

Religious Education (RE) Policy

Cheapside Church of England Primary VA School



Policy Adopted November 2025

Review November 2028 or when the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus has been agreed or when the proposed RE national curriculum is implemented, whichever is first.

Changed to ensure compliance and reflect current curriculum

Amended January 2026 to update parents' right of withdrawal procedures in line with ODBE instruction.

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1. Introduction and Rationale

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School within the Oxford Diocese, Religious Education (RE) is central to our vision, ethos, and curriculum. Rooted in our Christian foundation, RE enables pupils to explore what people believe, understand how beliefs shape lives, and reflect on their own ideas and ways of living. This policy sets out how RE is taught in accordance with both the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus and the statement of entitlement for RE in Church of England schools.

2. Legal Requirements and Statutory Framework

- As a VA school, the governors are responsible for ensuring that RE is taught in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and the principles of the Church of England.
- The curriculum must also meet the requirements of the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus, supplemented by diocesan guidance and recommended materials.
- RE sits within the basic curriculum and is compulsory for all pupils, unless withdrawn by parents (set out in section 71(1) of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#)).

3. Aims of Religious Education

RE in our school aims to:

- Enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Teach pupils about principal world religions and worldviews represented locally, nationally and internationally.
- Support pupils in developing their own beliefs, values, and ideas respectfully and thoughtfully – to disagree well and with respect.
- Develop religious literacy, critical thinking, and the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue.
- Encourage pupils to reflect theologically and consider the impact of faith on individuals and communities.

4. Theological and Educational Foundations

Our RE curriculum is shaped by:

- The Oxford Diocese Vision, based on “life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).
- The Church of England Statement of Entitlement for RE, ensuring a high-quality and academically rigorous subject.
- The Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus, which emphasises enquiry-led learning.

5. Curriculum Organisation

- RE is taught weekly, comprising 5-10% of curriculum time, in line with VA school expectations. In Key Stage 1, this equates to an hour per week. In Key Stage 2, the 45 hours per year entitlement is made up of a weekly hour-long RE lessons (38) plus 7 hours of dedicated curriculum time in two half-days focusing entirely on non-religious world views (=45).

- Christianity forms at least 50% of the curriculum.
- Learning intentions from the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus, combined with the Discovery units, underpin planning
- The curriculum is sequenced for progression in knowledge, skills, and concepts from Early Years to Year 6.

6. Teaching and Learning

Effective RE teaching includes:

- Enquiry-led units exploring key questions.
- Use of artefacts, texts, storytelling, visitors from faith communities, the children's own experience and expertise, and educational visits.
- Regular opportunities for discussion, reflection, and debate.
- Encouraging pupils to compare, contrast, and interpret diverse worldviews.
- Creative approaches such as drama, dance, art, writing, and digital media.

7. Coverage of Christianity and Other World Faiths

Christianity (majority focus)

Taught across all year groups, covering:

- The Bible and Christian teachings
- The life of Jesus
- Festivals, liturgy, and practices
- Christian values, prayer, worship, and the Church community

Other World Faiths

We follow the Pan-Berkshire requirement to teach:

- Judaism
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Non-religious worldviews (e.g., Humanism)

8. Assessment, Monitoring, and Reporting

- Assessment is in line with the expectations of the Pan-Berkshire Syllabus and is based upon the success criteria from the Discovery Scheme.
- Pupils' progress is monitored through written work, discussion, and creative tasks.
- The RE subject leader undertakes regular book looks, planning reviews, and learning walks.
- Progress is reported annually to parents.

9. Inclusion and SEND

RE is taught to all pupils regardless of background or ability. We ensure:

- Adaptive teaching to meet diverse needs and accessible resources.
- Opportunities for all pupils to participate and achieve, and for their views to be valued.

10. Role of the RE Subject Leader

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Overseeing curriculum planning and implementation, alongside the Headteacher
- Ensuring compliance with diocesan and statutory expectations
- Monitoring teaching and learning, alongside the Headteacher
- Managing resources
- Supporting staff training and professional development through direct training, dissemination of training or signposting
- Reporting to senior leadership and governors

11. Resources

We maintain a limited range of high-quality RE resources including:

- Artefacts from major world religions
- Age-appropriate sacred texts
- Links with local churches and faith communities

Resources are reviewed and updated annually.

12. Collective Worship and its Relationship with RE

RE is distinct from collective worship.

- RE is academic and educational.
- Collective worship is inclusive, inspirational and invitational.

Both contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development but are not interchangeable. They are planned and delivered separately.

13. Community Links and Partnerships

We maintain strong partnerships with:

- Local parish churches and the Oxford Diocese Board of Education
- Representatives of other faith communities
- Diocesan advisors and SACRE

These partnerships enrich the RE curriculum and promote understanding of diverse local worldviews.

14. Staff Development and Training

The school is committed to high-quality RE teaching.

- Staff attend diocesan and Pan-Berkshire training.
- The subject leader supports staff planning and confidence.
- New teachers receive induction in the school's RE vision and curriculum.

15. Parents' Right of Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their child from all or part of RE as set out in section 71(1) of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

- When a request to withdraw is received by a school, the request should be granted without delay. The school may offer to speak with the parent to try to understand the basis for the withdrawal but only after the request has been granted. The school must make clear that the parent's right to withdraw their child has been granted and that they are not required to give reasons for their request.
- Alternative provision will be provided but must not conflict with the school's Christian foundation and ethos.

16. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in diocesan or statutory guidance.