



Religious Education Policy

Altwood Church of England School

John 10:10: 'I have come that they may have life and live it to the full'

I am known, I am valued, I will succeed.

Approved by: Cath Harden Headteacher LGC – Chair Jan McLucas	Date: Sept 2024
Reviewed by	Cath Harden - Headteacher
Last reviewed on:	September 2024
Next review due by:	September 2027
Version	2
Changes	Amended wording for Parents' right to withdraw

Context:

Altwood is a Church of England Academy within the Diocese of Oxford, and it is a school with a Church Foundation. This reflects the school's history and the involvement of The Church of England in the education of young people in their communities; it does not mean our students, or their families have to have a Christian faith, or any religious faith. But everyone is expected to respect the teachings of the Christian faith. Altwood School is part of the AGAPE trust.

Our Christian Vision:

The school's Christian vision is based on the Bible verse found in John 10:10 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full' and so, at the heart of what we do is the determination to ensure that all our students and staff live 'life in all its fullness'.

We believe that education in all its fullness enables all people, students and staff, to flourish, socially, emotionally and academically. Students and staff of all faiths or none at all are equally valued, cherished and loved.

As a church school, our Christian values are very important to us. This is demonstrated most clearly in our vision of 'I am known, I am valued, I will succeed'. We want all our young people to feel a real sense of belonging and as part of our vibrant school community. Students are provided with the opportunity to develop academically, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. We understand that young people will make mistakes, and this is where our values of Truth and Forgiveness ensure that we can acknowledge what has gone wrong and then move forwards, together, in a positive way.

Rationale:

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is not a core subject in terms of government accountability measures but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal value to the core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered students.'

Religious Education is taught at our school up to GCSE and it is an expectation that all students will gain a GCSE qualification in this subject. Following Diocesan guidelines, the proportion of the curriculum time to be allocated to RE is 5%. Within that, the balance of time allocated to Christianity should be 80% and to other faiths 20%.

Aims:

RE will:

Provide a rich education experience which gives students the opportunity to explore challenging questions such as issues of right and wrong, the meaning of life, and personal belief.

Develop students' understanding of Christianity, other world religions and traditions fostering personal development and spiritual reflection.

Encourage students to explore their own beliefs on spiritual and ethical issues whether they are religious or non-religious to support their personal development and ability to think independently, developing their own values

Enable students to build their sense of identity and belonging which helps them to develop and flourish as citizens in a diverse society

Teach students to develop respect for each other including those with different faiths and beliefs, therefore helping to challenge prejudice

Make an important contribution to the wider curriculum aims of the school SMSC, community cohesion, personal development and well-being.

Curriculum:

In Religious Education, our curriculum is broad, balanced and ambitious where students will explore and challenge the beliefs of religious and non-religious people (including their own) and how these beliefs will influence their lives. We intend for all students to be given the opportunity to grow and nurture their own values and beliefs as young people in our Christian Community.

Our curriculum will equip students with transferable skills such as, critical and higher order thinking skills enabling them to be successful in the wider working world.

We will equip students with the knowledge and skills to explore religious, ethical and philosophical issues within society, informed by the locally agreed syllabus (Pan-Berkshire scheme of work). The syllabus highlights the significance of learning the purpose, aims and importance of learning RE focussing on learning about and from religions and worldviews. The syllabus' eight key questions are explored throughout our curriculum (for Christianity) using a thematic and systematic approach.

The KS3 curriculum provides a foundation of understanding of religion to prepare students for their KS4 study of AQA religious studies Specification A (non-Textual).

The relevance of RE and the curriculum is referenced through the intent shown below:

Relevant – we intend to make RE relevant to all students and their lived experiences building resilience and fostering strength of character.

Refl**E**ctive – we intend to nurture each individual and support them in becoming reflective and independent.

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Celebr**A**tion – we intend to celebrate the diversity of different religious and non-religious beliefs and practices to reflect the families we serve.

Spiritual**I**ty – we intend to develop individual spirituality by aiding them to find a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives.

