Written: September 2025, Updated: May 2026

Model Policy for Religious Education

This model policy provides guidance for RE in your school and helps you to write your own RE policy. You will need to choose the relevant paragraph below (seen in blue) and adapt the document throughout so that it is relevant for your school.

1. Legal Requirements, Provision and Aims

All schools and academies in England are legally required to provide Religious Education (RE) to all pupils. The National Curriculum states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced, and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

Our school is a Church of England **Voluntary Aided School** and the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School i.e. the practices and principles of the Church of England. The National Society for Education's Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education underpins our provision and informs this policy. The Governors, in accordance with the headteacher, have decided to adopt (state the syllabus that you follow).

Our school is a Church of England **Voluntary Controlled School** and the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Suffolk and is informed by the National Society for Education's Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education.

Our school is a Church of England **Academy.** RE must be provided under the terms of our Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State. We are informed by the National Society for Education's Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education and adopt (state the syllabus that you follow).

In a Church of England Academy the requirements for RE are specified in the funding agreement for that academy. For a VA school that converts to academy status the model funding agreement specifies that an academy with a particular religious designation must provide RE in accordance with the tenets of the particular faith specified in the designation.

RE in all Church of England schools is seen as having equal standing with the core subjects. In this school, we provide a rich and varied RE curriculum, enabling learners to acquire both a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and other faiths and worldviews.

The primary aim of the subject may be described as promoting religious literacy. The broad aims of RE are set out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

2. Leadership and Management

RE in all church schools should be well-led and managed. Positive support from senior management and governance are expected and key to achieving excellence in the subject. Continuity in leadership helps ensure ongoing progress.

In this school, we:

- **Have an RE subject leader. The subject leader develops the subject, supports and mentors staff, and monitors pupil progress and perceptions.**
- **Have a governor for RE who supports the subject leader(s) and monitors the subject.**

A 'shadow' RE leader may also be appointed. If relevant for your school, include information in your policy about a shadow leader or any cross-school leadership.

- **Offer our subject leader appropriate training, support and a good level of resourcing to do their job.**
- **Discuss progress in RE at least annually at staff / governing body meetings**.

3. Continuous Professional Development

Teachers are entitled to professional support and development in their careers. In church schools, priority should be given to staff to develop their expertise and qualifications in RE, so pupils receive high quality experiences.

In this school, we:

- **Offer staff appropriate and ongoing professional development in RE**
- **Ensure that where a teaching assistant (TA) is used to cover RE, this is part of a rotation of subjects to ensure professional development for both teacher and TA.**

4. The Curriculum

RE in Church schools should contribute to the school's Christian character and teaching about Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ. However, as inclusive communities, church schools encourage learning about and fostering respect for different world views. All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and steps should be taken to ensure a range of teaching styles, groupings, and resources to allow all children to make progress in RE. All schools enrich their RE curriculum with creative and varied teaching methods and a range of visits and visitors and aim to build a good bank of resources.

If you use the Emmanuel Project, then the following paragraph is relevant: The Emmanuel Project, a scheme of work for EYFS to Y6, follows an enquiry-based approach looking at the key beliefs and concepts for seven different worldviews. The scheme closely matches the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.

If relevant, you may wish to say that you enrich RE with additional whole school theme days. Include brief details of recent examples.

5. Assessment

Assessment in RE is an important tool by which teachers know that children are making good progress, and which enables them to plan future work. Assessment is based on pupils' depth of knowledge, skills and understanding related to the key questions addressed in the curriculum. Standards in RE should be equal to, or exceed, those of other curriculum subjects.

In this school, we:

- **Ensure assessment tasks offer proper levels of challenge and assess children's knowledge, skills and understanding in RE, rather than more general literacy skills.**
- **Ensure assessments are carried out by class teachers.**
- **Encourage pupils to use self-assessment to develop their own sense of progress and to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding.**

The Emmanuel Project offers a range of tasks to ensure teachers can assess their pupils as they move through the unit. It also offers end-of-unit tasks, linked to the unit's key question, to provide summative assessment.

6. Monitoring, Progress and Standards

Subject leaders in all schools are responsible, alongside the Headteacher and governing body, for monitoring and evaluating the provision and standards in their subject area.

In this school:

- **The Headteacher enables the subject leader to monitor provisions and standards in RE on a regular cycle.**
- **The subject leader monitors provision and standards in RE through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum regularly.**
- **The subject leader reports annually to the governing body on progress and standards in RE and contributes to the school's self-evaluation.**
- **A member of the governing body assists in monitoring and evaluating the subject**

The content, teaching, learning and attainment of RE in a church school are inspected as part of the SIAMS framework. In all church schools, the effectiveness of the RE curriculum is explored within Inspection Question 6. In VA schools, former VA schools and former VC schools where denominational RE is taught, Inspection Question 7 explores the quality of RE.

7. Right to Withdraw

In all schools, parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from RE, either wholly or partially. They do not need to provide a reason for the request. The right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. If a parent asks that a pupil is withdrawn, then the school will grant the request without delay and alternative arrangements would be made. Schools have a duty to supervise a withdrawn pupil, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Parents may arrange alternative religious education for the pupil. If this happens, this must not disrupt the rest of the pupil's education or incur any extra cost for the school. Although parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from the RE curriculum, pupils may encounter learning about religious and non-religious worldviews in other curriculum areas from which a parent cannot withdraw their child. As such, the right to be withdrawn from RE does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religious matters.

If applicable to your school, you should also include that students over the age of 18 have the right to withdraw themselves from RE.

In this school, we will:

- **Clarify for parent the educational nature and aims of RE.**
- **Provide supervision for a withdrawn child remaining on the premises, but not additional teaching or materials which incur cost.**

8. Links with the Diocese, Cathedral and Parish Church

All schools are part of a Church of England parish, and all children have the opportunity to visit the parish church as part of their RE. In Church of England schools, this entitlement should be broadened to include an interactive relationship with the local church, an opportunity to visit the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds and an awareness of Diocesan events.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Approved by the Diocesan Board of Education on Thursday 14 May 2026.