



Axbridge C of E Academy

Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel

Religious Education Policy

Date of Policy: December 2025

Date to Review: December 2026



Religious Education Policy

At Axbridge Church of England Academy, all policies and practices are rooted in our Christian vision and ethos. Our work as a school community is guided by the words of Jesus:

"I have come so that you may have life, life in all its fullness."

John 10:10

This vision underpins our commitment to enabling every child and adult to flourish academically, socially, emotionally, spiritually, and morally, within a safe, inclusive, and aspirational learning environment.

Our Christian values of **Community, Love, and Courage** shape the way we live and work together each day. They inform our relationships, our expectations, and our approach to teaching, learning, behaviour, and care. Through Community, we foster a sense of belonging, partnership, and mutual respect. Through Love, we promote kindness, compassion, dignity, and forgiveness. Through Courage, we encourage resilience, honesty, ambition, and the confidence to do what is right, even when it is challenging.

Our school motto, **"Together We Inspire, Thrive and Excel,"** reflects our belief that children achieve their very best when they feel valued, supported, and inspired within a strong and caring community. Working together with pupils, families, staff, partners and the wider community, we strive to provide opportunities that enable all learners to thrive and excel.

Legal Requirements

As an academy, we are independent of the local authority and not required to follow the national curriculum or the local RE syllabus. However our curriculum must reflect: 'that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principle religious traditions present in Great Britain.' [Education Reform Act 1988]. The school teaches religious education according to the Somerset agreed syllabus, with additional teaching on Christianity through the Understanding Christianity schemes of work and some resources from Oak Academy.

Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. This is the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

Intent

Religious Education has a particular contribution to make towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of each pupil. It involves learning about religion i.e.

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understanding what religious people believe and do, and how they express themselves and also learning from religion i.e. making sense of who we are, of life, and of right and wrong. We encourage respect for religious commitment and for those holding different beliefs.

The three statutory aims, or intent, of the curriculum are to develop successful learners, confident individuals and positive contributors. RE has a vital role to play in the development of these core aims.

RE helps pupils become **successful learners** by enabling them to:

- ✓ develop important skills, knowledge and understanding in RE;
- ✓ build progression from simple skills such as naming recognising and recalling, to complex and demanding skills such as synthesis and critical evaluation;
- ✓ develop understanding of both learning about and from religion and belief;
- ✓ access lively, challenging and compelling learning experiences which stimulate their mental, emotional and social development;
- ✓ engaging with powerful and important questions of meaning and complex, demanding ethical issues;
- ✓ understand both conflict and collaboration within and between religions and the importance of inter-faith dialogue;
- ✓ reflect upon and evaluate the role of religion and belief in the world today;
- ✓ mature in their spiritual moral, social and cultural development;
- ✓ build effective links between their learning in RE and other subjects;
- ✓ know how well they are doing in RE and how to improve their learning.

RE helps pupils become **confident individuals** by enabling them to:

- ✓ develop important attitudes such as sensitivity, open-mindedness, self-esteem and appreciation / wonder;
- ✓ share their own views, ideas and experiences, in a supportive learning environment, without fear or embarrassment;
- ✓ develop the ability to produce reasoned, thoughtful arguments and well substantiated conclusions, especially when engaging with questions of meaning and ethical issues;
- ✓ develop both dependent and inter-dependent learning in RE;

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- ✓ express their own ideas and responses in a variety of ways such as creative writing, oral work, the use of ICT, drama, story and music;
- ✓ engage with and reflect upon key beliefs and teachings in religion regarding the purpose, value and dignity of human beings.

RE helps pupils become **responsible citizens** by enabling them to:

- ✓ develop both respect and sensitivity to other people's beliefs and values;
- ✓ learn about and from the contribution of religion and belief to Community Cohesion through engaging with school, local, British and global communities;
- ✓ actively contribute to RE lessons through group and class discussions;
- ✓ learn about and from the diversity of faith and beliefs in their local, wider, British and global communities;
- ✓ analyse how and why religion and belief are portrayed in the media;
- ✓ critically evaluate the role and place of religion in the world;
- ✓ enrich their learning through visits and visitors;
- ✓ investigate and reflect upon their rights and responsibilities;
- ✓ develop the key attitude of open mindedness, sustaining their own views, agreeing and disagreeing respectfully and listening carefully to others.

