

Religious Education Policy October 2017



ARCHBISHOP
SENTAMU
ACADEMY

Church of England

Approved by Archbishop Sentamu Academy Principal on 19th October 2017

Next date of review: October 2019

Archbishop Sentamu Academy

Christian Aims and Values

Values

As a Church of England Academy:

- We value every young person in our academy equally regardless of race, background or creed as being created in the image of God
- We value good timekeeping and politeness as well as empathy and respect for others
- We value the work and person of Jesus Christ, his example and teaching
- We value good relationships as a basis for the development and fulfilment of ourselves, others and the good of the community
- We value and encourage the contribution made by families, community groups and others to the well being, education and nurture of our students

Aims

As a Church of England Academy we aim to:

- Treat students, staff and visitors with respect
- Incorporate and promote the values behind the academy motto; aspire, serve, achieve in all we do
- Instil a sense of self-worth and value in every student
- Encourage student participation in the planning and the running of The Academy wherever possible
- Encourage religious literacy as a way of interpreting the world around us
- Encourage, challenge and support every person to achieve his or her potential.

1. A statement regarding the legal position of Religious Education (RE) at Archbishop Sentamu Academy

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'

Archbishop Sentamu Academy is a Church of England and as such the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Principal have decided, following advice from the diocese, to adopt the Diocesan Framework.

2. Rationale/Aims for teaching Religious Education

The Diocesan Syllabus states:

2.1 Excellence in Religious Education

The principal aim of RE is to enable pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief.¹

2.2 Aims and purposes of Religious Education in the Church school

This principal aim incorporates the following aims of Religious Education in Church schools²:

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know and understand about other major world religions and non-religious worldviews, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, enabling pupils to express ideas and insights.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values. Appropriate to their 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 non-religious

¹ This principal aim has developed from continuing diocesan adviser work on the purpose of RE by Jane Chipperton (Diocese of St Albans), Gillian Georgiou (Diocese of Lincoln), Olivia Seymour (Diocese of York) and Kathryn Wright (Diocese of Norwich) www.reonline.org.uk/news/revision-rethinking-re-a-conversation-about-religious-and-theological-literacy/

² As taken from Religious Education in Church of England Schools: A Statement of Entitlement 2016. www.churchofengland.org/media/1384868/re_statement_of_entitlement_2016.pdf © Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education in the Dioceses of Leeds and York

- worldviews 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.

3. At Archbishop Sentamu Academy RE and the RE department are described as such:

- Quality Religious Education (RE) should be both academically rigorous and spiritually engaging, while at the same time being interesting and generating enquiry; this is the aim of the Religious Education Department at Archbishop Sentamu Academy.
- Through challenging yet accessible lessons guided by a supportive teacher-facilitator each and every student at the Academy has the opportunity to progress and achieve their potential in RE. Lessons are planned to include a variety of tasks to ensure students' higher order thinking skills and skills of analysis, interpretation, enquiry and reflection are developed throughout and across Schemes of Learning.
- Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are supported in lessons by implementation of a range of scaffolding and differentiation methods while the Gifted and Talented (G&T) and high ability (X population) students are stretched both in lessons, and through private study projects whereby they are encouraged to conduct independent research in order to broaden, and deepen, their knowledge and understanding of a topic.
- All students are assessed thoroughly throughout their time at Archbishop Sentamu Academy and the RE Department use this data effectively in order to best support the students and ensure they make the progress of which they are capable.
- The Christian nature of the Academy means that RE has a particularly important role in the Curriculum. As a Church of England Academy, students are taught the importance of Christian beliefs, values and practices through a study of scripture, The Trinity (with a clear focus on the person of Jesus) and through experiential learning (facilitated by our Academy chapel and Chaplain).
- The RE Department aims to promote Christian values within RE lessons but also through providing students with a Christian-focused environment, for example, all RE teachers with permanent teaching classrooms display Bible quotations and passages and some have other display areas with room for students' reflections.
- It is important that students feel safe and secure in a learning environment and this particularly important in RE rooms where often students will be sharing their personal opinions, beliefs and value systems. All teachers are aware of the courage

it may take some students to share their opinions and so the RE Department promotes the Christian Academy Values of Trust, Love and Community in order to show students that they, and their opinions, are valued.

