# POLICY

## For

## Religious Education

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|---|---|---|
| **September 2016** | **September 2022** | **September 2025** |
| **September 2019** | **September 2023** | |
| **September 2021** | **September 2024** | |

**Striving for excellence, caring for all**
**Within a loving and caring Christian environment.**

*'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.'*
*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

## Our Academy Vision

We are a community in which everyone is offered the opportunity to fulfil their full potential, to understand themselves and be valued for who they are. Through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, we pursue academic excellence and seek the flourishing of all. This is because we know we are all God's children.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."
**John Wesley**

Our mission statement:
**'Striving for excellence, caring for all**
**Within a loving and caring Christian environment.'**

Our vision and curriculum are based on five core values of:

- Respect for all
- Spirituality
- Personal Growth
- Success and flourishing
- Community

We affirm our belief that children are created in the image of God but also value their individuality as they explore their own God given talents and are treated with respect and dignity at all times.

We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs (Cultural Capital). We believe that our broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by the Christian narrative and Christian, British and life values, plays a major part in delivering excellence which permeates through every element of school life. The achievements, the development of character, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter and we have high expectations for every single member of our school community.

As a UNICEF RRS (Rights Respecting School) this policy upholds the following articles from the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child):

Article 2: Everyone has equal rights whatever their race, religion, ability, whatever they think or say or whatever their family.

Article 14: Every child has the right to follow their own religion.

Article 29: Every child has the right to be the best they can.

**Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2025-2030**

**For schools in Lincolnshire, the revised Lincolnshire Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE comes into effect in September 2025 with the expectation that schools are using it as the basis of the RE curriculum by September 2026. We aim to implement the revised syllabus in our schools by Spring 2026, with the Autumn term serving as a transition period.**

**The revised syllabus reflects a worldviews approach which explores the ways in which people make sense of the world and the impact this has on their daily life. This is a change of direction, moving away from the traditional 'world religions' model (i.e. which religions shall we teach?) towards an approach where religions are considered to the extent that they exemplify aspects of wider questions that are being explored. It avoids the trap of viewing everyone who belongs to a religion in the same way rather than exploring the diversity between AND within religions. In addition, this approach may neglect non-religious perspectives. 'Worldviews' refers to both religious and non-religious traditions and is explained succinctly in the short video clip, 'No-one Stands Nowhere' produced by Theos. The syllabus requires pupils to consider the key concepts underpinning religions and worldviews along with the lived experiences of people. The aim is to transform teaching and learning to achieve high quality Religious Education (RE) for all.**

**INTENT** - What are the aims and principles of Religious Education?

Our overarching aims in RE are for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of world faiths and worldviews
- Develop an understanding of the ways in which religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions influence individuals, communities, societies and cultures, from the local to the global contexts

*"I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11.*

We actively seek to overcome the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity and inclusivity must be a reality for our children. We recognise the importance of equality of opportunity as a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attentions we pay to the individuals and groups of children within our schools.

In a world of confusion and shifting values, children need accurate information and a helpful environment in which they can explore and form their own values and develop skills to deal with life's joys, sorrows and questions.

Religious Education provides opportunities for our pupils:

- To develop their religious literacy. We understand religious literacy to be the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief
- To develop children's knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- To explore issues within and between faiths to help children understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stories), and understand the influence of these on individual, societies, communities and cultures
- To consider questions of meaning and purpose in life
- To learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling children to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues
- To develop children's sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a multicultural society
- To develop enquiry and response skills through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy
- To reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses

## THE CONTEXT OF OUR ACADEMY TRUST

As Church of England schools, we recognise the core place that RE occupies in relation to our Church vision, Christian narrative and Church school distinctiveness.

Within our Academies Trust we believe in a Christian ethos whilst welcoming all. We understand that as Church Schools we are in a unique position to develop a clearer understanding of the ways in which our vision and values can be reflected within the whole curriculum of the school. We not only encourage our pupils to strive for excellence in the core subjects, but to broaden their education, to embrace and develop the concepts of faith and spirituality, of hope and charity and to enable them to make more informed decisions later in life as broad-minded and knowledgeable world citizens.

