

## **Governing Body Report**

### Report of the Executive Director Families and Wellbeing

#### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – A GOVERNORS RESPONSIBILITY**

##### **1. Key questions for governors;**

- What *priority* does RE have in your school?
- What impact does it have on pupil outcomes?
- How does it relate to the teaching and learning of British values? How does RE help to address issues such as bullying, racism, radicalisation and conflict?
- Are your pupils being fully prepared for life as contributors to a modern British society of great diversity?
- Who leads on RE in your school?
- How much curriculum time is allocated to RE at each key stage?
- How well resourced is RE?
- What opportunities are there for professional development

##### **2. Recommended actions:**

- Ensure your school (maintained) is using the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus and that staff are accessing the website, resources and training opportunities.

##### **3. RE in local authority maintained schools**

Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum (but not the National Curriculum) and is compulsory for all pupils in local authority (LA) maintained schools aged 5 to 18 years unless they are withdrawn from these lessons by their parents, or withdraw by their own choice after their 18th birthday. They are not obliged to give a reason, and the school is expected to comply with the request.

The key document in determining the teaching of RE within Warrington is the Warrington locally agreed syllabus. Warrington SACRE (Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education) has adopted the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 – August 2020. The Lancashire syllabus is titled 'Searching for meaning'. It is widely viewed as a model of best practice and is seen as fit for purpose. The syllabus is a statutory syllabus of RE prepared under Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 and has been adopted by Warrington LA and SACRE under that schedule. The locally agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught and includes the expected standards of pupils' performance at different stages.

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The locally agreed syllabus reflects the fact that religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

*It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination.*

### 4. RE in academies and free schools

Academies and free schools operate in accordance with the funding agreement between the individual academy trust and the Secretary of State. Requirements for academies and free schools broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The requirements, including the type of RE that an academy provides, will be set out in your funding agreement. For schools without a faith designation, this will usually mirror the requirements for local authority maintained schools without a religious character. For example, the model funding agreement for mainstream academies and free schools states:

'Where the Academy **has not been designated with a religious character:**

- a) provision must be made for religious education to be given to all pupils at the Academy in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996;
- b) the Academy must comply with section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if it were a community, foundation or voluntary school which does not have a religious character.

### 5. RE in faith schools

Schools with a religious character will follow a similar position in relation to the curriculum to other schools of their type, except, as the gov.uk website notes, "for religious studies, where they are free to only teach about their own religion."

RE in schools with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the school's trust deed or, where provision is not made by a trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the order that designates the school as having a religious character. RE in a foundation or voluntary controlled school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for the area. However, where parents request it, provision may be made in accordance with the school's trust deed or, where provision is not made by trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the order.

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Requirements for academies broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The requirements including the type of RE that an academy provides will be set out in the funding agreement between the individual academy trust and the Secretary of State.

### 6. Sources of Further Information

Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance (2010)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

Living with Difference: The place of religion in British Public Life (Dec 2015)  
<http://www.corab.org.uk/>

Lancashire Agreed Syllabus <http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk> (Go to Curriculum, RE, RE and Lancashire SACRE, RE Syllabus 2016 and Collective worship)

### 7. Contacts

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