

Religious Education in Church of England Primary Schools

A Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education

First Federation Trust

It is the vision of the First Federation Trust that, in all of our schools, whether Church schools or Non- Church schools:

- Every child is inspired to learn by an exciting, innovative, and challenging curriculum
- Every child is taught by an Exceptional Teacher
- Everyone in the Trust is a Lifelong Learner
- Every individual will aspire, flourish and achieve within a caring community (this will be within a Christian community, within our Church schools)

In conjunction with the final statement above, Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness.

This statement of entitlement for Religious Education has been written by the First Federation Trust Ethos Leads and Foundation Directors. It has been written in conjunction with A statement of entitlement for Religious education in Church of England schools by the Church of England education office (February 2019)

A high quality religious education (RE) curriculum is essential to meet the statutory requirement for all maintained schools to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in Modern Britain . We would also expect our Academies to adhere to this requirement. At the heart of RE in our church schools is the teaching of Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ. As we are inclusive communities, there is an expectation that our church schools encourage learning about other religions and world views* fostering respect for others. Although there is not a National Curriculum for RE, all maintained schools have a statutory duty to teach it. This is equally applicable to academies and free schools as it is to maintained schools. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus(which could include the use of Understanding Christianity resources) unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school; and, in voluntary aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

In our Church of England schools, the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith: for example, using the Understanding Christianity resource. All the schools within our Trust (whether Church schools or Non-church schools) provide a wide range of

opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied. Links with the Christian values of the school (in our Church schools) and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum and should have a significant impact on learners.

RE has a high profile within the church school curriculum and learning activities should provide fully for the needs of all learners. Learners should be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of higher-level skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion on the world. Our aims for teaching and learning in RE are that attainment should be high and progress significant in developing an understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religions and world views.

Aims and objectives of Religious education (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.
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- Appropriate to 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 world views 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.

Effective teaching and learning about Religions and World Views

- All schools have a duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views. They should provide:
- A challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework.
- An assessment process which demonstrates progression based on knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.

- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development and contributes towards British values.

Curriculum balance

Christianity should be the majority study in RE in every school, in each year group.

In Church schools that should be clearly adhered to: KS 1 – 2, 50% of curriculum time should be on the study of Christianity.

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% of curriculum time, but must be no less than 5% in Key Stage 1 and 2.
- The RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for Collective Worship.

Developing staff expertise

- To demonstrate the subject's comparable status with other core curriculum areas in both staffing and resourcing, it should be a priority in our Church schools to build up staff expertise in RE specifically but not exclusively, working towards:
- At least one member of staff having up to date knowledge of the SIAMS framework. The Ethos Lead/ RE leader having access to appropriate professional development.
- All teaching staff and governors having an understanding of the distinctive role and purpose of RE within church schools.
- Staff knowing how to create and maintain classrooms in which academic rigour is balanced with respect for different personal beliefs and identities.

Expected academic outcomes for pupils

- Pupil achievement in RE should equal or be better than comparable subjects.

Support for effective and outstanding RE

RE teachers belong to a wider educational and church community. They should expect positive support in providing effective and outstanding RE from:

Their senior management team.

A named member of staff responsible for Religious education

Local clergy and other ministers and Christian communities

The FFT Directors, especially Foundation Directors.

Their local Diocesan Board of Education, including a Schools' Adviser with an appropriate RE background.

Clergy.

The Church of England Education Office

The Church of England representatives on their local SACRE.