Li**T**eracy – we intend to develop a high level of literacy and numeracy in our students to support success in the wider curriculum and adult life.

Gro**W**th – we intend to grow and develop the students in achieving high academic success and empower them to progress to further education.

Mo**R**ality – we intend to expand students' perspective of the wider world and promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural values.

To**L**erance – we intend to promote tolerance of other's beliefs, opinions and cultures supporting students to develop as healthy individuals and good citizens.

Add**R**ess misconceptions – we intend to through a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, equip students with the ability to recognise and challenge common misconceptions within Religious Education.

Religious Education Curriculum Map



In Religious Education, our curriculum is broad, balanced and ambitious where students will explore and challenge the beliefs of religious and non-religious people (including their own) and how these beliefs will influence their lives. We intend for all students to be given the opportunity to grow and nurture their own values and beliefs as young people in our Christian Community. Our curriculum will equip students with transferable skills such as, critical and higher order thinking skills enabling them to be successful in the wider working world. We will equip students with the knowledge and skills to explore religious, ethical and philosophical issues within society, informed by the locally agreed syllabus (Pan-Berkshire scheme of work). The syllabus highlights the significance of learning the purpose, aims and importance of learning RE focussing on learning about and from religions and worldviews. The syllabus' eight key questions are explored throughout our curriculum (for Christianity) using a thematic and systematic approach and are addressed in other religious beliefs systems



How might beliefs shape concepts of truth, right and wrong?

Is there more than one way to be spiritual?

Exam & Post – 16 Destination

How far does a person's understanding of God influence their sense of purpose?

In what ways do science, belief and religion interact and what difference might this make?

Why might it matter that sacred texts are often open to interpretation?

To what extent should people from different belief systems manage their differences and cooperate for the common good?

To what extent do religious or non-religious beliefs affect personal relationships?

How might belief affect people's responses towards social and global issues?

Progression and Monitoring

Progress in RE is monitored through the quality assurance practices that are embedded across the school. Progress is seen in classwork and assessments during learning walks and department reviews. Staff regularly mark student work to check understanding. AFL is embedded into the lesson structure to ensure misconceptions are quickly identified. Schemes of work, with lesson plans and resources are centralized within the department to support consistency. Raw mark trackers are used to monitor progress and support intervention planning. Regular departmental moderation ensures that students' work is marked in line with national standards. The Head of Department has been an examiner for GCSE AQA and leads to RBWM collaborative planning group.

Special Education Needs provision

SEND students benefit from a quality first teaching approach. Scaffolding, sentence starters and model answers are used to support learning. Resources are adapted where there is a need, for example, EAL students or those with a visual impairment. LSA's are effectively deployed within the classroom to support student learning. Staff use relevant data to support their understanding of their class context. Knowing all our students ensures excellent provision for everyone.

Assessment

Regular knowledge checks are used within lessons to assess understanding. Green tasks highlight the gaps in knowledge, and these are addressed in DIRT lessons. REcap is used to support retrieval practice.

Responsibility for the policy

This policy has been written in consultation with the staff of the school following Diocesan guidelines and approved by the Governing body. It is to be reviewed every three years by the Headteacher and SLT link for RE. The Head of Department for RE is responsible for implementation/co-ordination of the policy.

Parents' right to withdraw:

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children. The ERA however, allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish.

To make a request for withdrawal, the legal parent or guardian of the child will need to complete the form found at the end of this policy, and address it to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will grant this request straight away and inform the Head of RE. The school may invite parents in to discuss the request further, but parents are under no obligation to justify their request or explain their beliefs.

In line with Government guidance, the student will receive an 'alternative provision' of RE which will be discussed and drawn up by the Head of RE and the parents or guardians of the child. The lesson time will not be allocated for any other curriculum subjects.

See <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-re/legal-requirements/> for more detail on the Government guidance.

A copy of the form and the accompanying letter will be placed on the student's educational file.

Parent Form - Withdrawal from Religious Education

Please complete and return to school **'For the attention of the Headteacher'**

To be completed by parents			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from Religious Education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

To be completed by the school	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	