



Woodkirk  
Academy  
& Sixth Form

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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## 1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) CURRICULUM INTENT

- 1.1. RE within Leodis Academies Trust schools aims to foster a deep understanding of diverse beliefs, values, and traditions, both locally and globally.
- 1.2. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, students are encouraged to explore fundamental questions about life, meaning, and morality, developing respect, empathy, and critical thinking.
- 1.3. Our intent is to nurture informed, reflective, and tolerant individuals who can engage thoughtfully with the world around them, appreciating the role of religion and belief in shaping human experience and society, equipping them as 21<sup>st</sup> Century global citizens that have empathy, respect and an open-minded approach to different ways of living (culture). This is broadly in line with our British Values.

## 2. PURPOSE OF RE

- 2.1. Our vision for RE is based on the national guidance issued by the RE Council in 2024 and the locally agreed syllabus for Leeds, 2024: Believing and Belonging. [Religious Education | Leeds for Learning](#).
- 2.2. "Schools should, through their RE programmes, aim systematically to prepare students for the spiritual and intellectual challenges of living in a world with diverse religions and beliefs as well as non-belief". *Big Ideas for Religious Education, Wintersgill 2017*
- 2.3. This syllabus is called Believing and Belonging because it weaves two key threads: First, it is about beliefs and values. It aims to develop learners' understanding of religions/worldviews, exploring their commonality and diversity. Specifically, RE:
  - 2.3.1. Enables learners to develop a broad and balanced understanding of religions/worldviews.
  - 2.3.2. Gives learners a broad understanding of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism and non-religious beliefs, and understand how these are woven into human experience and applied to life and decisions.
  - 2.3.3. Empowers learners to develop and use critical thinking skills.
- 2.4. Well taught, RE is a rigorous academic subject, supporting problem solving and critical thinking skills. It will inspire and motivate learners to enquire into religious and purposeful questions. Engaging and stimulating RE helps to nurture informed and resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division. It offers a place in the curriculum where difficult or 'risky' questions can be tackled within a safe but challenging context
- 2.5. Secondly, the syllabus is about 'belonging'. It aims to nurture pupils' awareness of the treasury of diverse beliefs and cultures, as well as sensitivity to the questions and challenges that these can present. Ultimately, we all share a common humanity and our own patch of the Earth. In this way RE plays a part in helping pupils to discover their own place, identity and journey through life.

## 3. THE RE CURRICULUM

- 3.1. The RE curriculum is based on the Local Agreed Syllabus for Leeds produced by Leeds SACRE for teaching from September 2024.
- 3.2. The aims of RE in our Leodis schools are based around six threads or 'pathways' through which the most important features of RE may be understood. Coherent and sequential learning is built on these pathways and then earthed by thematic and systematic study of specific religions/worldviews.

3.3. Our RE across the Trust therefore aims to:

3.3.1. develop progressive understanding of the 'pathways'; and

3.3.2. build rich and profound knowledge of religions/worldviews.

3.4. To support delivery of informed and interesting RE, teaching is based on a sequence of units of work. Representing progression of learning in the areas of study through Core and Focus units of study. See Appendices 1 to 3.

#### **4. ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS**

4.1. We assess progress of pupils against the end of key stage statements in the syllabus. The units of work specify age-related expectations within the key stages.

4.2. Primary phase assessment happens through end of unit assessments, quizzes and tasks.

4.3. In Key Stages 3 and 4, RE formative assessment is through an audit of knowledge learnt across the Unit of Study – MCQ knowledge checker. Further to this, for a more in-depth assessment students will write an extended piece of writing in relation to the Unit of Study where they will show their knowledge of content, understanding and application of content and evaluation of knowledge content.

4.4. Schools are required to report progress in RE in line with the core principles of assessment outlined by the DfE. We will report to parents on individual pupils' achievement relative to the end of key stage statements in at least Years 2 and 6 or when a pupil leaves school. In the secondary phase this is reported to parents three times a year as a minimum.

