

FEDERATION OF GORING AND STOKE ROW CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS



RE POLICY

Policy reviewed and agreed by: Ethos Committee
Date: March 2026
Next review: March 2028

Introduction

In the Federation of Goring and Stoke Row Church of England Primary Schools, RE plays an important role in expressing the theologically rooted Christian vision of the schools. RE reflects the ethos and values that are held and promotes understanding of people of all faiths and worldviews, whether religious or not. RE has the same high status as any other subject and contributes to the overall development of our pupils from all backgrounds and traditions.

The Legal Position

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex and relationship education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (see paragraph below). The schools, in accordance with their Trust Deeds, provides religious education for all pupils. Following advice from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, the governors decided that religious education in our schools should be based upon the Locally Agreed Syllabus <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/school/OxfordshireAgreedSyllabus2023-28.pdf> while also reflecting the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education published by the Education Office of the Church of England in February 2019. The statutory section 48 (SIAMS) inspection will evaluate RE and the way that it expresses the Christian vision of the schools and look for evidence of the quality of teaching, progress and assessment, alongside the priority, provision and profile of RE as expressed through the quality of the curriculum. Religious education has the same status and importance as any other subject and, as such, the same high standards are applied to this as to other subjects.

Purpose and Aims of RE

The purpose of RE is to teach children about the religious and non-religious worldviews that they will encounter in modern Britain and enable them to engage in meaningful and considered dialogue with those of all faiths and worldviews. This is religious literacy.

Therefore, the aims of RE in our schools are:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum and Time Allocation

The RE curriculum in the Federation of Goring and Stoke Row Church of England Primary Schools, has been approved by the governors. Christianity is taught in every year group, with key concepts revisited on a spiral curriculum. At least 50% of the time is devoted to Christianity. Other religions are covered according to the Oxford Diocesan scheme of work.

The total time for RE is between 5% and 10%, and it is taught in dedicated lessons/blocks/cross-curricular settings as appropriate. The time dedicated to RE is separate from the time given to Collective Worship. In KS1 this will amount to approximately 36 hours per year; in KS2 this rises to 45 hours per year.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

RE is taught using an enquiry based approach, that is challenging and robust. Learning will be organised to encourage the development of attitudes such as self-awareness, respect for all, open-mindedness, appreciation and wonder, as well as providing opportunities to engage appropriately with Fundamental British Values. All faiths are treated respectfully, and opportunities will be made to engage in age-appropriate, meaningful discussion. Where possible pupils will encounter members of a wide range of communities and visit places of worship.

A variety of resources, styles, and techniques will be used as appropriate to enable all children to make progress in RE regardless of their starting points, ability or background.

Assessment procedures will be robust and in line with the assessment procedures and feedback policy of the school, meeting the requirements of the syllabus or scheme that has been adopted. Assessment will largely be used to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and of teaching and learning. Students will engage in a variety of activities which will also enable teachers to assess what they have learnt.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE subject leaders and Executive Headteacher will monitor teaching and learning in RE in accordance with school policy. The RE subject leaders will observe teaching, conduct book and planning reviews and pupil interviews when appropriate to assess the quality of teaching and learning. The Executive Headteacher and governors will ensure that adequate monitoring takes place and that the impact of such activity is assessed.

Resources

The RE subject leaders will ensure that RE resources are kept up-to-date and that staff are informed when new resources are purchased or made available electronically. Resources will include source materials (e.g. Bibles, visitors, artefacts) where appropriate and be treated with respect by all staff.

The Right of Withdrawal

Pupils may be withdrawn from RE or part of RE by a parent or guardian (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; teachers can also exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. This provision will be the parents' responsibility. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from part of RE and can do so without giving any explanation. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from the teaching of RE. However, this does not apply to teachers who have been specifically employed to teach or lead RE. If a teacher wishes to withdraw from the teaching of RE, a letter requesting this must be submitted to the Executive Headteacher and its chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the schools must still make provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE.

When a request to withdraw is received by one of the schools, the request should be granted without delay. The school may offer to speak with the parent to try to understand the basis for the withdrawal but only after the request has been granted. The school must make clear that the parent's right to withdraw their child has been granted and that parents are not required to give reasons for their request.

Should parents take up the offer of a discussion, the schools may seek to establish the religious issues about which the parent objects to their child being taught. Discussion may include the practical implications of withdrawal and the circumstances in which it may be reasonable to accommodate their wishes. Practical examples of how a school may reassure a parent who has withdrawn their child may include inviting the parent to observe a RE lesson, discussing curriculum documents and discussing the aims of RE in the school with them.

Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed regularly in line with schools' procedures. An annual review is recommended, if possible, but review must be done within a 3-year period.