We actively seek to prepare our pupils for life in modern Britain. As such, we promote key British Values, including respect for all and respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We challenge all forms of prejudice and we seek RE as one curriculum area in which our pupils can encounter and critically reflect on a range of worldviews.

We identify RE as one of the core subjects through which our pupils can develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, but we do not limit the delivery of the SMSC to this subject alone.

We have close links with our Parish Church and the other Churches in our localities. Our school is inclusive and accepts children regardless of background or special need and our intake of pupils is representative of all sections of the Bourne community. We recognise that we are in a unique position to enable our pupils to develop a clearer understanding and identification of ways in which Christian, British, moral and other faith values can motivate and build relationships between all members of our community.

We believe that the timeless values of respect and care, which form the foundation of Christianity, are perhaps even more relevant in today's rapidly changing and expanding society. These principles of respect and care remain central to how we live our lives.

We recognise the variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds from which our pupils come. We welcome diversity and aim to be sensitive to the home background of each child. We understand that RE does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another.

The communal life of our school, and the role of every educator within them, continues to be highly significant. Unless the Trust models examples of personal maturity, good human relationships, successful communications and interest in one’s surroundings, achievement of the broader aims of RE become impossible. Similarly, an atmosphere in which it is accepted that religions and religious beliefs can be a genuine and important dimension of human life will foster the achievement of the more specifics aim of a tolerant understanding of religious believers and institutions.

The Trust recognises that Religious Education is not the same as Collective Worship, which has its own place within our Trust. (see Collective Worship policy)

Abbey Academies Trust (AAT) recognises the individual contexts of the academies/schools within the Trust. The RE curriculum is tailored to the needs of the children at individual school.

RE within the AAT is provided within legal requirements:

- We deliver RE in accordance with the Church of England Education Office’s Statement of Entitlement.
- The Basic Curriculum includes provision for RE for all pupils registered on the school roll, including those in Reception classes who are less than five years old
- The content of RE reflects that the religious traditions of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are, in the main, Christian. It also reflects the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in the United Kingdom

## TIME ALLOCATION

It is the expectation of the Church of England Education Office that RE should constitute a minimum of 5% curriculum time. This in line with the recommendations made by the Dearing Report 1994. We meet this expectation by providing the minimum time of 36 hours per year for KS1 and 45 hours per year for KS2. This time is arranged as discrete 75 minute long (for KS2) or hour-long (for KS1) lessons per week/in a range of ways, including discrete weekly/fortnightly lessons and RE days. RE forms part of the planning at EYFS; although there is no expected time allocation at this level, we expect that there will be connections made between RE and the Early Learning Goals. RE curriculum time does not include values lessons, collective worship or assembly.

## **IMPLEMENTATION** - How do we do this?

## TEACHING AND LEARNING PREFERENCES

Wherever possible, pupils are actively engaged in exploratory and experimental learning including opportunities to:

- observe religious artefacts, paintings, books, photos, pictures etc
- gain first-hand knowledge through direct questioning
- studying sacred texts and stories
- visit places of worship in a planned and structured way
- meet and talk to believers of various faiths in a planned and controlled situation

Learning in RE is geared to more than the accumulation of factual knowledge about religious beliefs, practices, and traditions (Substantive Knowledge) and personal reflections on one's own experiences and values (Personal Knowledge). It also involves understanding the methods and approaches used to study religions and worldviews (Disciplinary Knowledge). Opportunities for analysis are especially important, allowing students to engage critically with religious concepts and practices, compare interpretations, and explore underlying meanings. This enables them to develop deeper insights and understanding, fostering a more thoughtful and reflective engagement with the subject.