#### **5. RE LESSONS**

5.1. Primary phase RE is timetabled so that pupils are provided with at least *39 hours* of RE each year. This includes elements that are included in the PSHE curriculum. Time is also taken through assemblies and class discussion time to recognise and celebrate a range of religious and secular festivals around the world.

5.2. Secondary phase RE is timetabled so that pupils are provided with approximately *20 hours* of RE each year. Lessons will be delivered by specialist RE teachers where the timetable allows and is timetabled as PSHRE. This interweaves RE and PSHE topics. However, there are discrete RE Units of Study that stand alone within the PSHRE curriculum. Lessons are taught by a qualified RE teacher on the main, where this is not possible, RE is taught by non-specialists with a background in the provision of RE.

5.3. The school has a subject leader who supports and monitors the subject. This is within each school and across the Trust.

5.4. We encourage and promote teaching and learning through discrete taught timetabled lessons. In the Secondary phase, RE lessons follow a bookletised programme of study for rigor, application and consistency.

#### **6. THE PLACE OF RE ACROSS THE TRUST**

6.1. RE has a key part in our curriculum. It also makes an important contribution to pupils' wider development, wellbeing and understanding.

- 6.2. RE plays a vital role in enriching the broader curriculum by promoting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. It encourages pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values while developing respect and understanding for others. Through enquiry-based learning, RE supports literacy, critical thinking, and philosophical reasoning, complementing subjects such as History, English, PSHE and Citizenship.
- 6.3. RE contributes to pupils' personal development by fostering empathy, resilience, and ethical awareness. It provides opportunities for meaningful discussion, debate, and reflection, helping pupils to navigate complex moral issues and global challenges. The subject also enhances community cohesion by exploring diverse worldviews and encouraging active engagement with local faith communities and global perspectives.
- 6.4. By integrating visits, guest speakers, and cross-curricular projects, RE offers rich experiential learning that supports pupils' holistic growth and prepares them to be thoughtful, informed, and responsible citizens in a pluralistic society.
- 6.5. As part of enriching pupils' experiences, we provide opportunities for learning beyond the classroom (where possible) to deepen understanding and engagement with religious and philosophical concepts. This includes arranging visits to places of worship, inviting speakers from diverse faith backgrounds, and facilitating participation in interfaith and ethical dialogue events. Pupils are encouraged to explore real-world applications of belief and practice, fostering respect and curiosity.
- 6.6. We also engage in ongoing projects that connect RE with wider community and global issues, such as charity initiatives, cultural celebrations, and thematic days that promote reflection on values, identity, and justice. These experiences are designed to be inclusive, thought-provoking, and adaptable, ensuring they remain relevant and impactful across year groups and over time.
- 6.7. RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' SMSC development and Fundamental British Values by, for example, encouraging respectful dialogue, promoting understanding of diverse beliefs and cultures, and exploring ethical and moral questions. Pupils learn to appreciate the importance of individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, which are central to British Values.
- 6.8. RE links to PSHE education by supporting pupils in developing self-awareness, empathy, and the ability to reflect on personal and societal issues. RE complements PSHE themes such as identity, relationships, equality, and mental well-being, offering a space for thoughtful discussion and values-based learning.
- 6.9. RE supports our commitment to equality through its inclusive approach to exploring a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews. It challenges stereotypes, promotes respect for diversity, and ensures that all pupils feel represented and valued, regardless of background or belief.
- 6.10. We value the support given to RE through links with the local and wider community, such as partnerships with places of worship, interfaith groups, and guest speakers. These connections enrich pupils' learning experiences, provide real-world context, and foster a sense of belonging and active citizenship.

## **7. WITHDRAWAL FROM RE**

- 7.1. Parents have a statutory right to withdraw a child from RE. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. If a parent is considering withdrawal from RE, we will listen to their concerns, inviting them to do so with the lead for RE. We work hard to ensure that any reservations or doubts may be accommodated to avoid withdrawal but recognise that a parent has this right if reservations cannot be resolved. Any formal decision to withdraw should be made in writing direct to the Principal. We will ask parents if they wish to continue the withdrawal each year.

