
Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy 2018-19

Key contacts for Coast Academies:

CEO	Ken Kies
MAT SLT	Ken Kies (Executive Head) Rik Meek (Cockington Headteacher) Ian Morgan (Head of School Eden Park) Scott Ord (Head of School Preston Primary)
Curriculum leads/ RE co-ordinator	Adele Clayton (Eden Park) Phase / Unit leads (Preston Primary and Eden Park) Sharon Carter (Cockington Primary)

The Importance of Religious Education in the Curriculum

Religious Education ('RE') provokes challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and global community.

RE has a central target of **"engaging with religions and worldviews"**. This brings together the two separate themes: "Learning about Religion" and "Learning from Religion." "Engaging with" involves both learning about (investigating, describing, explaining) and from (responding, analysing, evaluating) religions and worldviews and provides important balance.

At Coast Academies, RE develops children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity (which is taught throughout each Key Stage of learning) and the other principal religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Consideration is also given to other non-religious perspectives such as Humanism.

RE offers children opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It considers the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures. A separate "Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy" is available on the Coast Academies website.

<https://www.coastacademies.org.uk/>

School Core Values

Our schools have Core Values. Examples are: Respect, Independence, Creativity, Determination, Responsibility and Teamwork. These types of values will play a central role in the teaching and delivery of RE.

We want our learners to be considerate, reflective and to develop values of tolerance and empathy.

In addition, we believe that RE can support the development of our Core Values by:

- Encouraging an environment in which all adults and children in our school are respected and respect others, their cultures, their differences and their opinions.
- Fostering in our children a sense of care and tolerance for, and sensitivity towards others, including those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- Promoting self-esteem, appreciation and wonder.
- Supporting the MAT's successful pastoral provision and the way that we care for and develop the "whole" child.
- Encouraging reflectivity and providing a forum for children to explore.
- Raising challenging questions for children about themselves and their world.
- Actively promoting the values of truth, justice, equality, freedom and respect for all.

We aim to Provide a School Environment:

- In which children feel able to express their views and expect to be listened to and respected.
- In which everybody's beliefs are respected (including being sensitive to the beliefs, feelings and values of others)
- In which all children feel special and cared for.
- In which children's self-esteem is promoted (so that every child feels valued and significant)
- That is open-minded and is willing to learn and gain new understanding
- That generates a stimulating curriculum which is inspiring to our children and nurtures both appreciation and wonder, developing curiosity and imagination.

Key Skills in RE

RE is more than just developing children's knowledge and understanding. It seeks to develop children's skills in investigation/enquiry, communication, interpretation, analysis and evaluation. These are important skills for children to develop. They include:

- Investigation and enquiry (finding out what people believe, how their beliefs affect the way they live, and the different ways people express their beliefs).
- Communication (sharing their ideas and those within religions and beliefs in a lively, informed way including different styles of writing, oral contributions and the use of IT).
- Interpretation (recognising and talking about religious symbols, stories and sacred texts).
- Analysis and evaluation (developing their own views and ideas, recognising the views of others)

Curriculum Provision

To ensure broad and balanced coverage within the curriculum, we follow these principles:

- We use the Devon Agreed Syllabus (SACRE) to ensure a broad and balanced coverage.
- A unit of the syllabus must be covered within each term.
- RE can be used as a driver subject for a Learning Experience ('LE') or curriculum project.
- The skills ladder areas 'Learning about Religion' and 'Learning from Religion' should be taught across the two-year cycle, alongside each term's content skills.

The current Skills Ladder for Religious Education, outlining the cycle and content of the syllabus, can be found in the Appendix.

The Contribution of RE to the Wider Curriculum (SMSC and Language)

While RE has its own distinctive subject-matter, it does make an important contribution to other aspects of children's learning.

RE contributes to children's spiritual development by:

- Discussing and reflecting on questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, good and evil, life after death, beliefs about God and humanity and values such as justice, honesty and truth.
- Learning about and reflecting on important concepts and experiences such as love, trust, forgiveness, obedience and sacrifice.
- Valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.
- Considering how religions and beliefs regard the value and purpose of human beings, the importance of the environment and the significance of emotions such as love, anger, joy, jealousy, happiness and pain.

