




Religious Education Policy (RE)

September 2025

Signed (Chair of Trust Board):	
Date:	September 2025
Review:	September 2026

Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.

Religious Education Curriculum Policy

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Introduction

Religious Education (RE) contributes dynamically to children's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Arbor Academy Trust considers Religious Education to be an integral part of our broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of children and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Aims

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

- learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts.
- develop their own ideas, values and identities based on systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews.
- discover, explore and consider different answers to the big questions in life.
- develop an aptitude for dialogue, so that pupils can participate positively in society, with its diverse religions and worldviews.
- gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence and express their insights in response.
- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals.
- articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.
- develop religious literacy and conceptual understanding of what it means to be a person with religious or non-religious beliefs and ways of living.

Objectives

- Pupils engage in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address and to develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions.
- Pupils engage critically with ideas and understanding of religion and worldviews.
- Learning is interactive, creative and experiential; promotes community cohesion and supports fundamental British values.
- To empower pupils to express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can explain, using reasoned arguments, their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.

- To build confidence in their ability to express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to question and teaching about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues.
- To identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.
- To support community cohesion.
- To appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Teaching and Learning including delivery of the Curriculum

Through our RE curriculum, children study how religion and worldviews shape and are shaped by the societies in which we live, promoting deepening understanding of those belief systems. The curriculum design aligns with the objectives of Waltham Forest SACRE's Locally Agreed Syllabus and Hackney Locally Agreed Syllabus. We have adapted the scheme to the local circumstances of the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the RE topics that the children study in each term during each key stage. It shows how teaching units are distributed across the year groups, and how these fit together to ensure progression within the curriculum plan.

Our medium-term plans map out a grid of lessons/units for each year group which progresses and returns to themes as children move through the school. They identify the key learning objectives for each unit of work and stipulate the curriculum time that we devote to it.

The class teacher is responsible for writing the short-term plans. These daily plans list the specific learning objectives of each lesson.

The topics studied in RE curriculum are planned to build upon prior learning. While we offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, we also build planned progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

We also teach RE through other aspects of the curriculum and through school life (e.g. PHSE, assemblies), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of religions of the world and other worldviews. Linked with PHSE, children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

Since RE explores questions of spirituality, identity, ethics, meaning and purpose, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground. It is important then that all staff understand they have

a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children.

The Foundation Stage

We teach RE in Nursery and Reception classes as an integral part of the understanding the world work covered during the year. As these classes are a part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Children in EYFS learn about religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences and use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

Teaching RE to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. RE forms part of the school curriculum policy. It helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors, classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, variation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to a church or mosque, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks it and comments as necessary. At the end of a unit of work s/he makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum expected standards and records these attainment grades. We use this as the basis for assessing the progress of the children and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE for each age group in the school.

Resources

Resources are stored in the PPA Room and copies of the resources can be sought from the RE Leader. Electronic resources are available on the school's internal electronic database. Any queries regarding resources should be directed to the RE Leader.

Parents

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE. However, this rarely happens, by working in partnership with parents they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education. Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from any trip that is part of the RE curriculum.

If parents/carers do request their child be removed from these lessons, the school has a duty to supervise any pupils but **not** to:

- Provide additional teaching that is not RE
- Incur extra cost

A register of any such pupils will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved. Parents must request in writing to the head of school/ headteacher if they do not want their child to attend the lessons.

Monitoring and review

The monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in RE is the responsibility of the RE subject leader. The RE subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE, for keeping informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The computing subject leader gives the headteacher a termly report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.