The GORSE Academies Trust

Policy for Religious Education

Designated Person:	Partnership Director
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1. Purpose of Religious Education (RE)

1.1. Our vision for RE is based on the national guidance issued by the RE Council in 2013 and 'Believing and Belonging' the local agreed syllabus, 2024-2029. Copies of the syllabus can be made available on request.

1.2. Our world is enriched by a wide and profound diversity of cultures and beliefs. Human beings are strengthened and empowered by learning from each other. Engaging and stimulating RE helps to nurture informed and resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division. It offers a place of integrity and security within which difficult or 'risky' questions can be tackled within a safe but challenging context. Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people'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.

1.3. In RE pupils discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions, in local, national and global contexts, through learning about and from religions and other world views. They learn to appraise the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

1.4. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in society with its diverse understanding of life from religious and other world views.

1.5. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

2. The RE Curriculum

2.1. The RE Curriculum is based on the local agreed syllabus for Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds produced by SACRE for teaching from September 2024. The syllabus is freely available on each trust establishment's website.

2.2. The aims of RE in our schools reflect the two aims of the syllabus for pupils:

1) To develop learners' understanding of religions/worldviews, exploring their commonality and diversity, including:

   a. Enabling learners to develop a broad and balanced understanding of religions/worldviews.
   b. Empowering learners to develop and use critical thinking skills.

To nurture pupils' awareness of the treasury of diverse beliefs and cultures, as well as sensitivity to the questions and challenges that these can present. Specifically, RE will:

   c. Broaden perspective of faiths and cultures, encouraging tolerance and diversity.
   d. Develop their own personal worldview, identify, values and spirituality.
   e. Contribute to developing learners as positive, participating citizens of the world.

2.3. The syllabus is based around six threads or 'pathways' through which the most important features of RE may be understood. These include:

   a. Pathway 1: The Nature of Religion and Belief
   b. Pathway 2: Expressing Belief
   c. Pathway 3: A Good Life
   d. Pathway 4: Personal Journey
   e. Pathway 5: Influence and Authority
   f. Pathway 6: The Big Picture

2.4. In Key Stages 1-4, by following this spiral curriculum, teaching should be built around developing knowledge and understanding along these six pathways for learning.

2.5. In Key Stage 5, the continued study of RE (either through an academic pathway or through enrichment) will support the development of cultural literacy and critical thinking on contemporary issues. The subject will build essential skills, enhancing personal development as well as academic competence in all subjects.

2.6 Within the rich conceptual understanding developed through the learning pathways, the curriculum will build subject-specific substantive knowledge of faiths and beliefs. This knowledge will grow throughout a learning career and will be appropriate to the

age and local context.

2.7 Alongside subject specific substantive knowledge, other forms of learning will be enriched. An education in religion and worldviews will be rooted in several distinct, but complementary, academic disciplines, including study of religions, theology, philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, literary criticism, creative arts, media studies and natural sciences. There will be an emphasis on a particular disciplinary approach depending on the area of study or key question concerned.

3. Achievement and Progress in 11-16

3.1. We assess progress of pupils against the end of key stage statements in the syllabus. The units of work specify age-related expectations within the key stages. Schools are required to report on progress in RE in line with the core principles of assessment outlined by the DfE.

4. Political Impartiality

4.1. The Religious Education curriculum will be delivered in accordance with the Department for Education's - Political impartiality in schools guidance.

5. Withdrawal from RE

5.1. Parents have a statutory right to withdraw a child from religious education. This right of withdrawal exists for all pupils in all types of school, including schools with and without a religious designation. If a parent/carer is considering withdrawal from RE, we will listen to their concerns, inviting them to do so with the Principal or other representative of the school. We work hard to ensure that any reservations or doubts may be accommodated to avoid withdrawal but recognise that a parent/carer has this right if reservations cannot be resolved. Any formal decision to withdraw should be made in writing to the Principal. We will ask parents/carers if they wish to continue the withdrawal each year.

5.2. If a pupil is withdrawn, the school has a duty of care to look after the pupil, but not to provide alternative education. Any arrangements made must not incur extra cost for the school or the local authority.

6. Enquiries and questions

6.1. The school welcomes enquiries or questions about RE. In the first instance parents/carers should contact [insert academy specific contact details here]

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