7.2. If a pupil is withdrawn, the school has a duty of care to look after the pupil, but not to provide alternative education. Any arrangements made must not incur extra cost for the school or Trust. Parents who withdraw a child from RE must provide work for that child to be completed in their timetabled RE time. The work provided must be of adequate length that matches the amount of time a child is withdrawn from RE. The school expects this substitute work to be sent to the school in advance of 48 hours prior to the child's withdrawal from RE.

## **8. ENQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS**

The school welcomes enquiries or questions about RE. In the first instance parents should contact their child's class teacher.

## Primary Phase Units of Study

Reception	E.1 Where do we live? Pathway 4	E.3 What makes a good helper? Pathway 3	E.6 How is our world wonderful? Pathway 6	E.1 How do people celebrate? Pathway 2 and 5	E.2 Who and what are special to us? Pathway 2	E.1 Where do we live? Pathway 4
Year 1	C1.1 What does it mean to belong to a religion? Pathway 1	F1.12 How and why do we care for others? Pathway 3	C1.5 How do we celebrate special events? Pathway 5	C1.5 How do we celebrate special events? Pathway 5	C1.6 Which books and stories are special? Pathway 6	C1.6 Which books and stories are special? Pathway 6
Year 2	F1.13 How can we look after our planet? Pathways 4 and 6	C1.3 How can we make good choices? Pathway 3	C1.3 How can we make good choices? Pathway 3	C1.2 How is new life welcomed? Pathway 2	C1.4 How and why do some people pray? Pathway 2 and 4	C1.4 How and why do some people pray? Pathway 2 and 4
Year 3	FL2.11 How do creation stories help people understand the world? Pathway 5 and 6	CL2.3 What is the importance of the Five Pillars of Islam? Pathway 3	CL2.2 How is religion expressed? Pathway 2 and 3	CL2.6 What is the Jewish way of life? Pathway 1 and 5	FL2.12 How does the Bible help Christians to live a good life? Pathway 3	FL2.12 How does the Bible help Christians to live a good life? Pathway 3
Year 4	CL2.1 How does faith expand? Pathway 1 and 4	FL2.13 Who can inspire us? Pathway 3 and 5	CL2.5 How is light celebrated? Pathway 1	CL2.5 How is light celebrated? Pathway 1	CL2.4 Why are the Guru's at the heart of Sikh belief and practice? Pathway 1 and 5	CL2.4 Why are the Guru's at the heart of Sikh belief and practice? Pathway 1 and 5
Year 5	CU2.4 Why are religious journeys special? Pathway 4	CU2.4 Why are religious journeys special? Pathway 4	CU2.6 What is the impact of the Old & New Covenant? Pathway 6	CU2.3 What values are shown in codes for living? Pathway 3	CU2.3 What values are shown in codes for living? Pathway 3	FU2.12 Should we forgive others? Pathway 3
Year 6	CU2.2 How do Sikhs show commitment? Pathway 1 and 2	CU2.5 What are the influences on Jewish life? Pathway 1 and 5	FU2.11 What do Christians believe about Jesus' death and resurrection? Pathway 6	FU2.11 What do Christians believe about Jesus' death and resurrection? Pathway 6	FU2.13 What is the impact of growing up? Pathway 2 and 4	FU2.13 What is the impact of growing up? Pathway 2 and 4

## Secondary Phase Units of Study

### Key Stage 3

Half Term	Unit of Study	Core or Focus Unit
HT1 Yr7	Philosophy, Religion & Ethics	Focus unit. Pathway 1, 4 and 6.
HT2 Yr7	Hinduism	Core unit. Pathway 1, 2 and 5.
HT3 Yr7	Buddhism	Core unit. Pathway 1, 2, 3 and 5.
HT6 Yr7	Sikhism	Core unit. Pathway 1, 3, 5 and 4.
HT1 Yr8	Judaism	Core unit. Pathway 1 and 5
HT2 Yr8	Evil & Suffering	Focus unit. Pathway 6
HT3 Yr8	Martin Luther King	Core unit. Pathway 2, 3 and 4.
HT4 Yr8	Christianity	Core unit. Pathway 1 and 5.
HT5 Yr8	Islam	Core unit. Pathway 1 and 5.
HT1 Yr9	PREVENT radicalisation/extremism	Focus unit. Pathway 1, 3, 4 and 5.
HT2 and HT3	Matters of Life & Death – Ethics	Focus unit. Pathway 1, 3, 4 and 6.
HT4 Yr9	Humanism & Western Philosophy	Core unit. Pathway 1, 2 and 3.

