Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

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An academy within:

"Learning together, to be the best we can be"

1. Scope

1.1. This policy applies to all schools within Nexus Multi Academy Trust and is designed to support academies in ensuring that their provision for Religious Education and Collective Worship is in line with statutory guidance and the requirements of their funding agreements. Each academy will have its own approach the delivery of the curriculum which is tailored to meet the needs of the pupils on roll.

2. Ethos

2.1. All pupils in Nexus schools are entitled to a programme of Religious Education which meets their needs and enables them to make progress in learning. This is usually delivered in line with a Local Authority's Agreed Syllabus. An academy may choose to adopt a locally agreed syllabus, but is not required to. Our intention is that Religious Education in Nexus schools should explore authentic and central concepts from religions on the basis of what will connect with pupils' experiences and enable them to respond whilst being sufficiently challenging and aspirational.

3. The legal framework

3.1. Government Guidance - Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools

3.2. Under the terms of their funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, all academies have to provide RE for all their pupils, except for those whose parents exercise the right of withdrawal. RE must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in reception classes and sixth form, but excluding:

- pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools;
- any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school; and
- any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education.

3.3. Funding Agreement – *please see each school's supplementary funding agreement which can be found on the Nexus website.*

3.4. The Academy Trust, where practical must provide for the teaching of religious education and for acts of collective worship at the Academy. *(School's Supplementary funding agreement, para 2.HH)*

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 and paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;

b) the Academy must comply with the requirements of regulation 5A of the Education (Special Educational Needs)(England)(Consolidation) Regulations 2001 as if it were a maintained school.

(School's Supplementary funding agreement, para 2.II)

3.5. The Academy Trust must comply with regulation 5A of the Education (Special Educational Needs)(England)(Consolidation) Regulations 2001 as if the Academy were a community or foundation special school, and as if references to "Religious Education" and to "Religious Worship" in that section were references to religious education and religious worship provided by the Academy in accordance with clause 2.II.

(School's Supplementary funding agreement, para 2.JJ)

Education Act 1996

3.6. (3) Every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996.

The Agreed Syllabus

3.7. An agreed syllabus is a religious education syllabus that is designed by a local authority's Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The syllabus, like the provision for RE in academies, must reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principle religions represented in Great Britain.

3.8. The Agreed Syllabus applies to pupils with SEND 'as far as it is practicable'.

3.9. Academies in Nexus are situated across different Local Authorities, each having its own Agreed Syllabus.

Collective Worship

3.10. Academies should follow paragraphs 50 to 88 of the Government guidance on collective worship in schools. The main points of this are detailed below:

- Each pupil (up to the age of 19) must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form, they have decided to withdraw themselves. This applies to academies with and without a religious designation.

- Academies without a religious designation must provide collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian.

- Academies without a religious designation can apply via the central government to the Secretary of State for exemption from providing broadly Christian collective worship for some or all of its pupils. In its application, it will be asked to give reasons for the application (such as consideration of the family background of pupils), details of consultation with governors and parents, and of proposals for future collective worship.

4. Context and Curriculum

Curriculum Provision

4.1. Nexus schools span several local authorities and the pupils attending each school have varying needs. For this reason, there is no one size fits all approach to the subject content delivered through the RE curriculum. Each school is aware of the religious make up of its pupils and therefore plans curriculum content which matches this so that pupils can see themselves in the taught content and are able to bring personal knowledge to their learning.

4.2. At Discovery, we are guided by the Sheffield agreed syllabus throughout the school. This provides a broad and balanced programme of RE which reflects three key areas and the skills of:

- Discovering religions: investigating religions and the world views through varied experiences and disciplines;
- Developing own views: reflecting on and expressing own ideas and the ideas of others with increasing creativity and clarity;
- Being reasonable about religions becoming increasingly able to be reasonable in response to religions and world views.

4.3. Pupils learn through discussion, debate, visitors and visual experiences such as artefacts and visits. The curriculum is designed to cover topics such as prayer which are common to a variety of religions and can be compared and contrasted.

School websites

4.4. All academies **should** publish:

- *the content of the curriculum in each academic year for every subject, including mandatory subjects such as religious education (RE) – this applies even if it is taught as part of another subject or known by another name.*
- *information to make parents and carers aware they have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE"*

What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online - Government

5. Collective Worship

"Collective worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes."
paragraphs 50 to 88 of the government guidance on collective worship in schools

5.1. Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves. The legislation for collective worship exists to enable pupils, wherever possible, to share a single act of collective worship, while ensuring that worship is appropriate for the pupils taking part.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Trust/Governance

6.1. The Trust and/or local governors should ensure that each school is meeting statutory duties in line with this policy and that provision is made for all pupils to engage in Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Headteachers

6.2. Headteachers should ensure that there is an appropriate curriculum, including access to Collective Worship, in place for all pupils at the school. They are also responsible for making sure that they publish the required details about the RE curriculum and should also ensure that parents and carers are aware of their right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective worship. Headteachers should ensure that subject leaders have access to high quality CPD to support them in the leadership of heir subject across the school and enable them to provide advice and guidance to other members of staff.

Subject Lead

6.3. The RE subject lead (or person with responsibility for the oversight of RE) should ensure that the agreed curriculum for RE is consistently delivered and should monitor the quality of the education provided with school leaders. They should offer support for staff delivering RE and Collective Worship and should access and provide CPD where required.

Class teachers

6.4. Class teachers are responsible for delivering high quality RE lessons and ensuring that pupils in their class are making progress. Class teachers are often the key people to talk to parents about their children's access to RE and should therefore be well informed about the legal requirements. Class teachers should be able to speak to the subject leader of the Headteacher where they are unsure of the provision made for pupils in their classes.

7. Quality assurance

External QA

7.1. As there are currently no schools within Nexus with a religious character who are subject to a Section 48 inspection through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist School (SIAMS) framework. Provision for RE and Collective Worship will be inspected through Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework. This may be through the inspection of the Quality of Education but will be considered in the inspection of Personal Development.

Trust QA

7.2. QA from the Trust will come through the work of the Executive Assurance Partners and Executive Regional Directors linked to the school and through the Trust's audit process. Aspects of Quality Assurance will be identified through the Collaborative

7.3. School Improvement Framework and priorities may arise as part of the Annual Support and Challenge Board.

School QA

7.4. Each school should have its own process for the internal quality assurance of RE and Collective Worship. This process should celebrate the strength in provision and the quality of education that pupils receive and also outline the areas for development in the delivery of the subject.

Appendix A

Useful websites

RE Online – Festival Calendar
Festival Calendar - RE:ONLINE (reonline.org.uk)

NATRE – National Association of Teachers for RE
National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (natre.org.uk)

RE Today
RE Today supporting Religious Education in schools

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE):

Rotherham - Committee details - Rotherham Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) - Rotherham Council

Sheffield - SACRE | Christians and Sheffield Schools (cass-su.org.uk)

Doncaster - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) - City of Doncaster Council

Nottinghamshire - Nottinghamshire standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) | Nottinghamshire County Council

Government - RE and collective worship in academies and free schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Big Ideas for RE - Big Ideas for RE - Free Religious Education Curriculum for schools