All Saints Church of England

Infant and Nursery School

Selston Church of England

Infant and Nursery School

Religious Education Policy

Opening hearts and minds through the grace and love of God

Created: September 2026
Next Review Date: September 2028

ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

SELSTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

VISION STATEMENT

Opening hearts and minds through the grace and love of God

At All Saints Church of England Infant and Nursery School and Selston Church of England Infant and Nursery School children always come first and we try to nourish, challenge, prepare and inspire them within a Christian ethos.

We believe in valuing all who contribute towards the successful running of our schools including children, parents, carers, governors, teaching and non-teaching staff.

This Vision Statement lies at the heart of our schools' aims. It is the philosophical basis for all of the schools' policies and through these, for everything that happens in and round our schools. Our aspiration is for everyone at All Saints and Selston to:

- feel happy, secure, safe and valued at school
- develop a growing awareness of their own inner self and spirituality, and of the power of the Christian faith to transform lives
- develop healthy relationships based on care, trust, compassion and forgiveness
- show acceptance for and understanding of others who may have different beliefs or needs
- strive for the highest standards of achievement, developing the confidence and skills to be independent, motivated and self-disciplined learners
- have a positive approach to life, contributing to the well-being of the community and building hope for the future

We hope that children will leave our schools with open hearts and minds, ready to respond to the opportunities that lie before them and to experience the joy of life in all its fullness.

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Religious Education Policy

Vision and Rationale

At All Saints and Selston, Religious Education is a highly valued and integral part of the curriculum. As Church of England schools, we believe that Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every child. Through Religious Education, children are encouraged to develop a rich understanding of Christianity, engage thoughtfully with a range of religious and non-religious worldviews and reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, identity and belonging. Religious Education supports our vision of enabling every child to flourish and helps prepare pupils to live well together in a diverse and changing world.

Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2026–2031 and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Our curriculum also incorporates the Understanding Christianity resource, which supports pupils in developing a deeper theological understanding of Christianity through engagement with biblical texts and key Christian concepts.

We believe that excellent Religious Education enables children to become religiously literate, equipping them with knowledge, understanding and skills that allow them to engage respectfully and confidently with people whose beliefs and values may be different from their own. It provides safe opportunities to ask questions, explore ideas, express opinions and appreciate diversity while developing respect for the dignity and worth of all people.

Aims

The aim of Religious Education at our school is to enable all pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith, while also developing an informed understanding of other religious and non-religious worldviews represented within Britain and the wider world. We seek to foster children's curiosity and encourage them to ask and explore deep questions about life, faith, values and human experience.
Through Religious Education, pupils develop knowledge of beliefs, practices, stories, festivals, symbols and traditions. They learn how religion and belief influence the lives of individuals and communities and explore how different worldviews help people make sense of the world around them. Children are encouraged to think critically, reflect deeply and articulate their own responses to significant questions in a respectful and informed manner.

The Religious Education Curriculum

Religious Education is planned progressively to ensure that children build upon their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The curriculum is structured around the three strands identified within the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus: substantive knowledge, personal knowledge and ways of knowing. Children are therefore supported not only in learning about religions and worldviews but also in understanding how knowledge is gained and how beliefs influence people's lives.

As Church of England schools, Christianity is the principal religion studied and accounts for at least fifty per cent of curriculum content. Children encounter Christianity as a diverse global faith, exploring key concepts through the Understanding Christianity programme, including God, Creation, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and Kingdom of God. The use of Understanding Christianity ensures that pupils engage deeply with biblical texts and develop a coherent understanding of Christian belief across the primary years.

Alongside Christianity, children study a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, including Judaism, Islam and Humanism. Through these studies, pupils gain an appreciation of both diversity and commonality within and between communities. They come to understand that people may hold differing beliefs while sharing many values and aspirations.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Nursery and Reception, Religious Education is embedded within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and contributes particularly to children's understanding of the world, communication and language, personal development and expressive arts.
Children encounter religions and worldviews through stories, celebrations, visitors, artefacts, music, role play and first-hand experiences. Learning is rooted in children's own experiences and encourages curiosity, wonder and reflection. They explore questions such as why some stories, people, places and times are special and begin to understand that different people have different beliefs and traditions. Through discussion and play, children develop an increasing awareness of their own identity and the communities to which they belong.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Nursery and Reception, Religious Education is embedded within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and makes a significant contribution to children's learning and development, particularly within the areas of Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. Through carefully planned experiences, children

begin to explore their own sense of identity and belonging while developing an awareness of the diverse beliefs, traditions and communities that make up the world around them.

At this early stage of learning, Religious Education is rooted in children's own experiences, interests and questions. Opportunities are provided for children to encounter religion and belief through stories, celebrations, special people, artefacts, music, role play, creative activities, visitors and first-hand experiences. These rich and engaging experiences encourage children to develop curiosity, ask questions, express their ideas and respond with wonder and imagination to the world around them.

