



Religious Education Policy

Reviewed by:	Governing Body
Approved:	July 2026
Review Date:	July 2027

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Aims for Teaching Religious Education	1
3. Planning	2
4. Assessment and Record Keeping	2
5. Contribution towards SMSC Development	2-3
6. SEN, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion	3
7. Withdrawal from RE Lessons	3

1. Introduction

We consider each child to be a unique and special individual with gifts and strengths to be developed. We aim to help each child to become a balanced, happy and social human being with caring and responsible attitudes towards others and the environment in which they live.

The teaching of Religious Education is a statutory requirement and sits alongside the National Curriculum. Our Religious Education (RE) Curriculum has been designed to be knowledge rich yet taught through an increasingly complex enquiry led approach on a weekly basis. Our RE curriculum is fully aligned with the Norfolk agreed syllabus (2019).

At West Norfolk Academies Trust, Religious Education places emphasis on the teaching of the major world religions (Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism). At both Key Stages, more time should be spent on Christianity than on any other individual religion. Christianity is taught in every year group at Christmas and Easter.

Should teachers wish to withdraw from teaching RE due to their beliefs and practices, arrangements will be made for an exchange with another class teacher to ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement. RE does not seek to impose religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

2. Aims for Teaching Religious Education

We aim to:

- **adopt an enquiry- based approach**, beginning with the children's own life experience before moving into learning about and from religion.
- **provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life**, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, commitment and belonging. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.
- **encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs** (religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses.
- **enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- **embed and actively promote Fundamental British Values**, including "mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs" and "individual liberty".
- **Teach pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice.
- **prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others**, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.
- **develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.**
- **nurture children's own spiritual development.**
- **help prepare pupils for adult life and employment** by enabling them to develop respect and sensitivity to others - those with different faiths and beliefs - and equipping them to combat prejudice and negative discrimination.

3. Planning

Overall coverage is in accordance with the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus (2019). At West Norfolk Academies Trust, we follow the Discovery RE scheme of work. Units of work include learning about six major world religions as well as multi-faith learning activities about the role of religion in local communities. Our children will also learn about the worldview, Humanism, in both years 2 and 4.

Discovery RE is delivered through enquiry-based units, each framed around a key question. In line with the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus, we aim to study the range of religious beliefs and practices by considering them from three different Lenses (viewpoints): theological (Thinking through believing), philosophical (Thinking through Thinking) and human/social science lenses (Thinking through Living).

In EYFS, within the seven strands, it is expected that educational programmes will provide activities and experiences which will, *“Guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment”* (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage). Discovery RE is aligned with the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters. The EYFS planning in Discovery RE ensures that children have opportunities to find out about aspects of the following from Christianity and a range of different religions and worldviews. They celebrate such events as Diwali, Christingle, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Easter as and when they occur in the academic year.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping

The assessment of RE is an integral part of its teaching. To support the teacher in tracking each child's progress throughout the year, there is an overview sheet for each enquiry on which to record the progress of the whole class. This supports teacher overview and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation. The progress of each pupil in RE is measured/monitored termly by their class teacher using a Foundation Subject Assessment Tracker.

5. Contribution to SMSC development

The teaching of RE is an integral part of promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, in accordance with the aims of the National Curriculum. It provides opportunities to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These are areas of a pupil's development to which all subjects are expected to contribute.

- Developing an awareness of a spiritual dimension to life (personal beliefs, the search for meaning and purpose, the sense of awe and wonder) and in offering opportunities to discuss this area in a structured way. (SPIRITUAL)
- Providing the opportunity for children to develop and evaluate their own beliefs and values and to examine the beliefs and values others have chosen to live by. (MORAL)
- Encouraging an interest in, and an understanding of others, respect for those with different beliefs, and sense of community. (SOCIAL)
- Evaluating the influence of Christianity on daily life in Britain, on the pattern of the year, on public occasions, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, laws, art, music, drama and literature, and in considering other cultural and religious expressions in British society, evaluating the riches that diversity offers. (CULTURAL).

External contributors from the community, e.g., local clergy and local members/speakers from other religions etc make a valuable contribution to our RE programme, as do visits to places of worship. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme. Teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the effective delivery of RE.

All staff follow our robust safeguarding procedures and policies. If a staff member feels that comments or work produced by a pupil are in any way discriminatory, safeguarding procedures will be followed appropriately to report these incidences.

6. SEN, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

All pupils have equal access to the RE curriculum and the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus regardless of their gender, disability or ability. We are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment to achieve their potential.

At West Norfolk Academies Trust, we recognise that for some children this may involve making adaptations in procedures and arrangements in order for all pupils to access the curriculum. A range of resources, visuals and representations should be used to support learners with SEN, while thoughtfully worded questions and challenges should ensure more able pupils can deepen their knowledge.

It is the intention of the staff to make the curriculum content and general life of the school accessible to all pupils. Wherever possible, after considering safety needs, the whole school community should be included as fully as possible in all aspects of school life.

7. Withdrawal from RE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RE Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. 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 will be made aware of the 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 and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it such as a unit of work or particular lesson. No reasons need be given. 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. Once a child has been withdrawn, they cannot take part in the RE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school it is our duty to inform our local Standing Advisory Council on RE regarding the numbers of children being withdrawn.