

Loving to Learn, Growing Together, Caring for All

Levens CE School is a happy, safe and inspiring place to grow and learn, where we enjoy the learning experiences each new day brings. Everyone is supported and nurtured through our distinctively Christian ethos and shared Christian values.

Our Vision for Religious Education

Religious Education contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. We aim to foster an attitude of fair-minded enquiry towards a range of religious convictions and encourage respect for those holding different beliefs and none.

Our school is situated in a small village in a rural area which means that we are a considerable distance from other faith communities or places of worship. Our children's everyday experience of the multi-faith nature of British society is therefore restricted. Pupils and staff come from different Christian faiths and none. RE is a highly valued academic subject that enables understanding of how religion and beliefs affect our lives. There is 'a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Statement of Entitlement 2019)

Our main aim is to enable children to understand the nature of religious beliefs and practices and the importance of these in the lives of believers. We aim to help children learn more about religious tradition and heritage. At the heart of RE in this school is the teaching of Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ that enables learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.

We aim for an open and reflective approach to Christianity and other world faiths and an appreciation of what it might mean to be a member of a faith community. We aim to explore values by which to live and those aspects of human experience which raise questions about life.

We aim to foster respect, tolerance, empathy, awareness and understanding of self and others in our teaching. Each child's world view is welcomed and used as a source for learning. We are committed to education for wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

The aims and approaches we adopt are outlined in more detail in the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus. However, encountering religion and belief includes:

- Enquiry into and investigation of the nature of religion;
- Key beliefs and teachings, practices;
- Impact on the lives of believers and communities;
- Different ways of expressing beliefs, teachings and practices;
- Developing pupil skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation in relation to religion;
- Pupils' communication of their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary;
- Pupils reflection on and response to their own experiences, questions of identity and belonging, meaning purpose and truth, values and commitment;
- Development of religious literacy.

Aims

The aims of religious education follow the National Society RE statement of Entitlement 2019:

1. To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
2. To enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
3. To facilitate pupils to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
4. To enable pupils to recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
5. To encourage pupils to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

National Society RE Statement of Entitlement 2019

Legal Framework

As a voluntary controlled school, we legally have to adopt the Cumbria local authority agreed syllabus. Parents have a legal right in accordance with the Education act 1996 to withdraw their children from RE lessons. As this subject is central to the life and identity of Levens Church of England School, we ask parents to discuss with the head teacher any reasons they might have for doing this.

Content

The broad content of our RE scheme is taken from the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus for RE supported by Understanding Christianity Resource. We study Christianity and Islam in KS1 and Christianity, Islam and Buddhism in KS2. RE is taught either as an integral part of class topics and as a separate subject. Other religions and worldviews may be taught implicitly or when comparing ideas or as thematic studies. Of the RE taught approximately 70% focusses on Christianity and 30 % focusses on other faiths. Where RE is taught as part of a cross-curricular theme the specific RE content is clearly defined and recorded at all stages. We are developing our school RE Long Term Plan that seeks to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression.

Children take part in celebrating the festivals of the Christian year. Christmas, Easter, and Harvest are covered with each year group in a progressive manner with different emphasis and depth to avoid repetition.

Our RE teaching is person-centred and engages with children's everyday experience. It presents opportunities for children to learn both about and from religion. We teach using a variety of styles and strategies incorporating periods of quiet reflection, art, drama, movement, music, pictures/posters, stories, poems, videos, tapes, visits, food, discussion and interviews.

RE is planned so children use all their senses and are prompted to think, question, explore, experience, reflect, feel, wonder, enjoy, and value.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development/ British Values

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. We invite children to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider those of others, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society as well as their own experiences

- Religious education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider community, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice. This includes work on British values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, respect and tolerance).

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Appropriate to age, at the end of their education in our Church school the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and (as a minimum) they are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith;
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and worldviews in their search for God and meaning;
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions;
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none.

National Society RE Statement of Entitlement 2016

We assess children's knowledge and awareness of RE by observing their interactions and relationships; by questioning and listening to them and by assessing individual or group presentations and pieces of work. Written comments on a child's strengths and areas for improvement are made to parents in the end of year report.

Inspection of RE as a Church of England School will be under the SIAMS inspection schedule, updated Sept 2018, and will look at both:

- Effectiveness in ensuring that pupils flourish through the provision of high quality religious education;
- Effectiveness in ensuring that the subject expresses the school's Christian vision.

Policy Review

This policy was agreed by the Full Governing Body on 19th March 2020

Signed (Chair of Governors) S. Bishop

This policy is due for review by Spring 2023