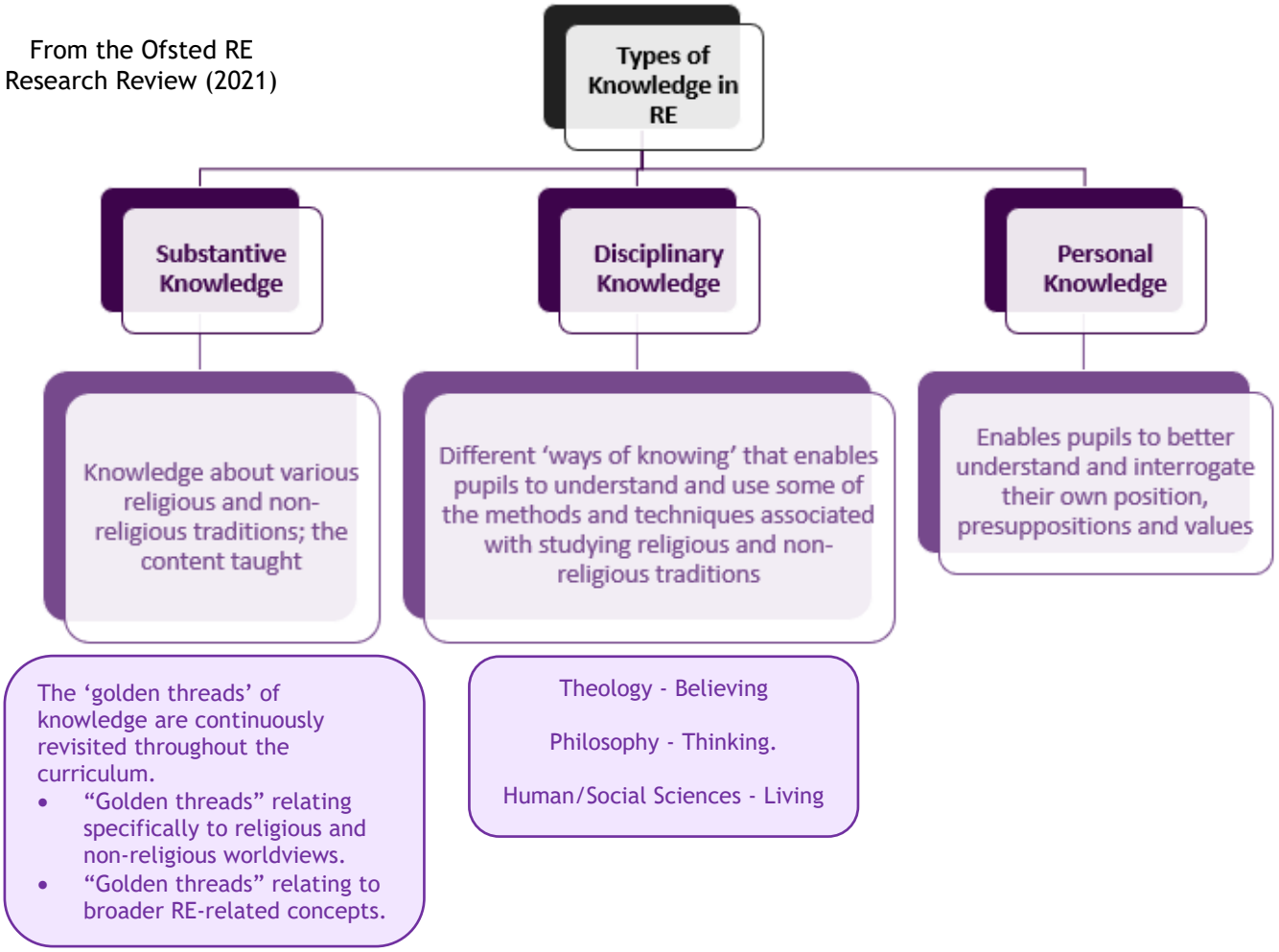
RE is equally concerned with understanding the feelings, opinions and attitudes of others. This requires both openness and sensitivity, and a degree of imagination in order to empathise with and see the world through the eyes of another person.

We have opted to structure our RE curriculum using the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus, enriched by the Understanding Christianity resource. During RE in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils have the opportunity to know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews and gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews. Individual Schemes of Work (SOW) have been created to assist the teaching of RE. These SOWs identify the core, disciplinary and personal knowledge focus for each lesson in the unit as well as a specified WALT and question for staff to use. The relevant LAS or Understanding Christianity overview has been highlighted and annotated to provide clarity over the sequencing of lessons and what content to include.