- The RE Department contributes not only to the development of the whole child but also to the Academy, by RE teachers' involvement in Collective Worship, Tutor Led Collective Worship and whole-school enrichment activities such as Y7 Reflection Days. Such opportunities, enjoyed by staff and students alike, show the potential the RE Department has to thoroughly engage students with Christianity and their own spirituality.
- As a Church of England Academy, Schemes of Learning must adhere to criteria set out in the Diocesan Framework for Religious Education. For students at Key Stage 3 (KS3), Christianity is to be the predominant religion, with students studying this for two-thirds of the RE curriculum. At least three other religions must be studied.
- At Archbishop Sentamu Academy, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam are the religions to be taught at KS3. A range of topics and units are taught across KS3, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, with most units being thematic and enquiry-based.
- To meet the requirements set out in the Diocesan Syllabus, students at Key Stage 4 (KS4) must follow an accredited qualification in Religious Education/Studies, including the study of Christianity and at least one other religion. At Archbishop Sentamu Academy, students at KS4 will study Christianity and Judaism. Students will study these two religions at both KS3 and KS4 to ensure a thorough understanding of the beliefs, concepts and practices of each religion and that there is clear progression and development in the understanding of each religion.
- Students in the top 6 classes will study the Full Course Eduqas Religious Studies: Specification B, Units 1, 2 and 3, over Year 10 and 11, sitting three examinations in the summer of Year 11. Students in the lower ability classes will study the Short Course Eduqas Religious Studies: Specification B, Units 1, 2, and 3 over Year 10 and 11, sitting the one examination in the summer of Year 11. This satisfies the aforementioned criteria and allows students to be entered for examinations suiting their ability.
- It is important in RE that students across all Key Stages are provided with the opportunities to make sense of beliefs, understand the impact and make connections. Making sense of beliefs and understanding the impact allows students to develop their understanding of the different practices and beliefs of religious people while making connections allows students' spiritual nature to be nurtured as they reflect on the beliefs of others and apply this to their own lives, therefore shaping the people they will become. All are extremely important for RE to be the successful subject that it can be and therefore all are focused on in each RE lesson at the Academy, where appropriate.

4. The contribution RE makes to other curriculum areas

4.1 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which ‘promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and 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.

4.2 Personal development and well-being

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

At Archbishop Sentamu Academy RE also has an impact on the rest of the curriculum by being a model of good practice for how the Christian Academy Values can be addressed through lessons. The Subject Team Leader (STL) for RE has delivered training on the ‘What if learning could be distinctly Christian?’ pedagogy to all teaching and support staff. Staff are now involved with researching this pedagogy further and are beginning to address the Academy Values more in lessons. The RE STL is leading in this area and provides support for other teaching staff.

Every teacher in the Academy has a responsibility for developing the SMSC character of each student. The RE Department sees its role in promoting SMSC as particularly pertinent as RE is a subject rich in questions of faith, spirituality, morality and culture and so students in RE lessons should have multiple chances to explore these areas in depth and detail.

The Academy Values of Trust, Love and Community are also incredibly relevant to all RE lessons as we teach that Christian values are important in creating well-rounded, thoughtful and respectful individuals. In RE, students are shown how the values link to the lesson being delivered as well as how they tie in with their every day lives.

Students will also learn the origins of the values and how they are inherently Christian. They will do this through reading and understanding Bible passages related to the values and interpreting them to show the values' origins in Christianity.

5. 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 locally agreed syllabuses, (diocesan advice) and in schools, 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, ICT 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. Some students are currently involved in a project to produce an e-Book with some Muslim students from another local school. This book will be available nationally on our local SACRE website for schools to use as a resource to teach about living faith. At ASA we will also be able to use this to teach about Islam.

A range of Teaching and Learning (T&L) methods and resources are used by the RE team. All RE staff are subject specialists and have been trained in TEEP and 'What if learning...?'.

6. How RE is organised.

In accordance with the structure of the Diocesan Syllabus we have agreed that:

At KS3 pupils study Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism

At KS3 pupils study Christianity and Judaism as part of the Eduqas Specification B course.

Students in each class receive two 75 minute lessons per fortnight.

7. Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the Academy Marking and Feedback policy and the Data and Assessment policy it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her students through marking work, assessments and homework set. For more detail, please see the appropriate policies.

In summary:

- RE books are marked every 4 lessons. Quality marking and DIRT (dedicated improvement and reflection time) should occur at least once within this time frame.
- Assessments are completed termly for KS3 and entered on to SIMS marksheets as a percentage.
- Assessments for KS4 are cumulative and are completed after each topic of work. A PPE (mock exam) will be held for each KS4 year group annually.
- Assessments will form part of the professional judgement along with classwork.

8. Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE

The STL will monitor RE within the academy through analysis of this assessment data, book looks, learning walks and discussions with staff. The STL follows the Academy Quality Assurance (QA) procedures. Tracking of RE data is discussed at meetings with the SLT link for RE and is reported to the Governors.

The RE STL is responsible for contributing to the SIAMS SEF and SIDP as well as producing an RE SIDP. These are shared with others in the department and focuses and tracked half-termly with progress towards each action being measured.

9. Responsibilities for RE within the school (Principal and Governors)

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

- all students 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 are aware of RE's contribution in developing students' understanding of religion and belief and its impact
- students have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion
- 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
- where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the head teacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to RE.

10. The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Archbishop Sentamu Academy we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents (and students over the age of 18) have the legal right to withdraw their children (or themselves) 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 occasion, 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 Principal to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at Archbishop Sentamu Academy.

10.1 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 students 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 are in the 6th Form), 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 students are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Students will usually remain on school premises unless parents organise alternative provision, agreed by the academy, to provide alternative religious education.
- Where a student has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the student 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 Trust 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.