

Religious Education Policy

Key Manager:	Principal
Ratified by CEO:	Autumn 2021
Review Dates:	2 years
Location of Policy:	School website
Access to Policy:	Open
Policy context:	This policy applies to all staff and students of the academy and to those others offered access to such academy resources.

Revision History:

Revision Date	Description	Sections Affected	Revised By	Approved By
Autumn 2021	New policy		J Casswell	LAB

1. 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).

At St. Peter's CE Academy, pupils and their families can expect a high quality RE curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews.

The teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. Through the 'Understanding Christianity' resource, the use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Using the Diocese of Peterborough RE syllabus, we learn about other religions and worldviews, fostering respect for them.

Links with our Christian values and vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied.

2. Aims

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 "Church of England 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.

3. Statutory requirements

RE must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28).

4. Parents' right to withdraw

In keeping with the law, parents / carers may withdraw their children from RE provided they give written notification to St. Peter's CE Academy. Parents / carers are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. The school will ensure that suitable supervision is provided for the pupil. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of St. Peter's CE Academy, we would hope that all pupils admitted will participate fully in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Principal before making such a decision.

5. Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- contributes to British Values (mutual tolerance, respectful attitudes, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) 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;
- enables pupils to develop their 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 a wide range of skills such as literacy, empathy 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.

An example of the long-term plan for RE can be viewed in Appendix 1.

6. Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting academy trust deeds and funding agreements, 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. 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.

St. Peter's CE Academy aims to be close to 10% of curriculum for teaching RE, but must be no less than 5%. (In practice, this means 75 minutes per week for Key Stage 2).

7. Cross-curricular links

RE supports the development of a wide range of educational skills 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, history, geography, computing, music, as well as personal, social and emotional education.

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

RE lessons provide a safe space 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.

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. 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 pupil'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.

The Diocese of Peterborough RE Syllabus is designed to support St. Peter's CE Academy 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.

9. 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 Long Term Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
- Decides which religions are to be included at which key stage, based on the syllabus requirements;
- Ensures that curriculum time is sufficient across the school;
- Devises appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with school 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.

10. Matching work to pupils' needs

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'.

11. Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment in RE will:

- involve identifying suitable opportunities in schemes of work / resources used such as "Understanding Christianity";
- be directly related to the expectations of the Diocesan Syllabus. 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;
- seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge;
- recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop;
- employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy;
- include pupil self-assessment;
- enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole academy areas for development;
- enable effective reporting to parents / carers.

An annual report for RE informs parents / carers of their child's progress and attainment, as required by law. St. Peter's CE 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.

12. Self-evaluation

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.

13. Health and safety

Health and safety issues may arise in RE on different occasions for example, when pupils:

- handle artefacts;
- consume food;
- visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to the guidelines set out in the Trust's Health and Safety Policy in these circumstances.

14. Related Policies

- Collective Worship Policy
- Spirituality Policy

Appendix 1 – Long Term Plan Example

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
	Harvest	Christmas	Candlemas	Easter	Pentecost	
Year 3	L2.1 (C) What do Christians learn from the Creation story? (Concept: Creation)	L2.3 (C) What is the Trinity? (Concept: God)	L2.9 (T) What are the deeper meanings of festivals?	RE Day L2.5 (C) Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? (Concept: Salvation)	L2.2 (C) What is it like to follow God? (Concept: People of God)	
Year 4	L2.7 (H) What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?		L2.10 (T) How and why do people show their commitments during the journey of life?		L2.6 (C) When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? (Concept: Kingdom of God)	L2.4 (C) What kind of world did Jesus want? (Concept: Gospel)
Year 5	U2.1 (C) What does it mean if God is holy and loving? (Concept: God)	U2.4 (C) Was Jesus the Messiah? (Concept: Incarnation)	U2.2 (C) Creation or science: conflicting or complementary? (Concept: Creation)	RE Day U2.6 (C) What did Jesus do to save human being? (Y5 unit) (Concept: Salvation)	U2.3 (C) How can following God bring freedom and justice? (Concept: People of God)	U2.12 (T) What will make our town a more respectful place?
Year 6	U2.14 (T) How do religions help people to live through good times and bad times?	U2.5 (C) What would Jesus do? (Concept: Gospel)	U2.8 (C) What kind of king is Jesus? (Concept: Kingdom of God)	U2.7 (C) What difference does the Resurrection make for Christians? (Concept: Salvation)	U2.10 (J) What does it mean for a Jewish person to follow God?	