The children acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of the worldviews of Christianity and Islam in KS1 and Christianity, Islam, Hinduism in KS2. Pupils will also learn about other religious and non-religious worldviews and how these worldviews, religions, faiths and beliefs influence individuals, communities, society and the world around them.

**TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE IN RE**

From the Ofsted RE Research Review (2021)




We understand that Disciplinary Knowledge needs to provide a balance between three disciplines. These are:

- Theology
- Philosophy
- Human/Social Sciences

**Theology**: This is about **believing**. It looks at where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

**Philosophy**: This is about **thinking**. It is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously the nature of reality, knowledge and existence.

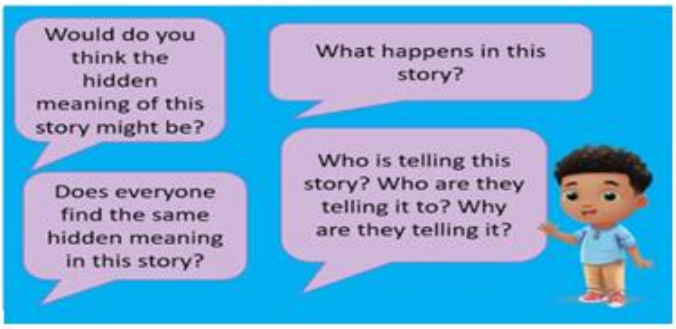
**Human/Social Sciences**: This is about **living**. It explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

| Believing (Theology)<br>*Key focus on the sources of authority (including, but not limited to, texts) from which people draw their beliefs* | Living (Human/Social Sciences)<br>*Key focus on the ways in which context affects ways of living* | Thinking (Philosophy)<br>*Key focus on different way of seeking knowledge and wisdom* |
|---|---|---|
| **Teaching Approaches** | **Teaching Approaches** | **Teaching Approaches** |
| Talking with a range of people (including those within the *same* religious/non-religious worldviews) to explore where their beliefs come from (e.g. sacred texts, family, key figures of authority, etc.)<br><br>Interpreting texts using similar skills to those used in English/History (e.g. VIPERS, Talk 4 Writing, vocabulary, etymology, etc.) | Engaging with a range of data that might tell pupils something about the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews, e.g. images, videos, music, artefacts, buildings, census data, maps<br><br>Analysing this data to explore how different people (including those within the *same* religious/non-religious worldview) live it differently | Learning about different ways of seeking knowledge/wisdom, e.g. using the senses, engaging with sources of authority, individual conscience, etc.<br><br>Developing skills of reasoning by learning how to construct a coherent argument, and thinking about different forms of evidence and their relative strengths and weaknesses |

We have introduced 3 Disciplinary Knowledge characters: Theo the theologian, Livvy the social scientist, Sophie the philosopher and Personal Percy to help the children to understand and apply the 3 aspects of Disciplinary Knowledge and the types of questions associated with each character.

# The Disciplinary Knowledges Characters

## Disciplinary Knowledge




Hi everyone!

My name is Theo and I'm a **theologian**. A theologian is someone who is interested in asking questions about what people **believe**.



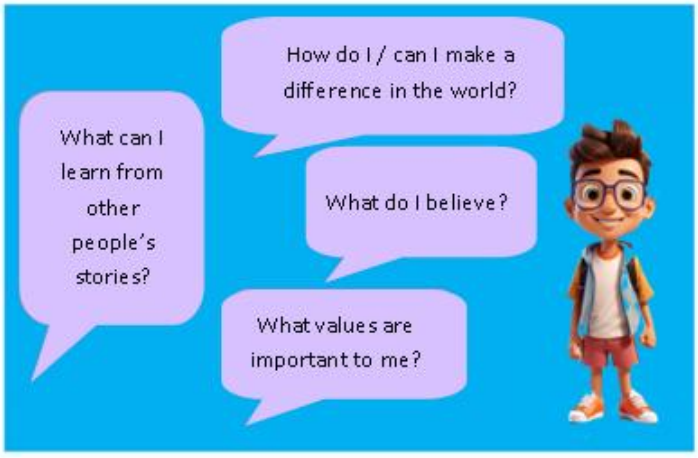

Hi everyone!

