

Religious Education Policy

Review Date: April 2026

Review By: Senior Leadership Team

Final Approval: Senior Leadership Team

School Context

The Core Values of the school which relate specifically to this policy state that we are working together to form relationships based on:

- **Compassion** – everyone is encouraged to be generous in their concern for others
- **Faith** – everyone is invited to develop their understanding of Christian belief, worship and lifestyle.
- **Justice** – everyone is entitled to be treated fairly and to promote the self-esteem of others.
- **Responsibility** – everyone is expected to understand the consequences of their actions.
- **Truth** – everyone is required to be honest and to communicate in a positive manner.

Such values contribute to the school’s common purpose of ‘striving for high quality education with a strong Christian ethos. Worship is at the heart of the school’s community and is central to this policy.

Introduction

The 1988 Education Reform Act stresses the importance of Religious Education and the legal requirement to teach it:

“The curriculum of every maintained school shall comprise a basic curriculum which includes ... provision of Religious Education for all registered students at the school.”

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, Bishop Stopford School consciously sets out to ensure that the curriculum is in keeping with the letter and spirit of this legislation and reflects the educational principles enshrined within it.

We seek to provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of students in the Academy and which prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We also strive to ensure that this curriculum is aligned with our whole school “Curriculum Intent” document.

The aims for RE are aligned with the Diocese of Peterborough Syllabus for Religious Education, as well as the Northamptonshire Locally Agreed Syllabus (2018-23).

The curriculum is also informed by SIAMS expectations regarding the effectiveness of Religious Education and meeting the needs of all learners in a faith school.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Education Reform Act (1994);
- Diocesan Board of Education Expectations;
- Entitlement Document;
- Inclusion Statement;
- Policy for Collective Worship.
- Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Inspection Framework (SIAMS 2023)

Principles

- Religious Education will be a part of the core curriculum at both Key Stages 3 and 4 for all students.
- The policy ensures that the Academy meets statutory requirements.

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- The policy makes provision beyond statutory requirements to reflect the faith-based character of the Academy. While the content of the curriculum reflects the Academy’s commitment to the Christian tradition and provides a challenging encounter with that tradition, account is also taken of the other major world religions.
- The policy addresses the needs of students in all age groups.

Policy

Religious Education will:

- Enable and assist students to explore the spiritual dimension of human life;
- Help students to appreciate their own Christian tradition, to see this in an ecumenical and worldwide context, and to appreciate diversity within their own and other faith communities;
- Promote the core British value of mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith;
- Awaken students to the diversity of the human spiritual quest;
- Introduce students to the complexity of the questions which religious belief can raise;
- Enable and encourage critical and imaginative responses and to develop religious literacy;
- Assist students to reflect on the variety of religious responses to moral issues and develop philosophical and reasoning skills;
- Encourage students to recognise the relevance of spiritual experience as an integral facet of everyday life;
- Be taught as a discrete subject, and externally accredited to GCSE level for all students at Key Stage 4;
- Be offered at A level as Religious Studies – Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity.

The RE Curriculum

- All Y7 students will study one period of RE per week and Y8 students have 3 periods per fortnight at Key Stage 3. In Y7, students study the following topics: Philosophy of Religion, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. In Y8, students study Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Sikhi and Buddhism. At the beginning of Year 9, there are two units of work that take a multi-disciplinary approach, focusing on anti-racism and ethics.
- The Christianity units from Y7 to Y8 are aligned with the resources provided by the Understanding Christianity framework.
- Key Stage 4 - Y9 and 11 students have 3 lessons a fortnight whereas in Y10 there are 4 lessons a fortnight.
- KS4 students follow the AQA Full Course GCSE Religious Studies (8062) with units on Christianity, Buddhism and Thematic Studies (Themes A, B, D and E).
- All students at Key Stage 4 will deal with a range of challenging philosophical and moral questions. The course will encourage them to develop critical thinking skills and to produce balanced responses through recognising the range of religious responses. (e.g. Good and Evil, Religion & Science, Religion & Medical Ethics.)
- A Level Religious Studies: Philosophy Ethics and Christianity (Eduqas) will be offered as progression from GCSE.
- This curriculum will enable students to acquire, within the Christian ethos of our Academy
 - an informed understanding of what it means to hold a religious belief;
 - appreciation of the link between faith, life, conduct and morality;
 - a deeper insight into their own commitment and beliefs.

Responsibilities

Head of Religious Education

- Co-ordinate, plan, monitor and review the RE curriculum;
- Lead on curriculum developments with regard to RE;
- Liaise with the Academy Chaplain and SMSC Co-ordinator over relevant issues;

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- Keep abreast of Curriculum developments within the subject (e.g the OFSTED RE Curriculum Research Review (May 2021))
- Ensure RE teachers maintain and develop their knowledge through CPD.

SMSC Co-ordinator

- Promote RE through regular communication channels;
- Make links with outside organisations to enhance the RE curriculum;
- Assist with the continuing professional development of teachers.
- Liaise with Head of RE and Academy Chaplain over relevant issues

Senior Leadership Team

- Maintain a regular curriculum link with RE;
- Provide appropriate resources for RE;
- Monitor the quality of the RE curriculum.

Governors

- Provide a link governor for RE as part of the Humanities Faculty;
- Agree RE policy.

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