# East Midlands Academy Trust

## Religious Education Policy

**‘Every child deserves to be the best they can be’**

Inclusion Innovation Impact

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| **Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust** | |
| **Version: 1** | **Filename:**<br>EMAT Religious Education Policy |
| **Approval: October 2026**<br>Approved by CEO | **Next Review: October 2029**<br>This Policy will be reviewed by the owner and & approved by the CEO every 3 years |
| **Owner:**<br>Executive Headteacher (Schools with a religious character) | |
| **Policy type:** | |
| Statutory | New policy |

**Revision History**

| Revision Date | Revisor | Description of Revision |
|---|---|---|
| Sept 2026 v1 | M Hawkes | New Policy |

# ‘Let all that you do, be done in love’ (1 Corinthians 16:14)’

Religion and worldviews continue to shape personal identity and public life both locally and globally. The 2021 Census, published by the Office for National Statistics, reported that 46.2% of the population in England and Wales identified as Christian, 37.2% reported no religion, 6.5% identified as Muslim, 1.7% as Hindu, 0.9% as Sikh, 0.5% as Buddhist, 0.5% as Jewish, and 0.6% with other religions.[1]

Globally, religion remains a significant and enduring aspect of human life. Around three-quarters of the world’s population identify with a religion. Christianity is the largest world faith, with approximately 2.3 billion adherents (around 30% of the global population), alongside around 1.9 billion Muslims (24%), 1.2 billion Hindus (15%), and smaller but significant populations of Buddhists, Sikhs and Jews. Approximately a quarter of the global population identifies with no religion. This global context reinforces the importance of Religious Education in helping pupils to understand both the diversity and the shared dimensions of human belief and practice.[2]

In this diverse and multi-secular context, Religious Education is an academically rigorous and socially vital subject. It equips pupils to understand the beliefs, practices and worldviews that shape society and prepares them for life in a plural democracy.

[1] *Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021*, published 29 November 2022.

[2] Pew Research Center, *How the Global Religious Landscape Changed from 2010 to 2020*, published 2025.

## 1. Vision and Theological Foundation

Religious Education in this Church school is an expression of its theologically rooted Christian vision. In the Diocese of Peterborough, we are committed to “*Education for life, deeply Christian, serving the common good”*, and RE plays a central role in realising that commitment.

In line with the Church of England’s Vision for Education, RE contributes to the flourishing of every pupil and upholds the dignity and worth of each individual.

RE is a core academic subject. It enables pupils to develop a secure and well-informed understanding of Christianity as a living and diverse global faith, while cultivating respect for the integrity of other religious and non-religious worldviews and for the freedom of belief of every person.

**Our Vision:**

***'Let all that you do, be done in love' (1 Corinthians 16:14)***

We are inclusive, welcoming others regardless of differences, appreciating and nurturing the uniqueness of each individual. We respect everyone, showing them the tolerance, understanding and forgiveness that we desire for ourselves. Love is the cornerstone of all that we do – the love of God, the love of others and the love of ourselves. The teaching of Religious Education (RE) has an important contribution to make towards our whole school vision by providing a caring environment where pupils feel secure and able to express their own views and beliefs. They are encouraged to value their own opinions and beliefs, whilst developing respect and sensitivity for the views of others. The teaching of RE in our school enables pupils to hold balanced and informed conversations about religions and belief, enabling them to build strong and healthy relationships.

The school recognises the importance of a high-quality induction process for all new parents and carers. This includes clear communication about the school's Christian vision, values and distinctiveness, and the role of Religious Education within that vision. Through this induction, parents and carers are supported to understand the school's commitment to educating for life in a way that is deeply Christian, academically rigorous and inclusive of all. This includes creating space for pupils' personal and spiritual development, and for the respectful recognition and celebration of a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews. This shared understanding strengthens partnership between home and school and ensures that the distinctive character of the school is both understood and lived out in community.

## 2. Legal Framework and Statutory Context

Religious Education is distinct from Collective Worship and is not counted as Collective Worship time.

## 3. Purpose and Aims of Religious Education

The principal aim of Religious Education in the Diocese of Peterborough is:

**To enable pupils to become religiously literate, so that they are able to hold balanced, informed and meaningful conversations about religion and worldviews in the multi-religious and multi-secular world in which they live.**

Religious literacy includes secure disciplinary knowledge, conceptual understanding and the ability to engage critically, respectfully and thoughtfully with religious and non-religious worldviews.

RE enables pupils to:

- Engage meaningfully and critically with learning that helps them make sense of the diverse religious and non-religious landscape of contemporary society.
- Understand Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Gain knowledge of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Engage spiritually with questions of meaning and purpose.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge through theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.
- Reflect on and articulate their own developing worldviews respectfully.

By the end of their education in a Church school, pupils should be able to:

- Give a theologically informed account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Demonstrate informed and respectful understanding of other religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Engage in meaningful and respectful dialogue across difference.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own convictions.

## 4. Curriculum Entitlement and Balance

All pupils in Reception to Year 13 are entitled to a high-quality RE curriculum.

