



St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

Policy for RE in the Diocesan MAT

Date Approved and Minuted	MAT Board	16 July 2026
Date of Next Review	MAT Board	July 2029

Policy for RE in the Diocesan MAT

A MAT vision for RE

All our schools should be beacons of outstanding practice in Religious Education, enabling pupils, staff and governors to speak about religious ideas confidently and in an informed way.

Our RE curricula should be vibrant, relevant and challenging, with pupils achieving the very best standards, and finding enjoyment and fulfilment in their lessons.

Our RE subject leaders should be encouragers, mentoring others both inside and outside the MAT, and looking to be involved in the wider RE community.

Our schools should be engaged with the RE Quality Mark programme, actively seeking excellence.

Policy pointers: The following paragraphs indicate the expectations for RE in the Trust's schools. It is for each school to take these expectations and personalise them into their own clear policy statement. The Headteacher of each school and its LGB are responsible for its implementation and review.

1. Legal Requirements, Provision and Aims

All schools and academies in England are legally required to provide Religious Education (RE) to all pupils. The National Curriculum states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced, 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 schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

Our schools are Church of England **Academies**. RE is provided under the terms of our Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State. The National Society for Education's 'Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education' underpins our provision and informs this policy.

More information about the National Society for Education's 'Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education' can be found [here](#).

RE in all Church of England schools is seen as having equal standing with the core subjects. In this school, we provide a rich and varied RE curriculum, enabling learners to acquire both a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and other faiths and worldviews.

The primary aim of the subject may be described as promoting religious literacy. The broad aims of RE are set out in the Church of England's [Statement of Entitlement](#) and the [Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for RE](#).

2. Leadership and Management

RE in all church schools should be well-led and managed. Positive support from senior management and governance are expected and key to achieving excellence in the subject. Continuity in leadership helps ensure ongoing progress.

All MAT schools should:

- ***appoint an RE subject leader, and, where possible, a 'shadow' leader. In small schools, pairing subject leaders across schools is advised. The subject leader will develop the subject, support and mentor staff, and monitor pupil progress and perceptions***
- ***appoint a governor for religious education who supports the subject leader(s) and monitors the subject***
- ***offer subject leaders appropriate training, support and a good level of resourcing to do their job***
- ***discuss progress in RE at least annually at staff / governing body meetings.***

3. Continuous Professional Development

Teachers are entitled to professional support and development in their careers. In church schools, priority is given to staff to develop their expertise and qualifications in religious education, so pupils receive high quality experiences.

- ***All MAT staff are offered appropriate and ongoing professional development in religious education.***
- ***All MAT schools ensure that where HLTAs/TAs are used to cover RE, this is normally a part of a rotation of subjects to ensure broad professional development for both teacher and HLTA/TA.***
- ***All NQTs, and teachers new to the MAT, receive suitable RE training.***

4. The Curriculum

Religious Education in church schools should contribute to the school's Christian character and teaching about Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ. However, as inclusive communities, church schools encourage learning about fostering respect for different world views.

All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and steps should be taken to ensure a range of teaching styles, groupings and resources to allow all children to make progress in RE.

- ***All schools in the MAT follow the Emmanuel Project, a scheme of work for EYFS to Y6, which follows an enquiry-based approach looking at the key beliefs and concepts for seven different worldviews. The scheme closely matches the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.***
- ***Additional Christianity units should be used in KS2 to raise the level of Christianity to the 2/3 required in those schools formerly VA.***
- ***All schools in the MAT enrich their RE curriculum with creative and varied teaching methods and a range of visits and visitors, and aim to build a good bank of resources.***
- ***All schools enrich their pupils learning in RE with additional whole school theme days on aspects of Christian Faith e.g. Pentecost, The Lord's Prayer***

5. Assessment

Assessment in RE is an important tool by which teachers know that children are making good progress and which enables them to plan future work. Assessment is based on pupils' depth of knowledge, skills and understanding related to the key questions addressed in the curriculum. Standards in RE should be equal to, or exceed, those of other curriculum subjects.

- ***All MAT schools should ensure assessment tasks offer proper levels of challenge and assess children's progress in RE, rather than more general literacy skills.***
- ***Class teachers should assess the work of their pupils .***
- ***Pupils should be encouraged to use self-assessment to develop their own sense of progress and to evaluate their own knowledge and understanding. The Emmanuel Project offers a range of tasks to ensure teachers can assess their pupils as they move through the unit. It also offers end-of-unit tasks, linked to the unit's key question, to provide summative assessment. The Trust's assessment tracking system, Insight, allows recording against the Emmanuel Project statements.***

6. Monitoring, Progress and Standards

Subject leaders in all schools are responsible, alongside the Headteacher and local governing body for monitoring the provision and standards in their subject area. In MAT schools:

- ***The Headteacher enables the subject leader to monitor provisions and standards in RE on a regular cycle.***
- ***The RE subject leader monitors provision and standards in RE through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum regularly.***
- ***The subject leader reports annually to the local governing body on progress and standards in RE and contributes to the school's self-evaluation..***

A member of the local governing body will assist in monitoring and evaluating the subject.

The content, learning and attainment of RE in a church school are inspected as part of the [SIAMS framework](#).. In all church schools, the effectiveness of the RE curriculum is explored within Inspection Question 6. In VA schools, former VA schools and former VC schools where denominational RE is taught, Inspection Question 7 explores the quality of RE.

7. Right to Withdraw

In all schools, parents have the [legal right to withdraw their child from RE](#), either wholly or partially. They do not need to provide a reason for the request. The right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. If a parent asks that a pupil is withdrawn, then the school will grant the request without delay and alternative arrangements would be made. Schools have a duty to supervise a

withdrawn pupil, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Parents may arrange alternative religious education for the pupil. If this happens, this must not disrupt the rest of the pupil's education or incur any extra cost for the school. This right to be withdrawn from RE does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religions or religious matters.

All MAT schools will:

- *clarify for parents the educational nature of RE and ensure there is a clear procedure for requesting withdrawal*
- *discuss with parents the management of their request for a child's withdrawal, noting whether it is complete or partial withdrawal*
- *provide supervision for a withdrawn child remaining on the premises, but not additional teaching or materials which incur cost.*

8. Links with the Diocese, Cathedral and Parish Church

All schools are part of a Church of England parish and all children have the opportunity to visit a local church as part of their RE. In Church of England schools, this entitlement should be broadened to include an interactive relationship with the local church, growing connections with the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds and an awareness of some Diocesan events.

In MAT schools:

- *all classes should visit the local parish church at least annually as part of RE*
- *visits to the cathedral, or from the Discovery Centre Team, should take place for all children at least once during both KS1 and KS2*
- *wider connections with the Diocese e.g. the annual schools' service, a visit from a Bishop or a Kagera Schools' Day, are encouraged.*