



Religious Education Policy

This is a Trust Policy– details specific to individual academies and their procedures are added by the academy in the *Appendix*. (For a copy of the policy for a specific academy which includes the *Appendix* – see the individual academy website).

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PDET Religious Education Policy

Our Vision

Peterborough Diocese Education Trust's (the Trust) vision is:

“Working together for each child to realise their God-given potential to flourish”

and each academy within the Trust has their own vision linked to this. An individual academy's vision is set out in the appendix to this policy (the *Appendix*).

Legal Framework

Religious Education (RE) within the Trust is provided in line with legal requirements. These are that:

- the basic curriculum will include provision for RE for all pupils on the academy roll;
- the content of RE shall reflect 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” (as set out in section 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998);
- the RE which is provided in our academies shall be in accordance with the Diocese of Peterborough Syllabus for Religious Education as required by the underlying trusts for the academies. A copy of the syllabus can be supplied on request to pdet.admin@peterborough.diocese.org.uk
- the RE curriculum will take account of the Church of England “Statement of Entitlement for RE” 2019 – www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/RE%20Statement%20of%20Entitlement%20for%20Church%20Schools.pdf

Introduction

“Religious Education in a Church School 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 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”. (*Taken from the Statement of Entitlement – Church of England Education Office 2019*).

Aims and Purposes

The principal aim for RE is **“to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief”**.

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of RE in Church Schools as taken from the “Statement of Entitlement 2019”. For 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;
- gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied;

- engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience;
- 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;
- explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Appropriate to their age at the end of their education in Church schools, the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and as a minimum, pupils 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 non-religious worldviews in their search for God and meaning;
- engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other faiths and none;
- reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

Right of Withdrawal

In keeping with the law, parents / carers may withdraw their children from RE provided they give written notification to the academy. The academy will ensure that suitable supervision is provided.

Staff always refer to the Subject Leader or Headteacher any questions from parents / carers about withdrawals.

The Trust notes that teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching RE if they wish to do so but must give notice of their intention in writing to the Headteacher].

RE does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children or staff, or to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

We hope that all parents / carers and teachers will feel comfortable with the open RE being taught at our academies and we encourage the participation of all.

Links with other Policies / subjects

Equal Opportunities

In keeping with the Trust's aims for equal opportunities, the teaching of RE endeavours to ensure that all pupils receive equal access to educational opportunities, regardless of their religious beliefs, gender, race, ability, social background or physical capacity. Care is taken in RE to avoid the reinforcement of negative or stereotypical images and RE aims to celebrate and appreciate cultural diversity through a variety of materials and experiences, in order to reflect the cultural diversities of our society.

Literacy

RE embeds skills of literacy in a variety of ways. For example, speaking and listening skills, drama conventions, reading different texts and writing in different genres.

ICT

ICT contributes towards the objectives of RE by the use of:

- Interactive whiteboards;
- Internet;
- Multimedia;
- Digital photography;
- Power-point presentations etc.

PSHE, Citizenship and Community Cohesion

RE looks at moral codes and values that underpin people's behaviour. It promotes values and attitudes that develop respect and sensitivity for others and enables discussion of a range of views, opinions and beliefs, which help to prepare pupils to become valuable citizens in a culturally diverse society. (Further details about the development of attitudes can be found in Section E3 of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus). We try to ensure that we have visitors from different Faith and Worldview Communities and cultural backgrounds. Visits to places of worship, both within the immediate community and the wider community are planned into the RE Programme of Study where possible. This helps to develop community cohesion through Religious Education.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

RE plays a key role in pupils' spiritual and moral development, and makes a distinctive contribution to their social and cultural development. This is outlined in detail in Section E1 of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus.

British Values

RE can make a key educational contribution to pupils' exploration of British Values and excellent teaching of RE can enable pupils to think for themselves about them. Further details can be found in Section E2 of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus.

RE and Collective Worship

RE is different in nature to both Worship and Assembly. The aims and objectives of RE are different and distinct from those of Collective Worship – see *Collective Worship Policy* –

<https://www.pdet.org.uk/userfiles/files/Policies/PDET%20Diocese%20CW%20Policy%20September%202019.pdf>

Collective Worship may not be counted as RE curriculum time.

National and Local Context

In Church of England schools and academies pupils and their families can expect an RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith through the "Understanding Christianity" resource which forms part of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus that we follow.

We provide a range of opportunities for learners to make links between beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

Our teaching and learning pedagogy uses an enquiry-based approach that engages with text and beliefs and helps to develop religious and theological literacy.
For academy specific details about local context– see the *Appendix*.

