



**“Let your light shine brightly.”**

Matthew 5:16

## **Religious Education Policy**

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<b>Statutory policy:</b> <i>Yes/No</i> <b>On school website:</b> <i>Yes/No</i>	

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

## 1. Introduction

Religious Education (RE) involves the exploration of fundamental questions concerning human experience and spirituality, and the attribution of meaning to such experience within personal belief and religious tradition. RE enables pupils to grow in their spiritual development through reflection on their feelings and relationships. RE also enables pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions in the UK.

## 2. A statement of entitlement

*Religious Education in Church of England Schools: A Statement of Entitlement* (Church of England Education Office, February 2019) – hereafter referred to as the *RE SoE* – states:

“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 well together.” (p.1)

“In [...] voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus.” (pp.1–2)

“[It is] the responsibility of Church school leaders to ensure that pupils flourish academically through the provision of high-quality RE ... In all Church schools progress in RE should be significant and attainment high enabling pupils to develop confident religious literacy.” (p.2)

## 3. Aims and objectives

The *RE Statement of Entitlement (SoE)* sets out these aims and objectives for RE:

- 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 living, believing and thinking.

In addition, since 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) has required all schools to teach children the Fundamental British Values (FBVs) of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

#### 4. **Teaching and Learning**

##### **Curriculum intent**

By the end of Year 4, Christ Church pupils will be able to:

- think theologically and explore ultimate questions and moral/ethical issues;
- appreciate and respect the faith/belief of others;
- develop a deeper understanding of their own beliefs and practices;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- reflect critically on areas of shared belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth;
- reflect critically and express their views on the human quest and destiny;
- actively model and promote respect, tolerance and social inclusion;
- identify and challenge prejudice, discrimination and injustice.

##### **Balance and time: sufficient, appropriate and balanced**

The *RE SoE* says: “parents and pupils are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10%.” (p.3)

At Christ Church, RE draws on the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms. The encounter must be an open one which stems from and instils respect for different views and interpretations, and in which real dialogue and education takes place.

##### **Quality first teaching for all pupils**

RE planning follows the ***Somerset Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education*** known as “**Awareness, Mystery and Value**” (AMV) and enables pupils to:

(a) grow in their spiritual development through reflection on their feelings and relationships:

- to explore some important questions of meaning and consider how the world’s religions have responded to them;
- think about their beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs and values of others, including religious traditions and the values of the school community;
- develop skills and attitudes which will support our children in their personal, moral and social development.

(b) develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions in the UK:

- develop in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, its impact in our local community and its impact on society today;
- develop in their knowledge and understanding of the other principal religions in the UK.

RE will be planned to engage children through a range of activities suitable for those of different ages, abilities and backgrounds. A variety of approaches will be used as appropriate, e.g. discussion, music, writing, drama, visual arts, artefacts, quiet reflection, photographs, visiting local places of worship and listening to/sharing with visitors from local faith groups. We will also use story, video and food to support our learning. As a result, pupils will gain greater insight into the world in which they are growing up.

### **Visits to places of worship**

RE will be made relevant by starting with the pupils' own experience. Visits will be made to places of religious significance and visitors from the community invited into school.

### **Continuity and progression**

In accordance with the AMV syllabus, skills, knowledge, attitudes and key concepts, as defined in the implicit and explicit areas of RE, will be identified, consolidated and developed through the school's skills lists with the areas of learning.

The exploration of personal experience through reflection and enquiry will be fundamental to learning at Key Stage 1 and will be developed at Key Stage 2 as children develop a greater understanding of broader religious issues, beliefs and practices.

## **5. Being “global neighbours” and “courageous advocates”**

RE can provide a structure within which pupils can explore concepts, values and attitudes both personally and within society. As such, the RE curriculum may help children to understand the importance of FBVs. RE also contributes to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSCD) and compliments the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum. As such, RE has a part to play in helping children see themselves as positive agents of change in the world, identifying as “global neighbours” and “courageous advocates.”

We understand that courageous advocacy – as the name suggests – is about both “being brave” and “speaking up”. For Christians, this is part of a millennia-old prophetic tradition, whereby individuals are called by God to speak uncomfortable

truths, challenging people to change their ways. In a school context, this will involve home, school and church working together to make bold, brave choices: doing the right thing, rather than the easy thing or the popular thing.

In RE, for example, children will *learn about* and *learn from* concepts of compassion and charity which are common to different religious and non-religious belief systems. Children will be invited to reflect on their own response to human need and suffering.

6. **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the RE Subject Leader.