

West Coker Primary School



Religious Education Policy

**Approved by the Governing Body of West Coker
Primary School in May 2025**

Headteacher *Phil Hyland*

Chair of Governors *Helen James*

Our Core Christian Values of Respect, Hope, Community, Wisdom and Kindness run through everything we do and help ensure that our pupils flourish and leave our school as conscientious, well-equipped citizens of the future. Together, we seek to embed a supportive, thoughtful and considerate atmosphere throughout that allows everyone to thrive.

West Coker CofE VC Primary School

Draft Policy for Religious Education (RE)

Last updated: May 2025

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

We aim for every child to flourish. Supported by our core values, children consider all that they say and do, grow in confidence, and value the contribution of others. Taking inspiration from Christian stories, we ensure we are inclusive of all, and value religious, social and cultural difference.

Policy Statement

Religious education (RE) has a very high profile within the West Coker CofE VC Primary School curriculum and makes a significant contribution to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all learners. Pupils will be inspired by the subject and develop a wide range of skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection, to deepen their understanding of the impact of religion on the world. Christianity is taught as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teachings of Jesus and the Church, alongside a range of religious and world views. Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while creating a safe space for them to explore their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

Legal Requirements

As a Voluntary Controlled School, at West Coker we are required to follow the locally agreed syllabus 'Awareness, Mystery and Value' (<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk>) drawn up by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act requires the inspection of religious education in schools which have a religious character. This is the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

The right to withdraw

Parents have a right by law to withdraw their children from the Religious Education curriculum. In this event, we will undertake responsibility for their supervision regarding health and safety. Information on these arrangements can be found on our website. There will always be opportunity for parents to discuss the contents of the RE curriculum should they have any concerns.

Aims of RE

- To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living faith that influences the lives of people worldwide and as the religion that has most shaped British culture and heritage.
- To enable pupils to know about and understand other major world religions and world views, their impact on society, culture and the wider world, and to appreciate the diversity, continuity and change within those religions and world views.
- To engage with the challenging questions of meaning and purpose.
- To contribute to the development of pupils' own spiritual/philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own beliefs and values.

Teaching and Learning

The RE statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office, February 2019 is:

'Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live a life in all its fulness (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together.'

In line with this statement, we aim to provide:

- A curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice.
- A curriculum that draws on the richness and diversity of religious experience worldwide.
- The opportunity for pupils to deepen their understanding of the religion and world views as lived by believers.
- A pedagogy that instils respect for different views and interpretations; and, in which real dialogue and theological enquiry takes place.
- Engaging and varied learning activities that provide for the needs of all learners, supported by high quality resources.
- The opportunity for pupils to develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection.
- RE that makes a positive contribution to SMSC development, and also to pupils' understanding of British values.
- An assessment process which has rigor and demonstrates progressions based on knowledge of core religious concepts.

Implementation

- Religious education may be taught in a 'whole class' setting but with flexibility to allow for discussion, questioning and reflection in small groups and individually.
- Visits to local churches and other places of worship are encouraged.
- A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
 - o Teacher presentations, role play, drama and story-telling
 - o Questions and answer sessions, discussions and debates

- Individual and group research
- Photographs, pictures and maps
- IT, film, podcasts, radio, websites, to research and communicate ideas

Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting the fact that West Coker CofE VC Primary School is a voluntary controlled school, Christianity should be the major religion studies and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, should be given to RE. This aim should be close to 10% but no less than 5% in key stages 1 and 2.

Resources

- Understanding Christianity materials
- Other web-based resources may be used to enhance this provision
- Teachers will use resources for other religions from reputable sources and develop them themselves to meet the locally agreed syllabus 'Awareness, Mystery and Value'.
- Further artefacts are available in the school store

Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment, Recording, Reporting

- Governors have responsibility for monitoring how RE in the school reflects its Christian vision.
- The headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The RE subject leader (currently the HT) will assist by monitoring long-term and medium-term plans.
- The RE subject leader (currently the HT) will assist by monitoring RE through work scrutiny.
- The subject leader will manage resources.
- The subject leader will endeavour to keep up-to-date with information, initiatives and developments in religious education and disseminate this as appropriate.
- The subject leader will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The subject leader will facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- The subject leader will be responsible for drawing up and action plan for religious education. Generally, this will be an annual plan and should be informed by this policy.
- The subject leader will liaise with the Diocesan adviser with responsibility for Religious Education.