



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY TEMPLATE

This policy template has been updated to reflect the expectations of the current CE Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (2019) and the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (2018).

This template is for guidance only and should only be used as the basis for a school policy. **It should be adapted and edited to reflect the context and vision of your own school**, the requirements of your RE syllabus and used in conjunction with Diocesan religious education guidance materials.

Policy Statement for Religious Education

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together

*Such an approach is offered through 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.
(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)*

Introduction

The religious education (RE) at[insert school name] is informed by our school vision and values and our Anglican foundation [You may wish to include details of your vision]. As a church school we recognise the core place that RE occupies in relation to our Christian distinctiveness and regard it as one of our core subjects. The teaching of Christianity sits at the heart of our RE curriculum, but we recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds that make up our school community and respect this variety of backgrounds in the spirit of Christian welcome. Pupils and their families can expect a RE curriculum that meets legal requirements, is rich and varied and provides pupils with a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews. We actively promote British values, including the respect for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We challenge racism and all forms of prejudice. RE is one curriculum area in which are pupils encounter and critically reflect on a range of religions and worldviews.

As a VA/VC school/academy we follow the [insert name of appropriate RE Syllabus] and use high quality resources and an enquiry approach to engage pupils with Christianity and other religions and worldviews, focusing on significant theological concepts which develop and deepen pupils' own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our Christian values and our school vision support pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and we provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Aims of RE [You may prefer to include details of your school vision as an introduction to this section. The aims here are taken from the CE SOE for RE. You may want to include additional aims which derive from your school vision]

Our aims in RE for all pupils are:

- 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
- to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied

- to engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience
- 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
- to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking by:
 - considering the ‘big questions’ raised by human experience and reflecting on how different religions respond to them
 - responding to these questions with reference to religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions, relating them to their own understanding and experience
 - reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in light of their study of religious and other traditions

Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. Senior leaders ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is a priority for the school.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all pupils to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable our pupils to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief (religious literacy)
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy, critical thinking skills and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils’ needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it
- ensures that all pupils’ contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

Our RE curriculum map is based on the [insert appropriate syllabus] and we use [insert appropriate resources] to help us deliver this content effectively. [You may wish to include details of the religions studied at each key stage; details about RE planning including any cycles you follow]

Curriculum balance and time

The content of RE follows the legal requirement to reflect the fact that the religious traditions of the UK are, in the main, Christian. Reflecting our school's trust deed/academy funding agreement Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group and comprises at least 50% of curriculum time in each academic year. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, is organised [insert appropriate details] and equates to [insert details] of our curriculum time*.

*Schools may teach RE in weekly sessions or blocked units. This should aim to be close to 10% of dedicated curriculum time but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4. The minimum recommended time for all maintained schools is 36 hours per year for KS1 and 45 hours per year for KS2/KS3. In church schools RE should be regarded as a core subject. Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.

Teaching and learning

Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. RE lessons provide a safe space for pupils to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- reading and critically analysing texts
- interpreting information from different sources
- seeking information for themselves in libraries and on computers
- listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils
- engaging in individual, paired and group work
- exploring a range of artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama
- experiencing visits and visitors
- taking part in outdoor learning
- taking time for reflection

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about and religions and worldviews. Lessons seek to present religions and worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. All questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teachers establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the children's own lives. Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.

We consider encountering world faiths as an important element of our RE. Visits and visitors are therefore planned as part of the programme of study. We encourage pupils to participate in these visits which provide pupils with the chance to encounter world religions as living faiths in modern Britain. As also encourage faith leaders and other members of faith communities to visit our [school/academy](#).

Cross-curricular links

Religious education supports the development of general educational attributes such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship. Where authentic opportunities exist, we make connections to learning in other subject areas in line with our school policy on teaching and learning.

RE and Inclusion

We teach RE to all pupils, whatever their individual needs. RE forms part of our commitment to provide a broad, balanced and inspirational education for all pupils. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress and work hard to meet the needs of all our pupils. Please see our [\[insert appropriate details\]](#) policies for details.

[This section should include how the policy deals with matters of inclusion and should make reference to the school inclusion and equal opportunities policies.](#)

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- handle artefacts
- consume food
- visit places of worship/external organisations

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We have put in place an effective system of assessment* which enables teachers and pupils to be clear about the progress they are making in RE. [\[insert details\]](#)

*Assessment in religious education should:

- include both responsive teaching (formative assessment) and summative assessment
- identify suitable assessment opportunities within units of work, drawing on resources such as Understanding Christianity
- meet the expectations of the syllabus followed
- seek to identify development of thinking skills and other attributes of learning - not only the acquisition of factual knowledge
- employ well defined criteria for marking, feedback and assessment, which identify progress and achievement
- include peer self-assessment
- enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development
- enable effective reporting to parents
- enable school leadership to make accurate judgements about the quality of the RE learning

RE Leadership

RE is a high priority for senior leaders. The school has appointed [\[insert appropriate governor details\]](#) to liaise with senior leaders and the RE subject leader to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of RE across the school.

The RE subject leader will:

- ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of RE
- ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement
- produce and regularly review the RE policy to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects current expectations and the school's vision
- ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards
- ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE
- monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff
- liaise with the HT and governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school
- attend high quality professional development opportunities

- support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions
- seek opportunities to share effective practice
- oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary
- ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE Lead undertakes formal and informal monitoring of RE. This involves [insert details] which is undertaken on a [insert details] basis. The RE lead meets regularly with senior leadership and governors and provides a report to the governing board once a [insert details]. The effectiveness of RE is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Resources

The RE budget is allocated to enable a range of high-quality resources on different religions to be purchased. The school makes use of guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be listed, stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education is provided for all registered pupils in accordance with the statutory requirements. (*DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28*). The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

Parents have the right to withdraw pupils from RE. We comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision.* Any queries about withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE subject leaders in the first instance and thereafter to the Headteacher.

[amend this section as appropriate if VA/Academy] We acknowledge that teachers also have the right to withdraw from teaching RE unless they are 'reserved' teachers. However, as a church school/academy all members of staff are asked to support the Christian ethos of the school and therefore we expect teaching staff to teach RE when asked to do so. Any member of staff wishing to withdraw from teaching RE should discuss their wishes with the

Headteacher. Should a member of staff still seek to withdraw following this discussion they should provide written notice to the Headteacher and governing board. *

Further information about the Right to Withdraw is published on our website, school handbook and prospectus. [\[amend as appropriate\]](#)

* Teachers in VC schools have the right to withdraw from teaching RE unless they are reserved teachers (teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE) or are teachers in a VA school with a National Society contract. However, teachers in church schools are asked to support the ethos of the school at recruitment and it is therefore very unlikely that teachers would ask to withdraw from RE. Further information about withdrawal can be found on the diocesan education website which provides links to diocesan guidance and key documents and schools should refer to this guidance when writing their policy.

This policy has been adopted by the [Governors/Directors](#) in consultation with the senior leaders, the RE subject leader and teaching staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies including SMSC, Collective Worship, PSHE, Teaching and Learning, Assessment.

Date of adopted..... Signed.....
Chair of Governors

Date of review..... Signed.....
Chair of Governors

[A school may wish to attach the RE curriculum map and the RE action plan as appendices to their policy.](#)