

Religious Education Policy

St Aidan's CE Academy



Updated: December 2025

Review Date: December 2026

Religious Education Policy

1. Introduction

Religious Education has a unique place as a central subject in the curriculum of St Aidan's. It is neither a core nor a foundation subject; 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'.

With this in mind, our syllabus is based on the Leeds and York Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and is structured around key questions, the exploration of which encourages pupils to develop and use their skills of reflection, interpretation, analysis and application, as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Understanding Christianity is taught alongside this syllabus and is a resource to support the teaching of Christianity in Religious Education. The key purpose of this is to help all teachers support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. The aim being to see pupils leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice.

2. Policy Aims

To engage pupils in enquiring into and exploring questions arising from the study of religion and belief, so as to promote their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

To provide learners with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions and beliefs represented in Great Britain.

To develop their understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and outlook.

To enable learners to apply the insights of the principal religious traditions to their own search for identity and significance.

To enable learners to become aware of their own beliefs and values and to have a positive attitude to the search for meaning and purpose in life.

To encourage learners to develop a positive attitude towards other people who hold religious beliefs different from their own.

3. The Importance of Religious Education

Religious Education at St Aidan's CE Academy develop pupils:

Knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity, other principal world religions, other religious traditions and world views

Understand and respect for different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stances), through exploring issues within and between faiths

Understanding of the influences of faith and belief on individuals, societies, communities and cultures

Skills of enquiry and response through the use of religious vocabulary, questioning and empathy

Skills of reflection, expression, application, analysis and evaluation of beliefs, values and practices, and the communication of personal responses to these.

Religious Education of St Aidan's CE Academy encourages pupils to:

Consider challenging questions of the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human

Understand the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures

Learn from the difference religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring questions of meaning and their own beliefs

Learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed responses to religious, moral and social issues

Develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural, global society

Develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

Religious Education at St Aidan's CE Academy enhances pupils:

Awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression

Ability to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses

Religious Education at St Aidan's CE Academy offers:

Opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development

Religious Education at St Aidan's CE Academy does not:

Seek to urge religious beliefs on pupils nor compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

Religious Education at St Aidan's CE Academy is not:

The same as collective Worship, which has its own place within school life (see Collective Worship Policy)

4. Legal Requirements

Religious Education is a statutory subject of the curriculum for all pupils in each year group and 'should be provided for all registered pupils except those withdrawn at the request of their parents.' (s 71 SSFA 1998)

Parents have the right to request that their son or daughter be excused from all or part of the RE provided at school.

The syllabus should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' (s375 (3) Education Act 1996)

We ensure that we comply with the legal requirements by following the Leeds and York Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018 and Understanding Christianity: Text, Impact, Connections

5. Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

Religious Education is generally taught on a weekly basis but is sometimes delivered through a class topic or as a whole school RE week. Teachers may develop their own key questions linked to the themes in the syllabus, allowing links with other subject areas where appropriate.

Understanding Christianity Overview

Reception	Creation (God) Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	Incarnation Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas?		Salvation Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?
Year 1	God 1.1 What do Christians believe that God is like?	Incarnation 1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Gospel 1.4 What is the good news that Jesus brings?	Salvation 1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians?

Year 2	Creation 1.2 Who made the world?	Incarnation 1.3 (Digging Deeper) Why does Christmas matter to Christians?		Salvation 1.5 (Digging Deeper) Why does Easter matter to Christians?
Year 3	Creation and Fall 2a.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation story.	Incarnation 2a.3 (Digging Deeper) What is the Trinity?	Kingdom of God 2a.6 When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	Salvation 2a.5 (Digging Deeper) Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?
Year 4	People of God 2a.2 What is it like to follow God?	Incarnation 2a.3 What is the Trinity?	Gospel 2a.4 What kind of world did Jesus want?	Salvation 2a.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?
Year 5	God 2b.1 What does it mean if God is holy and loving?	Incarnation 2b.4 Was Jesus the Messiah?	Fall 2b.3 How can following God bring freedom and justice.	Salvation 2b.6 What did Jesus do to save human beings?

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

The aims of Religious Education in Church schools are:

- 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.

In the York and Leeds syllabus, RE teaching and learning should enable pupils to

- a. Make sense of a range of religious and non-religious concepts and beliefs.
- b. Understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs.
- c. Make connections between religious and non-religious concepts, beliefs, practices and ideas studied.

6. Assessment and Recording in Religious Education

Pupils progress in RE is based on the expected outcome outlines in the agreed syllabus and in Understanding

Pupils' progress in RE is based on the expected outcomes outlined in the Agreed Syllabus and in Understanding Christianity, which in turn have been developed in line with guidance produced nationally. These outcomes have been developed into 10 Key Performance Indicators for each year group and students are assessed regularly against these KPIs.

We track individual pupils' progress in this way, whilst also bearing in mind that the statements do not cover all aspects of teaching and learning in RE. For example, pupils' personal views and ideas are not subject to formal assessment, and yet are central to good RE.

Progress in RE is reported annually to parents and has a prominent position in the end of year report.