Through the EYFS Religious Education curriculum, children explore questions such as: *Which stories are special and why? Which people are special and why? What places are special and why? What times are special and why? Who are we and how do we belong? How can we care for our wonderful world?* These enquiries help children to recognise that different people have different beliefs, traditions and ways of living, whilst also identifying many shared values such as kindness, love, friendship, generosity and care for others.

Children are introduced to a range of religious and non-religious worldviews through age-appropriate stories, celebrations and experiences. They learn about key Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter, as well as festivals celebrated by other faith communities represented within the school and local area. They encounter important religious figures, hear stories from sacred texts and begin to understand why these are valued by believers. Through these experiences, children gain an early understanding of Christianity as a living faith and are introduced to the rich diversity of religious and cultural traditions found within Britain and across the world.

Religious Education in the Early Years provides valuable opportunities for language development. Children are encouraged to talk about their own experiences and feelings, ask questions, learn new vocabulary and engage in meaningful conversations with adults and their peers. Through storytelling, discussion and imaginative play, they begin to express their own ideas about what is important, special, beautiful or puzzling. These opportunities support both communication skills and the development of critical thinking.

Religious Education also contributes significantly to children's personal, social and emotional development. Through learning about belonging, communities, relationships and values, children develop a growing awareness of themselves and others. They begin to understand the importance of treating people with kindness and respect, recognising similarities and differences and valuing diversity. Through discussion, reflection and play, children develop empathy, learn to listen to others and begin to appreciate that people may hold beliefs and opinions that differ from their own.

The natural world also plays an important part in Early Years Religious Education. Children are encouraged to explore feelings of awe, wonder and appreciation as they investigate nature, seasons, animals and the environment. They consider questions about creation, care and responsibility and begin to understand why many religious and non-religious people believe it is important to care for the world and all living things.

Throughout Nursery and Reception, Religious Education is delivered through a balance of adult-led activities, continuous provision, child-initiated learning and high-quality interactions. The emphasis is on exploration, discovery and developing positive attitudes towards difference. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children will have begun to develop an understanding of themselves as unique individuals, recognise that people belong to different communities and traditions, and demonstrate curiosity, respect and openness towards the beliefs and experiences of others

Teaching and Learning in Key Stage 1

We believe that children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful enquiry and are encouraged to explore questions that are relevant and intriguing to them. Religious Education in Key Stage 1 is therefore planned around carefully structured enquiry questions that stimulate curiosity, encourage investigation and help children develop an understanding of different religions and worldviews. Through high-quality teaching and learning experiences, pupils are supported to become thoughtful, reflective and respectful learners who are able to express their own ideas while listening carefully to the views of others.

Learning is designed to be engaging, interactive and memorable. Children encounter a wide range of learning experiences including storytelling, discussion, drama, role play, art, music, practical activities and opportunities for reflection. These approaches enable pupils to explore religious concepts in age-appropriate ways and help them make meaningful connections between their learning and their own lives. Lessons encourage children to ask questions, investigate ideas and consider different responses to significant questions about belief, belonging, values and human experience.

The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn through and from religion and worldviews. Children engage with authentic religious materials, including sacred stories, artefacts, photographs, music, symbols and examples of worship and celebration. Through these experiences they begin to understand how beliefs influence the lives of individuals, families and communities. They learn about important religious festivals, special places, key figures and traditions, while also recognising that there is diversity within religions and that people may express their beliefs in different ways.

Wherever possible, learning is enriched through visits and visitors. First-hand experiences help children encounter lived religion and belief and develop a deeper understanding of the communities they study. Visits to churches and other places of worship, as well as opportunities to meet faith representatives and members of local communities, enable pupils to ask questions, deepen their understanding and appreciate the relevance of religion and belief in contemporary society. These experiences promote respect, challenge stereotypes and support children's understanding of diversity within their local community and beyond.

Teaching reflects current best practice in Religious Education and incorporates age-appropriate approaches drawn from theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. Children are encouraged to think about what people believe (theology), to ask and discuss life's big questions (philosophy), and to explore how religion and belief influence the lives of individuals and communities (human and social sciences). Through these different lenses, pupils develop an increasingly rich understanding of religion and worldviews and begin to recognise that there are many ways of exploring and understanding belief.

Teachers create a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment in which all children feel valued and confident to share their ideas. Respectful discussion is modelled and encouraged, helping pupils learn how to listen carefully, disagree courteously and appreciate different viewpoints. Children are supported in exploring their own developing worldview and reflecting on what matters to them, while recognising that others may hold different beliefs and perspectives.

Religious Education is non-confessional in nature and does not seek to persuade pupils to adopt any particular faith or belief. Instead, it aims to develop knowledge, understanding and religious literacy through objective, balanced and academically rigorous study. The emphasis is on helping children become increasingly informed, reflective and respectful members of society who are equipped to engage positively with the diverse world in which they live. Through Religious Education, pupils develop critical thinking skills, empathy, curiosity and the confidence to participate in thoughtful dialogue about religion, belief and human experience.