Time Allocation

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus, the Trust expects a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE based upon the law and the *Statement of Entitlement* from the Church of England Education Office – www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/RE%20Statement%20of%20Entitlement%20for%20Church%20Schools.pdf

Schools should aim to be close to 10% of curriculum for teaching RE, but must be no less than 5%.

(In practice, this means a starting point of 60 minutes per week for Key Stage 1 and 75 minutes per week for Key Stage 2).

For details of how an individual academy organises their RE time – see the *Appendix*.

Subject Leadership

RE is a core subject in all Church of England schools. RE has equal status with other core subjects in staffing, responsibility and resourcing.

The Subject Leader for RE has the following role:

Policy, knowledge and development

- Devises a whole academy plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Decides which religions are to be included at which key stage;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient;
- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole academy policy;
- Ensures that SEN, EAL and gifted and talented academy policies are promoted in RE;
- Promotes RE with staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors;
- Promotes displays of pupils' work in RE;
- Audits available resources, buys new ones and deploys appropriately;
- Keeps up-to-date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

- Reviews, monitors and evaluates the provision and the practice of RE;
- Identifies trends, makes comparisons and knows about different groups within the academy;
- Monitors planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
- Provides observation feedback and reports on findings;
- Samples pupil's work;
- Evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE for progress and attainment;
- Sets overall academy targets for improvement.

Supporting and Advising

- Prepares a subject action plan, including short and long-term targets and a funding policy, which builds on existing practice and strives for continuous improvement;
- Leads curriculum development and ensures staff development through courses, in-house meetings and training;
- Keeps up-to-date with new developments and resources, including accessing the Diocese of Peterborough termly RE Newsletter;
- Supports non-specialist teachers and staff;
- Works alongside colleagues to demonstrate good practice;
- Prepares statements about RE for parents/carers and governors, as required;
- Ensures parents/carers and children are involved in the process.

Teaching and Learning Styles

The Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus is designed to support schools / academies in developing and delivering excellence in RE. It sets out an approach to teaching and learning, supporting teachers to help pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and beliefs.

The Syllabus is underpinned by three core elements (Text / Beliefs, Impact and Connections) which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, thus supporting the aims of RE. Further details are found in Section A3 of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus.

For details of an individual academy's teaching and learning styles – see the *Appendix*.

Resources

For academy specific details – see the *Appendix*.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

The Trust's SEND policy applies to RE. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some pupils have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This, of course, may not relate to their general educational 'ability'.

Special Educational Needs

RE contributes towards the SEND policy by ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties are able to:

- Develop their self-confidence and awareness;
- Understand the world they live in as individuals and as members of groups;
- Bring their own experiences and understanding of life into the classroom;
- Develop positive attitudes towards others, respecting their beliefs and experience;
- Reflect on, and consider, their own values and those of others;
- Deal with issues that form the basis for personal choices and behaviour.

Access to RE for pupils with learning difficulties can be improved by:

- Using sensory materials and resources through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell, for example, music, tactile artefacts, plants in a sensory garden;
- Giving pupils first hand experiences, for example, visitors to the academy, visits to religious buildings, involvement in festivals and special times;
- Organising a range of activities to give personal experiences, for example, dance, drama, visits to a range of environments;
- Helping pupils to understand and appreciate their world and its diversity;
- Using a range of resources, for example, interactive/sensory stimuli, ICT, to increase pupils' knowledge of religions and the elements in them;
- Using specialist aids and equipment;
- Providing support from adults or other pupils when necessary, while allowing pupils the space, time and freedom to develop skills for themselves;
- Adapting tasks or environments and providing alternative activities where necessary, for example, tactile story books, puppets, role-play, music making, presenting work as a painting instead of writing;
- Being aware of the pace at which pupils work and of the physical and mental effort required;
- Balancing consistency and challenge, according to individual needs.

Gifted and Talented

Gifted in RE is not the same as being religiously gifted.

Gifted and talented pupils in RE are identified by teachers as those pupils who:

- Show high levels of insight into and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary;
- Make sense of and draw meaning from religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- Are sensitive to, or aware of, the mysteries of life and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- Understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts.

