



WICKERSLEY  
PARTNERSHIP  
TRUST.



# Religious Education Policy

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**OWNED BY:** Director of RE

**APPROVED BY:** Trust Board

**WICKERSLEY PARTNERSHIP TRUST**

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## Contents

1.	Context	3
2.	Legal Requirements	3
3.	Aims and Purpose of RE	4
4.	RE in the Curriculum	5
5.	Religious and Worldviews	6

This policy does not form part of the contract of employment and from time to time may be altered following consultation and negotiations with recognised Trade Unions. Any changes will be communicated to employees with reasonable notice. The policy may vary from time to time on a case-by-case basis in consultation and agreement with Union Representatives.



## 1. Context

Wickersley Partnership Trust comprises of five secondary schools and eight primary schools. From the October 2019 census, our academies have 7335 students within them and an additional 109 in our F1 provision and they serve a diverse community culturally, ethnically and socially.

11.81% of the school population are classed as EAL and at least 20 different languages are spoken. We have a number of refugee families with a proportion of these children placed as part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. These children come to our academies with no English and sometimes significant care needs. Some schools sit on the border between Rotherham and Sheffield with a proportion of children not coming from Trust catchment area or local authority. One school sits out of Rotherham completely and is situated in Gainsborough.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is currently at 35.5% (ranges between 6.49% and 59.28%). This figure has been impacted on in recent years due to the advent of universal free school meals in KS1 and also reflects the fluctuation of children 'on and off' benefits. The percentage of pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium funding within the Trust is 38.12% (ranges between 7.14% and 63.88%). These figures do not include Early Years funding. FSM data also no longer accurately represents the cohort of pupils from deprived areas or near the poverty line in our community.

Under the revised SEN code of practice, the percentage of children identified across the Trust as SEND was 23.31% in October 2019. 13.1% of these pupils (224 of 1710) have an EHC Plan. Children across the Trust often begin their education working at average or below average and leave broadly in line with national.

We deliver Religious Education (RE) in line with the Rotherham Locally Agreed Syllabus (secondary provision) and the Oldham Locally Agreed Syllabus (primary provision).

**Academies and free schools can choose which agreed syllabus to use or create a syllabus of their own following the same guidelines as other agreed syllabus writers.**

Wickersley Partnership Trust recognises the education value of Religious Education in the school curriculum. Wickersley Partnership Trust also recognises the excellent contribution RE makes to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development across the school.

## 2. Legal Requirements

The National Curriculum states that:

*Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, 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 state schools... must teach religious education... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.*

***DfE, The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, September 2013, p.4***

**Breadth of RE:** Wickersley Partnership Trust recognises that RE 'must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal

religions represented in Great Britain' (Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3)) Schools Standards and Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19, para 5). The breadth of RE is referred to in more detail in the section on 'curriculum' below.

**Right of withdrawal:** Parents (or students who are over 18) have the right to withdraw their children either partly or wholly from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE. In addition, teachers have the right not to teach the subject. 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 head of the school and its chair of governors. If a teacher withdraws from the teaching of RE, the school must still make provisions for the pupils to receive their entitlement to RE. Our approach to RE, however, has been constructed in the hope that parents and teachers will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal.

Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from RE should inform the school Head Teacher and the Director of RE in writing at their earliest convenience. The request must be from both parents/guardians and state if they wish to withdraw from the entire RE curriculum or part (e.g. topics on life after death only). It is the parents' (or students over 18) responsibility to provide their own work for RE lessons (e.g. schools should not provide additional literacy/numeracy intervention in this time). During the designated RE time students will be registered and monitored at a designated place on school site, but they won't be provided with one to one staff support during this time. Wickersley Partnership Trust recognises this right, but is pleased that it is almost never used by parents and students. Information about the right of withdrawal is provided on the Trust website via publication of this policy.

**Collective worship:** This policy covers the provision of RE in the curriculum – collective worship is not covered in this policy. Collective worship is distinct from Religious Education and should not be counted as curriculum time.

### 3. Aims and Purpose of RE

**Purpose:** At Wickersley Partnership Trust RE enables students to engage critically with significant ethical, philosophical and social issues in order to understand the world we live in more fully. Students learn about a wide range of religious beliefs and practices, including non-religious worldviews. They do this for the development of their knowledge, for their capacity to flourish in our diverse society, and for their growing understanding of their own identity and outlook. At Wickersley Partnership Trust students are encouraged to develop their own considered opinion, to articulate their views, and engage in productive dialogue and debate with others.

