

ST LAWRENCE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for Religious Education



Guidance from the Diocese of Gloucester's Board of Education

Approved by the Christian Ethos Committee of the Local Governing Board - March 2025

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Name of School: St Lawrence C of E Primary School

School's Vision:

Achieving Together + Learning For Life

Our shared vision is to be a joyful and loving school community; rooted in clear Christian values, where every child participates, celebrates achievement and cares for the people and world around them.

Legal Position of Religious Education in school

Religious Education is unique in the curriculum as it is neither a core or foundation subject. In the 1988 Education Act it states, 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all pupils'.

St Lawrence is a Church of England Academy (previously a VA school) therefore Religious Education is provided in line with the funding agreement and the academy follows the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017 – 2022.

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement

The Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE. Full details of this document can be found in Appendix One.

Aims of Religious Education

The principal aim of religious education at St Lawrence is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living. Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017 – 2022.

School Approach to Religious Education

In line with all church schools, this school has duty to provide accurate knowledge and understanding of religions and world views. More than 50% of teaching time will include learning about Christianity in line with the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017 – 2022. A wide range of imaginative teaching methods and pupil groupings ensure effective RE sessions. We appreciate the positive impact that local faith communities can have on pupils' experience in RE. Therefore this school encourages visits to places of worship and welcomes visitors from different faith communities. We recognise it is vitally important that teachers demonstrate respectful attitudes towards all faiths, modelling the attitudes and responses we would expect from our pupils.

As identified in the Statement of Entitlement, teaching and learning in RE in this school will provide:

- A challenging and robust curriculum based on an accurate theological framework.
- An assessment process which has rigour and 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

Organisation & Time Allocation

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

In the Foundation Stage pupils will be introduced to a range of faith traditions and will be taught RE for 36 hours over the year.

At Key Stage 1 pupils study Christianity, Judaism and Islam. RE will be taught for at least for 36 hours over the year. This will include a minimum of one timetabled lesson a week.

At Key Stage 2 pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and also consider non-religious worldviews. RE will be taught for at least for 45 hours over the year. This will include a minimum of one timetabled lesson a week.

Assessment/Recording & Reporting

The Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2017) sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus. At the end of every big term a teacher judgement will be made using the assessment criteria on Target Tracker which will match the unit that has been taught.

In the school reports that are sent home in the summer term of each year an assessment for RE will be included. This will show whether the child is working at a greater depth level, working at age expectations, working towards age expectations or working below age expectations. This assessment will match the assessments provided in Target Tracker.

Responsibilities for RE in School

The **subject leader** is responsible for overseeing the teaching and learning of religious education in the school. The role includes:

- Ensuring personal subject knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD for RE
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring the staff are familiar with the syllabus and supporting resources such as *Understanding Christianity*
- Supporting and clarifying approach to planning, delivery and assessment
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of RE through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks, analysis of data and pupil voice and be able to discuss impact and standards
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process particularly around Strand 7

The Head Teacher and Governors make sure:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning outcomes 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 effective and regular opportunities for CPD

- Teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- 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 make good progress

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

At St Lawrence we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children 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 occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history and citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns and anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at our school.

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 pupils 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 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 pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil 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 LA SACRE (VC schools) or diocese (VA schools) 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.