



Policy for Religious Education in Church Schools



Guidance from the
Diocesan Board of Education

July 2022

Living Worship Growing Disciples Seeking Justice

Leverton Church of England Academy

Leverton Church of England Academy



Religious Education Policy

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A statement regarding the legal position of RE at Leverton Church of England Academy including syllabus taught.

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

Leverton Church of England Academy is a Church of England Academy therefore RE is provided in line with the Nottinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026 'Religious Education for All' & The Understanding Christianity resources.

Religious Education is central to the church's understanding of education and mission. 'The National Society Statement of Entitlement' outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England School.

- To enable pupils to encounter Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and influences the lives of millions of people today
- To enable pupils to learn about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of their adherents
- To develop understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs

We will achieve these aims by using the programmes of study and the attainment targets, developed through exploring key questions.

Rationale/Aims for teaching RE in the school should be stated making reference to the aims quoted above, the Locally Agreed Syllabus – 'Religious Education for All' (2021) & Religious Education in English schools: Non statutory guidance 2010

In Religious Education at Leverton Church of England Academy we aim that Religious Education will:

- Simulate and maintain pupils' curiosity, interest and enjoyment in RE.
- Help pupils acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and some of the other principle religions represented in the United Kingdom and the wider world, including non-religious worldviews.
- Develop an understanding of the influences, beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.

- Develop an ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of some of the main religions represented in the UK
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold different views and beliefs, and towards living in a society of diverse religions.
- Enhance children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by;-
 - Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and how religious teachings can relate to them.
 - Responding to such questions with reference to the teaching and practices of religions, relating them to their own understanding and experience.
 - Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their work.

The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims in particular to SMSC, promotion of the schools Christian values and the promotion of 'British Values'

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

SMSC prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

The school's Christian values

RE should contribute to the promotion of the school's distinctively Christian values. Making connections between the values and learning in RE will bring about greater understanding of the values and how they can be put into practice across a range of experiences.

Respect for All & Global Learning

RE makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all & global learning. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination & extremism.

The school community – RE provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

The community within which the school is located – RE provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area in particular local churches.

The UK community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

The global community – RE involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

The promotion of ‘British Values’

RE provides opportunities to promote the ‘British Values’ of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty & mutual respect. (See Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2021 ‘Religious Education for All’ and the supporting document ‘Guidance for delivering Religious Education in church schools’)

Approaches to teaching RE

- RE has an important part to play as part of a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum to which all pupils are entitled
- High quality learning experiences in RE are designed and provided by careful planning through the locally agreed syllabus and diocesan materials taking into account the need to offer breadth of content
- In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection
- Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities

We use as a basis for our planning the Locally Agreed Syllabus & Understanding Christianity.

How RE is organised

RE is taught as a discrete subject for at least 1 hour a week in KS1 & 2, and 30 minutes in EYFS.

In EYFS the children will study key elements of Christianity from the Understanding Christianity resources and explore the views of others as part of their learning in ‘knowledge and understanding the world’.

At KS1 children study Christianity, Judaism & explore non-religious views.

At KS2 children study Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and further explore non-religious views.

Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording, staff evaluate children's attainment and progress in RE. From week to week, staff assess children's learning and depth of understanding through written outcomes, discussion and creative responses. On a termly basis the children respond to a 'big question' to support teacher judgements. The progression statements from the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus are used to support and inform judgements. Pupil attainment is monitored by the RE leader and any children identified as requiring extra support are discussed as part of pupil progress meetings with class teachers.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE, including how RE contribute to SIAMS School Self Evaluation

The RE leader will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils.

The RE leader is responsible for contributing to the Church school self-evaluation process by reviewing each area of the SEF, monitoring and evaluating as above, followed by action plans to identify the next steps..

Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Head teachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- the subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives
- clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw

- teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Leverton Church of England Academy we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Leverton Church of England Academy.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.

- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

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