(Taken from Somerset AMV)

Implementation

- Religious education may be taught in a 'whole class' setting but with flexibility to allow for discussion, questioning and reflection in small groups and individually.
- Visits to local churches and other places of worship are encouraged, as well as visits from different faith representatives.
- Monthly whole school visits to the church to take part in worship and celebrate our Christian values, as well as monthly visits to school from a member of the clergy team.
- A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
 - ✓ Teacher presentations, role play, drama and story telling
 - ✓ Questions and answer sessions, discussions and debates
 - ✓ Individual and group research
 - ✓ Photographs, pictures and maps
 - ✓ Exploration through food, clothing and artefacts
 - ✓ IT, films, podcasts, radio, websites, to research, communicate ideas and discussion

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Curriculum Time

In line with the guidance set out in the Awareness, Mystery and Values 2019 the children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One receive 36 hours of religious education per a year and the children in Key Stage Two receive 45 hours per a year. This is in addition to Collective Worship time. As a Church school, we make sure that this is fulfilled. In addition, the introduction of our core 'Christian Values' of Community, Courage and Love, are taught termly and further embedded throughout the school to enable children to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning and recognition of how to exemplify them within our everyday lives.

The right to withdraw

Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from RE. Where parents are wishing to exercise this right, the Local Partnership Board (LPB) would first suggest that the parents meet with the Head Teacher to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved, parents need to apply to the LPB in writing to withdraw their child from RE lessons. The governing body will make arrangements with the Head Teacher for the child(ren) to be supervised or engaged in another activity during this time.

Programme of study

In the **Foundation Stage**, children are introduced to religion and belief through stories, celebration, special people, times, places, and objects. Learning is rooted in first-hand experience, sensory exploration, and talk, enabling children to reflect on their own feelings and experiences. Three planned RE workshops are delivered annually to develop awe, wonder, and appreciation of the world, celebrating at least two world religions each year, including festivals such as Harvest, Hanukkah, and Diwali.

In **Key Stage One**, learning builds upon children's personal experiences and emerging understanding. Pupils begin to explore religious beliefs more explicitly through age-appropriate key concepts such as *Incarnation* and *Salvation*, guided by key questions from the AMV syllabus. There is a strong emphasis on discussion, respectful listening, and valuing others, supporting pupils to relate their learning to both their local community and the wider world. Pupils study Christianity and one other world religion, with a focus on Judaism.

In **Key Stage Two**, pupils deepen and extend their understanding by revisiting and building upon prior learning through increasingly complex key questions. They are encouraged to articulate their views, engage in respectful dialogue, and make meaningful links across beliefs, practices, and worldviews. As a First School, pupils study Christianity alongside Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism, in line with the school's long-term plan and coverage.

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Assessment

Assessment in Religious Education is integral to teaching and learning and is embedded throughout each unit. Teachers plan purposeful learning tasks that enable pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and ability to think deeply about religious and worldviews content. These tasks are carefully sequenced and revisited across each unit to support progression and depth of understanding.

Assessment is informed by a SOLO taxonomy approach, supporting pupils to move from surface knowledge to deeper, more connected and extended understanding. Teachers use SOLO-aligned success criteria and questioning to identify where pupils are within their learning journey and to plan appropriate next steps.

Ongoing formative assessment is central to RE practice. This includes skilled questioning, structured discussion, pupil voice activities, and opportunities for reflection. Where pupils are unable to record effectively, teachers prioritise capturing learning through oral responses, observation, and professional dialogue, ensuring that RE understanding is accurately evidenced.

For pupils with SEND, assessment focuses on identifying and celebrating small steps of progress, with teachers recording observations, responses, and attitudes to learning to build a holistic picture of understanding. It is recognised that pupils with SEND may achieve Age-Related Expectations (ARE) in RE, and they are given every opportunity to demonstrate their learning at an appropriately ambitious level.

Overall, assessment in RE is inclusive, flexible, and reflective, ensuring that all pupils are supported to articulate what they know, understand, and can express about religion and worldviews.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Recording and Reporting

The Local Partnership Board have responsibility for monitoring how the RE in the school reflects its Christian vision;

- The headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The RE subject leader will assist the headteacher by monitoring long term and medium term plans.
- The RE subject leader will assist the headteacher by monitoring RE through work scrutiny and learning walks.
- The subject leader will manage resources.
- The subject leader will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in religious education and disseminate this as appropriate.
- The subject leader will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice.

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- The subject leader will be responsible for drawing up an action plan for religious education. This is an annual plan and should be informed by this policy.

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