RE contributes to children's moral development by:

- Enabling children to value themselves and others.
- Exploring the influence of family, friends and other sources on moral choices.
- Considering what is of ultimate value to both children and within religious traditions.
- Developing an understanding in key beliefs and teachings in religion and values and moral choices.
- Considering ethical issues (especially justice) that promote racial and religious respect.
- Reflecting on the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

RE contributes to children's social development by:

- Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to actions and concerns.
- Reflecting on the importance of friendship and positive relationships.

RE contributes to children's cultural development by:

- Encountering people, fables, artefacts and resources from differing cultures.
- Promoting respect for all
- Challenging stereotypes of religion and beliefs.

RE contributes to children's language development by enabling children to:

- Acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary
- Communicate their ideas with clarity.
- Listen and respond to the views and ideas of others.
- Be inspired by the power and beauty of language.
- Write in different styles such as poetry, diaries and extended writing.
- Highlight their own ideas and those of others.

Equal Opportunities

We recognise that in our school we have children from a variety of faith backgrounds and that many children have no religious background at all. Great care is taken in teaching RE to ensure that all children feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is consistently upheld.



We believe that RE is an important subject in children's learning and is taught as an inclusive activity addressing many issues relating to different cultures and races, gender issues and family beliefs. We also recognise that parents have the legal right of withdrawal from all or part of RE on the grounds of conscience.

RE deals with all the world-faiths and adopts no prejudicial attitude in displaying the differences between one faith and another, or between faith and non-faith. The objective is never to persuade children to adopt a particular point of view, but to enable them to arrive at informed views of their own that will be of great help to them in life.

Right of Withdrawal

We firmly believe that RE is an important subject in children's learning. We fully recognise the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of RE on the grounds of conscience. We do encourage parents to contact the Headteacher/ Head of School if they have any concerns about RE provision and practice at the school.

Collective Worship

Definition

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school, meet to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all children an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life to support our curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our children.

The Legal Position

The 1996 Education Act states that all pupils in attendance at a maintained school other than a maintained special school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship.

Requirements of Academies

In May 2013, the Department of Education published information for academies and free schools about providing religious education (RE) and collective worship. This information remains current. A section on academies and daily collective worship says:

- An academy's funding agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for acts of Collective Worship in maintained schools.
- Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. This applies to academies with and without a religious designation.

Within Coast Academies we have developed a range of themes and topics through which collective worship takes place and these are based principally on each school's Core Values. Within these, key themes that include love, joy, trust, forgiveness, justice and the value of all human life can be explored.

We believe these themes are Christian in nature but are universal in their application. We recognise that in our schools we have children from a variety of faith backgrounds and that many children have no religious background at all. Great care is taken in our collective worship to ensure that all children feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is consistently upheld. Collective Worship is an inclusive activity.

Aims of Collective Worship

The central aims of Collective Worship are to:

- Promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Celebrate the values and worth of the school community and all who belong in it, including the sharing of the gifts and talents of our children.
- Explore together the world in which we live
- Reinforce positive values
- Help children develop and understanding both of the nature and language of worship
- Help children develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others
- Provide our children with regular opportunities for stillness and reflection
- Develop a sense of community, including local, national and international understanding

- Support the broader curriculum through the use of art, music, dance, story, drama and other visual and oral means of communication.

Visitors and collective worship

Visitors play an important part in the life of our school and regularly contribute to acts of worship. We structure our acts of worship to inform our learning and plan for further development and understanding. Themes delivered will form part of class, individual or whole school work and so at times, Collective Worship will enrich classwork through its consideration of subject matter from different perspectives.

Often work will also be adopted through the school councils, in the form of charity themes being supported by the schools.

Right of Withdrawal

Our assemblies will be conducted in a manner as sensitive and inclusive as to ensure that all children feel comfortable to attend the assembly. As with RE, parents have the right of withdrawal from Collective Worship. Parents who have any concerns about the provision and practice of our Collective Worship are strongly encouraged to contact the Headteacher or Head of School.