**Aims:** In order to fulfil this purpose, RE lessons at Wickersley Partnership Trust are aimed at developing, with increasing depth and discernment, students' knowledge and understanding of religious traditions and non-religious worldviews. Students will learn how religious identity influences people's lives and will be encouraged to express their own considered opinions about the nature and value of religion on people and the planet. Students will develop the skills of listening, speaking and discussing, as well as those of enquiry, analysis and evaluation.

**SMSC:** Although all subjects in the curriculum and the school as a whole have an equal duty to promote students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, RE is particularly well placed to do this. RE develops students' capacity for cultural understanding and moral enquiry particularly strongly, both through curriculum content and the personal characteristics required to participate in RE.

**Community cohesion:** RE plays a strong part in promoting community cohesion. In the RE classroom the values of tolerance, respect and openness are essential in all students in order to participate in RE.

**Inclusion:** RE, as all school subjects, adheres to a policy of inclusion. RE teachers plan lessons and schemes of work to ensure that all students can access high quality RE. To this end, teachers will monitor the success of their provision and differentiation, and employ specific strategies when necessary.

## 4. RE in the Curriculum



**Content and approach:** At the heart of our RE curriculum at Wickersley Partnership Trust is the intention to enable students to know and articulate their own beliefs and opinions on a variety of topics; whilst also understanding the worldviews of others and how this influences behaviour, thus preparing students for life in a diverse world.

Within our primary schools the 'School Way' is used to reinforce this intention, for example, RE plays a key role in developing respect for others, reflected in the statement 'We are respectful'.

Within our secondary schools the 'RE Subject Way' is designed to help students become young subject specialists. The Subject Way has two main purposes: firstly, to teach students the vital skills they need to achieve their full potential and gain the very best grades they can. Secondly, to teach students how each subject relates to the wider world, incorporating the life skills they will learn.



**Assessment:** Done well, assessment supports student progress, builds learning, addresses misunderstandings, and thereby closes the gap between where a student is and where the teacher wants them to be.

Assessment in the primary RE curriculum:

- Includes written and verbal feedback which is age and stage appropriate for our pupils
- BRAG marking is used at key points of the pupil's learning journey
- End points are identified at the point of planning and used to assess current learning and move learning on

The secondary RE curriculum includes various forms of assessment:

- Formative and summative measures
- Self & peer assessment
- AFL used formatively
- Regular BRAG marking

Within the RE curriculum written & verbal feedback will:

- Focus on specific success criteria
- Relatable to intended outcomes
- Provide targets for improvement
- Provide opportunity for students to act on targets in a timely manner

*For further information, please see the Trust Marking and Feedback Handbook and/or the RE Marking and Feedback Policy.*

**Time allocation:** It is recommended that RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two. The general guidance is for one hour per week for Key Stage 3 RE, non-examined and Short Course RE at Key Stage 4. Full Course at Key Stage 4 should receive at least three hours of RE per fortnight.

A Level RS will be according to your sixth-form policy, but should be equal to any other humanities subject or English. Please note that schools with a sixth form are required by law to provide some RE provision for all students in the sixth form unless they have been withdrawn.

Across all key stages our RE curriculum is designed to include entitlement experiences such as visits to places of worship and talks from visiting speakers, which compliments classroom learning and ensures recommended curriculum time is adhered to.

Key Stage	Time per week
EYFS	Planned within the EYFS Framework
KS1	One hour a week
KS2	One hour a week
KS3	Year 7 and 8 students receive one lesson a week Year 9 students receive one lesson a fortnight
KS4	Year 10 students receive one lesson a fortnight Year 11 students receive one lesson a fortnight (beginning September 2024)
KS5	RE is delivered in discrete identifiable time

All secondary lessons are 75 minutes in length.

In addition to this core provision, upper KS3 and KS4 students can opt to study Religious Studies, starting with a foundation year in Year 9 and then undertaking the full course GCSE.

*RE curriculum time does not include assembly or collective worship, even when the assembly provides a starting point for curricular work. Christmas and Easter production rehearsals and performances are not RE.*

## 5. Religions and Worldviews

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy. These schemes have been written in light of the Oldham and Rotherham Agreed Syllabus.

At each key stage a depth of understanding of both religious and non-religious worldviews is taught.

Scheme of Work
EYFS themes emerging from the EYFS Framework
KS1 Christianity and Islam
Lower KS2 Judaism and Hinduism
Upper KS2 Humanism
KS3 Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Humanism (includes thematic study)
KS4 Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Humanism (includes thematic study)
KS4 options groups study Edexcel B GCSE Religious Studies.



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