My name is Livvy and I'm a **social scientist**. A social scientist is someone who is interested in how people **live their lives**.




Hi everyone!

My name is Sophie and I'm a **philosopher**. A philosopher is someone who is interested in how people **think**.




Hi everyone!

My name is Percy and I'm all about you. I'm here to help you think about your own identity, feelings, and moral choices while learning about religions.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF RE TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT and SPIRITUAL FLOURISHING

Religious Education plays an important role in helping children grow spiritually and flourish as individuals. It supports their personal development in a number of meaningful ways:

1. **Understanding Faith**
   RE introduces children to Christianity as well as other world religions. This broadens their knowledge, nurtures respect for different traditions and encourages tolerance towards people of all faiths and none.
2. **Personal Reflection**
   Children are given the chance to think about their own beliefs, values and experiences. This helps them build confidence in who they are and supports the development of a strong personal identity.
3. **Moral Development**
   Through the study of religious and ethical teachings, children explore questions of right and wrong. This develops their sense of responsibility and helps guide their everyday choices.
4. **Exploring Meaning and Purpose**
   RE encourages children to engage with life's "big questions" – such as the meaning of life, why we are here and what really matters. This supports their search for purpose and direction.
5. **Empathy and Compassion**
   By learning from religious stories, teachings, and examples, children develop an awareness of the needs of others and the importance of kindness, compassion and respect.
6. **Celebrating Diversity**
   RE gives children opportunities to learn about and celebrate religious festivals and traditions. This fosters inclusivity and builds appreciation for the richness of cultural and religious diversity.
7. **Spiritual Practices**
   Children are introduced to practices such as prayer, stillness and meditation, which can support their well-being and enrich their personal spiritual journey.
8. **Community Engagement**
   Links with the local church and wider community help children understand shared values, strengthen their sense of belonging and encourage them to contribute positively to society.
9. **Critical Thinking**
   RE provides a safe space for questioning and discussion. Children learn to listen to different perspectives, think deeply about spiritual and moral issues and develop their ability to reason and reflect.
10. **A Sense of Awe and Wonder**
    Through exploring nature, the world and human experience, children are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder, gratitude and appreciation for life itself.

RE supports our children's spiritual development by promoting understanding, reflection, empathy and community, helping them grow into thoughtful and caring individuals.

## VALUES AND ATTITUDES

We embed Christian Values to ensure they permeate through our policies and every aspect of the children's learning and lives. Made in the image of God, we all deserve to be the best we can be regardless of background, faith and ability.

Children are given opportunities to:

- work with others, listening to each other's ideas, and treat others with respect
- consider their own experiences, attitudes and values, and those of other people
- develop respect for evidence and critically evaluate ideas that may or may not fit the evidence available
- identify puzzling questions and suggest answers
- develop their understanding of why certain things are held to be right or wrong
- relate to moral and religious issues

- explore and express personal values, feelings and choices
- experience stillness and periods of quietness, silence or being alone
- evaluate their experiences and discoveries
- express themselves through movement, dance, poetry, music or in other creative media
- develop appropriate behaviour and responses when dealing with what is special, important, precious or sacred to themselves and others

**SKILLS**

Pupils will develop key skills in RE in order to enhance learning and this is evident across key stages:

- Investigation and enquiry: asking relevant and increasingly deep questions; using a range of sources and evidence, including sacred texts; identifying and talking about key concepts

- Critical thinking and reflection: analysing information to form a judgement; reflecting on beliefs and practices, ultimate questions and experiences

- Empathy: considering the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others; seeing the world through the eyes of others

- Interpretation: interpreting religious language and the meaning of sacred texts; drawing meaning from, for example, artefacts and symbols

- Analysis: distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact; distinguishing between the features of different religions

