

# Religious Education Policy

Academic Year 2023-2026



Version and Date		Action	Notes	Date to be Reviewed
3.0	13.07.21	Approved by the Trust Board	Updated July 2021	3 Years – July 2023
4.0	12.07.22	Approved by the Trust Board	Updated July 2022	3 Years – July 2025
5.0	11.07.23	Approved by the Trust Board	Updated June 2023	3 Years – July 2026

### Background to Religious Education Within the Connect Education Trust

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be taught to all pupils as part of the Basic Curriculum.

Families who send their children to Connect Education Trust schools are from a range of faith and non-faith backgrounds. RE is concerned with “learning about religion” and “learning from religion” and it is not the intention of the Connect Education Trust to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child’s family is respected at all times.

Parents of a pupil at any Connect Education Trust school has the right to withdraw their children from religious education (RE). If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school will comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes this may consult the Headteacher and other arrangements will be made. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE.

Many of our schools follow the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for Enfield. This was written by members of the Enfield Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), alongside RE Today, and followed consultation across Enfield with principal stakeholders, including faith leaders, Headteachers, RE practitioners and subject leaders in schools.

#### A. Values and Aims:

We believe that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE aims to enable pupils of whatever ability and level of development to:

1. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, each of which is represented in Enfield;
2. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;
3. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
4. enhance their own **spiritual, moral, social and cultural** development by:
  - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
  - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;

- c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
- d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way;
5. recognise the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

**B. Objectives:**

**Learning**

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate 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. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education should encourage all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to acknowledge that others hold beliefs different from their own.

Religious Education has two closely related aspects:

**Learning about Religion and Learning from Religion**

These two attainment targets with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum. RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience.

**Learning about Religion**

- identify, name, describe and give an account, in order to build a coherent picture of each religion;
- explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism;
- explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

**Learning from Religion**

- respond to religious and moral issues in an informed and considered manner;
- reflect on what might be learnt from religion in the light of personal beliefs and life experience;
- identify and respond to the question of meaning within religion.

**Teaching**

Teaching the programmes of study should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

- **Beliefs and teachings** - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
- **Religious practices and lifestyles** - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- **Ways of expressing meaning** - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;

- **Human identity, personality and experience** - e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- **Questions of meaning and purpose** - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences;
- **Values and commitments** - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge and develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between these two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of RE at the Trust.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. visits and visitors; enabling children to see at first hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith
2. role play; encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask questions from their own encounters
3. artefacts; being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge
4. parents; by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community

The teaching of RE will involve some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and faith visitors, pupils are actively engaged in learning.

### **Cross Curricular Issues**

RE teaching and learning will be the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions.

There are clearly very special opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions will be raised and pupils will develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links will be made with people and communities within the locality.

Pupil's skills in oracy and literacy will be enhanced. Problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills will be developed.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Board of Trustees.