The RE curriculum in this school:

- Is well-sequenced, balanced and ambitious.
- Reflects the school's context while fully meeting the expectations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement (January 2026).
- Aligns with the National Content Standard for Religious Education (2023).
- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner.

### Range of Worldviews

Christianity is the main religious worldview studied, constituting at least 50% of curriculum time in each year group or phase. In addition, pupils study a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. The curriculum recognises and explores diversity within and between traditions, including continuity and change across time, place and culture.

### Curriculum Time

Sufficient dedicated curriculum time is allocated to RE. This:

- Represents no less than 5% of curriculum time in Key Stages 1–4 and aims towards 10% of curriculum time where possible.
- Is distinct from time allocated to Collective Worship.

## 5. Curriculum Structure and Planning

The RE curriculum is constructed in accordance with the school's legal designation and reflects its Christian foundation.

**VA schools:** The governing body determines the RE curriculum in accordance with the Trust Deed. The Diocese of Peterborough Diocesan Syllabus for Religious Education (2024) forms the basis of curriculum planning.

The curriculum:

- Is coherently sequenced from EYFS to the end of the relevant phase.
- Enables pupils to build substantive and disciplinary knowledge over time.
- Aligns with the National Content Standard for Religious Education (2023).
- Provides opportunities for pupils to explore and articulate their developing worldviews.

Planning and assessment are informed by diocesan end-of-unit and end-of-phase outcomes where applicable.

## 6. Teaching and Learning

Teaching in RE is academically rigorous and delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner.

The curriculum is structured through three elements:

- Making sense of beliefs
- Understanding the impact
- Making connections

RE draws explicitly on theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences, enabling pupils to develop disciplinary knowledge and religious literacy.

Classrooms are characterised by psychological safety, enabling pupils to engage in respectful dialogue, explore personal worldviews and encounter diverse perspectives with integrity. Academic challenge is balanced with dignity and respect.

## 7. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in RE is rooted in the curriculum and reflects the knowledge and understanding pupils are expected to develop.

Assessment supports progress in:

- substantive knowledge
- disciplinary knowledge
- personal reflection and reasoning

Assessment information informs curriculum development, teaching and inclusion. Achievement in RE is reported to parents in line with statutory requirements.

## 8. Inclusion and Equality

All pupils are entitled to high-quality RE and to achieve well, irrespective of background or educational need.

The curriculum:

- Is accessible to pupils with SEND.
- Promotes dignity, respect and mutual understanding.
- Avoids stereotyping and prejudice.
- Reflects diversity within and between worldviews.

The school fulfils its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## 9. Right of Withdrawal

Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from Religious Education, in whole or in part, by written request. Pupils aged 18 or over may withdraw themselves.

Requests for withdrawal are actioned without delay. The school remains responsible for the supervision and safety of pupils who are withdrawn. Where parents exercise their right of withdrawal, responsibility for providing alternative Religious Education rests with them. Any materials provided by

parents will be undertaken independently during the timetabled RE session. Pupils who are withdrawn from Religious Education will not be directed to complete alternative curriculum subjects or attend academic interventions during RE time. Withdrawal from RE does not result in the substitution of additional English, mathematics or other curriculum provision.

The school will review arrangements for withdrawal on a regular basis, in dialogue with parents or carers, to ensure that the decision remains appropriate and that the pupil's educational development and welfare are fully considered.

Teachers may exercise their right to withdraw from teaching RE, except where they have been specifically employed to teach RE. Any such request is made in writing to the headteacher.

## 10. Leadership, Governance and Accountability

### RE Subject Leader

The RE Subject Leader provides professional leadership for Religious Education across the school. The RE Lead:

- Leads the development, implementation and review of the RE curriculum.
- Ensures progression and coherence across phases and year groups.
- Supports staff in planning, subject knowledge and pedagogy.
- Promotes the use of theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences within RE.
- Monitors teaching, learning and assessment in line with agreed school systems.
- Evaluates standards and identifies priorities for improvement.
- Oversees the organisation and quality of RE resources.
- Engages with diocesan training and networks to maintain subject expertise.
- Contributes to self-evaluation and preparation for SIAMS and other external review.

### Senior Leadership

Senior leaders ensure that:

- RE maintains a high profile and priority as an academic subject.
- RE is clearly distinct from Collective Worship.
- The curriculum is well sequenced, balanced and reflective of the school's context.
- Sufficient curriculum time and appropriate resourcing are allocated.
- Staff expertise is developed through professional development.
- Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate standards in RE.

### Governance

Governors provide strategic oversight of Religious Education. They ensure that:

- RE meets statutory and designation requirements (Trust Deed, Agreed Syllabus or funding agreement).
- Christianity constitutes at least 50% of curriculum time in each year group or phase.
- Curriculum time, staffing and resources are sufficient to secure strong outcomes for pupils.
- Monitoring focuses on standards, curriculum quality, inclusion and staff development.

**External Accountability**

The effectiveness of RE is evaluated through SIAMS inspection. Ofsted may consider RE within its inspection framework in VC schools.

## 11. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed in accordance with the school's policy review cycle and at least every three years.