It is important that the full range and scope of RE activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. For example, pupils who are gifted and talented in RE should be appropriately challenged by:

- Using a variety of challenging questioning strategies to explore religious phenomena;
- Setting extension tasks to encourage greater depth of understanding;
- Using authentic materials from a faith;
- Focusing on interpretation of symbol, metaphor, text and story and the ways in which these stimulate reflection on meaning and discernment;
- Challenging and developing use of spoken and written religious language with both sacred texts and general literature;
- Teaching pupils correct terminology and language needed to handle sophisticated religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical questions ideas and materials;
- Using questions and tasks from later key stages to stimulate responses through argument, analysis and prediction;
- Encouraging pupils to make connections between their work in RE and other subjects.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

In line with the requirements of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus, by the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, understand and apply the concepts, skills and processes specified in the relevant Programme of Study, as in all areas of the curriculum. The expectation is that pupils' achievements will be weighed up by teachers using the criteria arising from the Programmes of Study.

Further detail including End of Phase Learning Outcomes, Unit Outcomes and Pupil Speak Unit Outcomes can be found in Section D of the Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus.

An annual report for RE informs parents/carers of their child's progress and attainment, as required by law. Each academy will make specific, individual, accurate comments on each pupil's progress in RE in this report, based on regular monitoring of work and with regard to the end of phase outcomes. This information will be transferred to new schools/academies when pupils leave us.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy will be reviewed annually.

To ensure that the policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to return a copy of the medium term plan for RE, or plan of the theme with RE highlighted, to the Subject Leader each term. The Subject Leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. Academies maintain a 'self-evaluation' of their RE work in readiness for inspection.

Self-Evaluation, RE and Inspection

The Subject Leader will maintain an active awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, in line with guidance about self-evaluation and review.

Transition to Secondary Education

Our academies use the final term in Year 6 to review learning in RE. They provide the schools / academies our pupils move on to with a simple statement of the religions and topics they have been studying as part of their transition information.

Appendix

Name of Academy:

Name of Headteacher:

Name of RE Subject Leader:

Our Academy Vision

[Write your “Academy Vision” here].

Explain how RE contributes to the vision. [E.g., “RE has an important contribution to make towards this by providing a caring environment where pupils feel secure and able to express their own views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions and beliefs, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others.

Pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of the role that each individual has to play in the life of the academy and of the wider community. Links are made with a variety of faith and worldview groups to help with this”].

Local context

[Make this part Academy specific.]

*xxx **Academy** is a small / large urban / rural primary academy, serving children in the age range...*

- *We welcome the diversity of our families and we intend to be sensitive to the home background of each pupil.*
- *We have close links with xxx Church and the vicar and members of the congregation support RE and Collective Worship through.....*
- *We also have close links with the local community. This includes welcoming visitors to the academy from a variety of religious and non - religious backgrounds to support RE lessons and talk to the pupils such as.....*
- *Pupils also experience visits to diverse places of worship.
We are able to visit _____ and _____ in the immediate vicinity of the Academy, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with pupils and be involved in RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. Pupils will have the opportunity to make the following visits during their time here.*

Year R

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6

The RE Subject Leader supports the organisation of these educational visits (in addition to the Educational Visits Coordinator).

- *Pupils also have the opportunity to experience the celebration of different cultures and festivals other than their own, within RE and other areas of the curriculum and Collective Worship.*

Time Allocation

At xxx Academy we organise our RE time as follows.....

Teaching and Learning Styles

We ensure that a variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted by teachers in RE to allow access by all pupils. The variety enables pupils to encounter their preferred learning style as well as to develop a broad repertoire. The teaching and learning styles used promote a range of skills such as thinking skills, reasoning, enquiry and research.

Examples of active learning strategies and activities, which we use, are [make specific to the Academy]:

- *Dramatic conventions;*
- *Group work;*
- *Individual reflection;*
- *Use of music and art;*
- *Artefact handling;*
- *Multi - sensory approaches;*
- *Visits and visitors;*
- *Use of ICT and Multi Media;*
- *Use of photos, posters, DVDs.*

Resources

[Make this section specific to the Academy].

A wide range of resources are in place for each theme within RE. These are all individually boxed according to religion and a list of contents for each resource box is displayed on the front of each box. A master copy is given to each teacher to put into their RE files. Resources are stored in xxx, and should be returned after use.

In addition, there is also a bookrack where a selection of posters and 'big books' can be found to complement themes within RE.

The Academy has invested in new books, religious artefacts, DVDs, picture packs and posters, and staff may need to familiarise themselves with the new materials. We maintain an RE story shelf in the library, which offers many stories from different traditions. Teachers may choose to use these in RE. There is a range of RE 'big books' which can be used across the age range as well.

Staff are invited to suggest gaps in the resources for future spending.