### Key Stage 4

RE is offered as an option subject in Yr10 and 11: AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification A – Christianity & Islam

Those that do not opt for GCSE Religious Studies follow a core RE curriculum through PSHRE and Form Time provision.

Half Term	Unit of Study	Core or Focus Unit
HT1 Yr10	Marriage, Family & Relationships	Focus unit. Pathway 5, 4 and 1.
HT3,4 and 5 Yr11	Ethics and Global issues related to Religion	Focus unit. Pathway 3,6 and 4.
GCSE units of study	Christianity Belief & Practice Islam Belief & practice Theme B – Religion & Life Theme A – Relationships Theme E – Crime Theme F- Human Rights	Focus and Core units – all pathways.

## SIXTH FORM Units of Study

RE is taught through the General Tutorial and Form Time themes programme in 6<sup>th</sup> Form.

In Form Time discussions are held in form groups around SMSC World and Religious Views. (see attached document).

In Group tutorial RE is covered through presentations. Students must select a question from the specification (see sheet attached below). The questions are researched then presented to the form throughout the year, so the topics are covered and student led with feedback and questions from the member of staff.

This task aims to support students in preparing for a presentation by exploring a range of questions related to religion, belief, meaning, and morality. The key components of this task include:

- Preparation: Organising materials, structuring the presentation, and rehearsing delivery.
- Timing: Managing the duration of the presentation effectively.
- Audience: Considering who will be listening and how to engage them.
- Location: Understanding the setting and adapting accordingly.
- Research: Gathering relevant information and examples to support the presentation.
- Anticipating Questions: Preparing for potential questions from the audience to demonstrate depth of understanding.

As a class, you will need to agree on distributing the questions. You must stick to the deadline given to you by your teacher.

Write your deadline here: \_\_\_\_\_

### **As part of developing knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views, students could explore questions such as:**

- How are beliefs expressed or portrayed in different media, for example, music? Bring and interpret examples;
- How have we got here? Investigation of the history of local migration, historically and more recently;
- What does it mean to believe and how does it make a difference? Develop cultural literacy and awareness of faiths and world views through an exploration of a specific faith, or selection of faiths, involving visits or visitors. Interview someone on how faith impacts on their work or profession;
- Is it right for religion to make the rules? Is there any role for religious authority in civil matters? The established church; Sharia law;
- Would it be beneficial if there was only one religion? The work of interfaith dialogue, including locally. Would it be better if there was no religion at all?
- Where is diversity? Investigation of diversity in faith locally and in college. How does this challenge or enrich?

### **As part of exploring questions of belief and meaning, students could explore questions such as:**

- Are all political systems equally valid? Is democracy better than theocracy?
- Is food a moral issue? Include topics such as: dietary rules, vegetarianism, multinational companies, obesity; fasting.
- Has human wellbeing made a difference for the better? What is the contribution of humanity to the planet?
- What is secular society and is it a good thing?
- What's wisdom?
- Is compassion possible in our world? Investigate examples of benevolent action, compassion, forgiveness, charity and the pursuit of justice;
- How do religious understanding and creation myths both have things to teach us? Are religions and science mutually exclusive?

**As part of questions about morality, students could explore questions such as:**

- Should we permit assisted suicide?
- Should humans exploit resources no matter what? (fracking, nuclear power)
- Should a religious believer or institution be exempt from equality laws?
- Are human rights more important than religious beliefs?
- Does 'respect' have any boundaries?
- Does free-market capitalism have any morality? Can you be a free-market capitalist and a moral person?
- Are there any boundaries to creating life?