to make a significant contribution to a child's cultural capital, and to help them become religiously literate. We want children to learn more about themselves and their place in the world from their increasingly academic and creative exploration of religions and beliefs. We aim to develop the skills and attitudes essential to help them communicate with others in a way that appreciates religious beliefs, cultural experiences, and world views. Through the sharing of lived experience and knowledge of how beliefs, values, practices, and ways of life within religions and cultures cohere together, pupils will be empowered to show curiosity, reflect, express themselves and ask respectful questions. We want our pupils to develop a personal awareness and ability to approach life in an inclusive, informed, and respectful way. We want RE to contribute to our pupils' personal development and wellbeing, and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. We work to enable children to understand the nature of religions and beliefs which have influenced the lives of millions of people and heavily influenced the development of different human cultures.

Christian Vision

'Be Strong and Courageous, Do not be afraid, Do not be discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go' Joshua 1:9



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St Maxentius is a learning community where everyone can prosper and flourish in God's wisdom, where each person is known, loved and valued. Underpinning everything we do in school is our Christian Vision ' Be Strong and Courageous. Do Not Be Afraid. Do Not Be Discouraged for the Lord Your God is With You Wherever You Go.' (Joshua 1:9) Children are encouraged to relish challenge, rise to difficulties facing them with strength and courage. We ask our children to believe in themselves as we do in them, as with self-belief, anything is possible! Our children are resilient and never give up, learning from their mistakes and finding success in their journey, reassured that God is with them supporting and guiding all the way!

Our Christian Values of Love, Hope and Faith are woven through all we do, our relationships, interactions, learning and successes.

Context

- St. Maxentius is a one form entry primary school, serving children in the age range of 4- 11 years.
- We deliver Religious Education (RE) in line with the Blackburn Diocese Syllabus and guidelines and we are transitioning to the Manchester scheme in September 2024.
- St. Maxentius recognises and values the religious backgrounds and non-religious backgrounds of each of our pupils. We intend to be sensitive to the home background of all and therefore work to ensure that RE is accessible to all pupils and teachers of any religious persuasion or none.
- We have a strong understanding of how RE can play a leading role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- At St. Maxentius we know how relationships with members of local communities and local faith communities can enrich pupils' experiences in RE and we strive to cultivate and maintain these relationships.

Legal requirements

RE at St. Maxentius will meet legal requirements by:

- Its inclusion in the curriculum of all registered pupils. In primary school, this is a requirement for all pupils in Reception to Year 6, but does not include children in nursery classes. However, at present St. Maxentius does not have nursery class provision.
- Reflecting the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.



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- Teaching RE in accordance with RE statement of entitlement.

Aims

Our aims of RE are that pupils will:

- A Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and among individuals
 - identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
 - Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- B Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs and practices influence individuals and communities
 - express with increasing consideration their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
 - Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.
- C Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:
- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
 - enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
 - Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Place in the curriculum

The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

All state schools... must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage...

All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

(DfE, The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, July 2013, p.4)



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The *Curriculum Framework for RE* (2013) recognises RE as a core subject and it is regarded as such at St. Maxentius.

RE is taught as a discrete subject and links are made across the curriculum. We recognise that RE can make a positive contribution to much of pupils' life in school. It can be linked especially well to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, Citizenship (including social cohesion) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic education and we strive to make links where appropriate.

In order to maximise the impact of RE sessions and pupils' progress in this subject, we teach RE in designated weekly RE lessons. Our RE curriculum provides memorable experiences to deepen our children's learning and facilitate them in putting their beliefs into action. RE provides the children with the opportunity to reflect on their own moral stance and will give them opportunities to articulate and express their views and idea.

Timing

The RE syllabus that we follow recommends that RE should be taught for 36 hours in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 36 hours in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and 45 hours in Key Stage 2 (KS2). At St. Maxentius, RE is therefore taught for:

36 hours per year in Reception

36 hours per year in both year groups across KS1

45 hours per year all year groups across both lower and upper KS2.

Learning and teaching in RE

A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings are used where appropriate including: role play/puppets, re-enactment, hot-seating, discussion / debate (peer, small group, and whole class), questioning, enquiring / researching, collage / painting / sculpture / drawing, music, dance, story, poetry, technology, artefacts, visitors, and visits.

St. Maxentius recognises that 'enquiry' can be instrumental to good learning in RE and we aim to help pupils develop skills to enquire independently. Pupils should be given time to generate pertinent questions where appropriate. Teachers ensure that the atmosphere in RE lessons is conducive to question raising and reflective thought. We appreciate the positive impact that local communities and local faith communities can have on pupils' experiences in RE. With this in mind, we endeavour to visit different places of worship and invite visitors from faith communities into RE lessons.

All teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

Parents and other adults

As in all other areas of our curriculum, parents and other adults are welcome into school and into classes, to work alongside the children, or to talk to them about particular experiences – whether connected with their life or their faith.



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Adults are invited to our church services as well as other whole school celebrations such as: Harvest, Christingle service, Nativity, Holy week re-enactment or any of our class worships.

Religions and worldviews

St. Maxentius follows the direction of the Blackburn Diocese Syllabus and guidance for RE and Blackburn Diocesan guidelines which states that school will follow an 80/20 split of Christianity and other religions. This is supplemented by units from 'Understanding Christianity' and themed days such as Diwali and Eid. From September 2024 the school will be moving the Manchester diocese scheme.

Inclusion

Our whole school inclusion, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies apply to RE.

Teachers are aware that pupils who have barriers to learning in other areas may have a strong interest in and aptitude for RE. All pupils should be encouraged to progress to their full potential and a variety of adaptive teaching methods (e.g. use of art, drama, ICT) should be employed to ensure that this is possible.

Some pupils have positive and deep experiences of religion from their lives outside of school. While there is no doubt that these experiences should be valued, they do not necessarily relate to pupils' ability in RE.

Assessment

A range of strategies and evidence forms are used by teachers to make summative judgements and assessment for each child.

Pupils' attainment in RE throughout the school will be tracked by class teachers using 'insight'.

As required by law, we report pupils' attainment in RE in written form to parents once a year.

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for overseeing teaching and learning in RE. This role includes:

- supporting staff with planning and delivery of RE
- acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- organising visitors and trips
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE (monitoring includes books, lesson observations, resources, pupil and staff questionnaires, lesson observations)
- Staff CPD in RE



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Right of withdrawal

Pupils' families and faith communities have the right to encourage religious nurture of the children, fostering their faith. It is the responsibility of the school to provide Religious Education for all its pupils.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children either partly or wholly from RE. In addition, teachers have the right not to teach the subject. Our approach to RE, however, has been constructed in the hope that parents and teachers will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons should inform the Head teacher and discuss this further in person.

Review and development of RE

- This policy will be reviewed every two years by the RE leader to ensure that:
- It is contributing to the achievement of high standards and progress in RE throughout the school
- It complies with statutory requirements and any new legislation
- Any necessary actions are included in the School Improvement Plan
- An annual action plan will be created

Prepared by: Mrs L. Cousen (Headteacher/RE lead)

Reviewed: September 2023

Next Review Date: September 2024