- Evaluation: enquiring into religious issues and drawing conclusions with reference to experience, reason, evidence and dialogue

**IMPACT of RE** - We aim for our pupils to:

- Know more and remember more (Substantive Knowledge)
- Make the best possible outcomes and progress
- Have a positive attitude to all aspects of the RE curriculum and their learning in all areas.
- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of world faiths and worldviews (Disciplinary Knowledge)
- Develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own (Personal Knowledge)
- Develop an understanding of the way in which beliefs impact on the individual (Disciplinary Knowledge)
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by considering the ‘big questions’ raised in RE lessons (Personal Knowledge)
- Develop an understanding of the ways in which religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions influence individuals, communities, societies and cultures, from the local to the global contexts (Disciplinary Knowledge)
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the beliefs, teachings, practices, sources of authority and ways of living associated with the principle religions represented in the UK (Personal Knowledge)
- Respond to such questions with reference to religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values and traditions, relating them to their own understanding and experience (Personal Knowledge)
- Articulate how and whether things make sense (Disciplinary Knowledge)
- Develop their sense of identity and belonging in the world, preparing them for life as citizens in a multi-cultural global society (Personal Knowledge)

## RESOURCES

We take advice from the Diocesan RE Adviser and other RE professionals on the best resources to support the delivery of high-quality RE. Our wide range of resources are stored in an appropriate and sensitive manner.

## ASSESSMENT

We appreciate that assessment should focus on pupils and the ways in which the curriculum and its implementation is enabling our pupils to make progress.
The Ofsted RE research Review (May 2021) outlined three core types of knowledge that children develop through the teaching of RE:

Substantive Knowledge – knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions; the content taught
**Do pupils know what we think they should know?**

Disciplinary Knowledge – different 'ways of knowing' that enables pupils to understand and use some of the methods and techniques associated with studying religions and non-religious traditions
**Are pupils building confidence in the specialised knowledge in RE?**
**Are pupils developing the specialised skills in RE?**

Personal Knowledge – Enables pupils to better understand and interrogate their own position, presuppositions and values. Due to the nature of personal knowledge, this sits outside of the realms of assessment.

Pupils need time to make progress in RE and we appreciate assessment processes must reflect this.

Summative assessment: There will be one summative judgement on pupil progress in RE per year.

Formative assessment: There will be regular formative 'knowledge checks' throughout the year to ensure pupils are acquiring or developing the knowledge we think they should be getting from their RE lessons.

Evidence of pupil progress and attainment in RE can come from a wide variety of sources and will not be limited to retrieval activities like the 'knowledge checks' but will include them.

## MONITORING

Religious Education is monitored through:
- Work and planning monitoring (including monitoring of Statutory Requirements for RE) by the RE and CW leaders, Senior Leadership Team, Governors/Trustees and the Diocesan RE Advisor
- Drop-ins by the RE and CW leaders
- Pupil Interviews
- Summative and formative assessment
- Moderation across the Trust

Other Relevant Documents
- Teaching, learning and curriculum policy
- SMSC Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Curriculum Maps
- Whole school RE overview
- Whole school Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus supported by Understanding Christianity Syllabus Spiral Curriculum.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM RE

We acknowledge the right of parents/carers to withdraw their children from RE lessons and of teachers to withdraw from teaching the subject. Parents/carers/teachers do not need to provide a reason why they wish to withdraw from the subject. Should a parent/guardian wish to withdraw their child from RE lessons or a teacher wish to refuse to teach RE, it is required that written notice be sent to the CEO/Executive Headteacher/Head Teacher/Head of School

Should a parent/guardian request that their child be withdrawn from RE, endeavours will be made to communicate clearly the place of RE within a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that they are in possession of all the necessary information before confirming their decision. However, there will be no attempt to persuade them to alter their decision. If a pupil is withdrawn from RE lessons, the school is required to provide supervision, but should not incur any additional cost in doing and is not obliged to provide alternative work.

Any enquiries regarding the withdrawal from RE should be directed to the RE and Collective Worship leaders in the first instance and thereafter to the Head of School/Head Teacher/Executive Headteacher/CEO.