SEND and Inclusion

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are fully included in Religious Education and are able to access, participate in and make progress within the Religious Education curriculum. We recognise that every child is unique and that high-quality Religious Education should provide meaningful opportunities for all learners to develop knowledge, understanding and personal reflection, regardless of their starting points or particular needs.

Religious Education is planned and delivered in accordance with the principles of inclusive practice outlined within the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Agreed

Syllabus, which emphasises that RE should be accessible to all pupils and that appropriate provision should be made for learners with SEND.

Teachers carefully adapt teaching, resources and learning activities to meet the needs of individual pupils. This may include the use of visual supports, practical and sensory experiences, adult guidance, structured discussion, simplified language, alternative recording methods and carefully scaffolded tasks. Learning objectives may be adapted where appropriate to ensure pupils can engage successfully with key concepts and experiences while maintaining high expectations for achievement.

Religious Education provides valuable opportunities for pupils with SEND to explore identity, belonging, relationships, values and meaning through a wide range of accessible learning experiences. We recognise that many pupils benefit from concrete experiences, storytelling, drama, music, artefacts, photographs, visits and opportunities for first-hand learning, all of which form a regular part of our Religious Education provision. These approaches support understanding and enable pupils to make personal connections with their learning.

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils are able to contribute their ideas, experiences and questions within a safe and supportive environment. Teachers are sensitive to the diverse backgrounds, needs and life experiences of pupils and seek to create an atmosphere where every child feels valued and respected. Assessment arrangements are adapted as necessary to allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways, including through discussion, practical activities, artwork, role play, photographs and other forms of communication.

We believe that Religious Education makes an important contribution to the personal development and wellbeing of pupils with SEND. Through learning about Christianity and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, pupils are encouraged to develop self-awareness, empathy, respect for others and an appreciation of diversity within the wider community. In line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement, we are committed to enabling all pupils, irrespective of educational need, disability or disadvantage, to achieve highly in Religious Education and to access their full curriculum entitlement.

Assessment

Assessment in Religious Education is ongoing and informs future teaching and learning. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills through observation, discussion, questioning and the outcomes of learning activities. Assessment focuses on children's growing understanding of religions and worldviews, their ability to express informed ideas and their development as thoughtful and reflective learners.

Progress is monitored in line with the expectations of the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus.

Monitoring and Leadership

The Religious Education Subject Leader is responsible for ensuring the quality of Religious Education throughout the school. This includes supporting staff, monitoring planning and provision, reviewing children's work and evaluating standards and progress. The Subject Leader works alongside senior leaders and governors to ensure that Religious Education remains a high-profile subject and continues to reflect both the Church of England Statement of Entitlement and the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus.

Particular attention is given to ensuring that Christianity remains central within the curriculum, that Understanding Christianity is used effectively and that pupils encounter a broad and balanced range of religious and non-religious worldviews. RE is monitored separately from Collective Worship and retains its status as an academic subject in its own right.

Collective Worship and Religious Education

Religious Education and Collective Worship are distinct, though complementary, aspects of school life. Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual reflection and worship within the context of the school's Christian character. Religious Education, by contrast, is an academic subject in which pupils study Christianity and other religious and non-religious worldviews in an objective, enquiring and critical manner. Curriculum time allocated to Religious Education is separate from Collective Worship and is clearly identifiable.

Statutory Requirements and Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

Religious Education is a statutory subject and forms a central part of our curriculum. As Church of England schools, our Religious Education provision reflects the requirements of the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus and the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Religious Education is taught as an academic subject that explores Christianity and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. Christianity forms the majority of the curriculum, reflecting the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, whilst also taking account of the teachings and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain. All pupils are entitled to receive Religious Education in every statutory year group.

Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child, either wholly or partially, from Religious Education in accordance with Schedule 19 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents are not required to give reasons for requesting withdrawal, and any request will be granted promptly and without question. Although the school may offer an opportunity to discuss the nature and purpose of Religious Education in order to provide further information and address

any concerns, this conversation will only take place after the request has been granted. Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher to ensure that clear records are maintained. The school will confirm the arrangements for the pupil during Religious Education lessons and will keep an accurate record of the request and any actions taken.

Where a pupil has been withdrawn from Religious Education, the school will make reasonable alternative arrangements which do not incur additional cost or disruption to normal school organisation. Alternative provision will not normally include teaching another curriculum subject, intervention programmes or catch-up work. Instead, wherever possible, arrangements will support the pupil's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. There is no requirement for the school to provide alternative Religious Education or instruction in a different faith or worldview. The school remains committed to ensuring that Religious Education is inclusive, accessible and respectful of all pupils and families and will continue to communicate the value and purpose of Religious Education through curriculum information, policy documents and discussions with parents and carers.

Conclusion

At All Saints and Selston, Religious Education makes a vital contribution to the life of the school. Guided by the Church of England Statement of Entitlement, the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus and the Understanding Christianity programme, our Religious Education curriculum enables children to develop knowledge, understanding, wisdom and respect. Through high-quality Religious Education, pupils are equipped to flourish as thoughtful, compassionate and informed individuals who are prepared for life in a richly diverse society.